

**CALGARY SCIENCE SCHOOL
PARENT COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
October 1, 2008**

Present at meeting:

Emily Brown – CSS staff
Jackie Stewart – Member at Large
Cheryl Lemieux – Board Representative
Wendy Baillie – Secretary
Max Kaulback – Vice President
Juergen Amft – Treasurer
Jim Scouras – Member at Large
Leann Meronek – President
Deb Foley – Member at Large
Darrell Lonsberry – CSS staff
Dave Robinson – Member at Large

Leann Meronek called the meeting called to order 7:03pm.

Amendment to Parent Council Agenda, October 1, 2008:

Add Dave Robinson's name to Board Representatives.
Motion to approve the amended Council Agenda made by Cheryl Lemieux and seconded by Jim Scouras. The motion was approved.

Amendment to Parent Council Minutes:

The minutes from the September 10, 2008 meeting were amended with the addition of Dave Robinson under Board Representatives.

Amendments to AGM Minutes:

The minutes from the September 10, 2008 Annual General Meeting (AGM) were amended to add Dave Robinson under Board Representatives.

Motion to approve the amended Parent Council and AGM Minutes was made by Deb Foley and seconded by Dave Robinson. The motion was approved.

Before addressing other agenda items, Juergen suggested we prepare name cards so everyone knows who's who. Emily Brown provided paper for all present to use.

REPORTS

Outdoor Activity Center (OAC)

Leann requested volunteers for OAC Grand Opening event on Thursday, October 9 from 9:30am. Volunteers are needed to help set up for the presentation and the lunch. Emily Brown will make contact with parents in her classes. Leann also said that Parent Council will pay for cost of event and the bench plaque being prepared to recognize Ron Sweet. Estimated cost to Parent Council for the OAC event \$4,000.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Max, Juergen and Leann need to transfer signing authority on the Parent Council bank account. Juergen will prepare the letter to take to the bank to transfer signing authority. The bank is TD Canada Trust at Glenmore Landing.

Lori Einsporn-Wilhelm was proposed as a new Board Representative to replace Jeff Parker. Jackie Stewart moved council support Lori's nomination. The motion was seconded by Cheryl Lemieux and unanimously approved by council.

Leann requested that everyone on the council take time to think about Parent Council's priorities for the year and beyond. Please email suggestions to Leann. She also council members glean ideas from other parents.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Darrell's comments are attached at the end of these minutes.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Juergen had nothing new to report. Juergen found the letter to transfer signing authority and will prepare it before the end of the evening.

BOARD REPORT

Cheryl attended the CSS Board meeting on September 23rd. They viewed the CSS student film that won the top award at the Calgary International Film Festival.

The Board discussed volunteer screening at CSS. There is a need for volunteers to complete security checks to volunteer at the school. Currently, it is not legislated, but it has become standard practice, so the Board is working with administration to prepare a policy. The current situation is teachers are responsible for monitoring the children. A parent is not left alone with students. Historically, the approach has been that teachers know and trust the parent population and rely on the obligation of teachers to provide appropriate supervision. The teachers have a duty of care, however with a school of 600 students this approach is no longer realistic. There was also discussion of conducting volunteer orientation meeting for all parents. Jackie believes there's material in the Parent Handbook, but she will check with the Communications Committee.

Dr. Shelley Robinson provided an update to the Board on the charter renewal process. The first draft is due to Alberta Education in December. This item generated some discussion the vision statement for the school. Work will be done to refine the statement.

The Board Superintendent provided a recap on the association of charter schools meeting, but not much substantive discussion. Dave commented that there is no imminent change to charter schools.

Cheryl asked the council for clarity on the role of the Board Representative. Dave Robinson commented he feels the role of the Parent Council is to build the sense of community in the school – to build the connection. It's not a community school, but it's a school community. Leann would like some feedback on Parent Council involvement in fundraising, and there are Board priorities that the Council could support as well? Darrell would like to see more connection to external expertise to support the inquiry-based learning within our school community. Jackie suggested preparing a two or three-year action plan of priorities for the Parent Council so it's more manageable. She suggested preparing a survey of parents to help identify initiatives they are interested in. The Council could develop an online survey to find out about a broad range of initiatives including what school activities people are interested in, if there is interest in ordering school clothing to preparing a database of community expertise available to support learning. Deb Foley and Wendy Baillie will help with survey preparation with assistance from Jackie Stewart and the Communications Committee. Max also suggested asking what teachers' priorities are for input to the Parent Council and the Board.

Leann said that the plan this year is to send minutes and agenda to council members before the meeting.

OAC REPORT

Jackie showed the summary newsletter for the OAC that was sent home earlier this week. Invitees for Grand Opening next Thursday include MLAs, community representatives and major donors. The Communications Committee will prepare a media release.

Jackie still needs some volunteers for pre-event preparation and site clean up.

With the business complete, Max Kaulback moved to adjourn the meeting and Wendy Baillie seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50pm.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT
Wednesday, October 1, 2008
School Council Meeting

Enrolment

We submitted our enrolment count to Alberta Education yesterday and we are full. This is significant because our enrolment determines our funding. Each desk that is empty at the September 30 deadline means approximately \$6000 less money in grant revenues.

Facilities

We received a letter yesterday from the Deputy Minister of Education stating that our request for funding regarding the development of the “cage” had been granted to the tune of \$460,000. We’ve already submitted our request for a development permit to the city and the next step will be to ask our architect to go ahead with the construction drawings.

We’ve been sprucing up the building by repainting the bathroom stalls a deep blue color, and most recently painting all of our exterior doors the same deep blue. We’ll be painting a number of classrooms in the grade 6/7 hallways also, though we don’t have a timeline on that work yet. We will also be investing in new lighting covers for a couple of the classrooms where the covers have yellowed substantially over time.

Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) Review

Last year we commissioned an independent consultant to have a look at our facilities and our school operations as part of an occupational health and safety review. Schools are now mandated to meet OH&S standards, so we brought in Mike Reikie to see what we needed to do to be fully compliant. His findings indicated that we have a few areas we needed to address to meet all OH&S standards, but these were quite readily achievable changes. For example, we needed to put in place policies on workplace safety and working alone, we have to clean up some of the Ethernet wiring in some of the classrooms and we will ensure that our caretaking crew and teachers receive WHMIS training (whenever appropriate). We have addressed most of the recommendations and will deal with the rest in the coming months.

Teacher Professional Development

So, what do teachers do on those PD/Planning days? Each of these days begins with a staff meeting, then we move into an hour or so where a handful of teachers shares with their colleagues how they are using inquiry in the classroom and how technology supports their efforts. This sharing time is the foundation of our teacher professional development and the expectation is that every teacher will, at some point in the year, share an aspect of their practice with their peers and receive feedback. After the sharing time we will move into mini training sessions, put on by our teachers, on a number of technology related tools and topics, such as smarboards, using remote desktop as an instructional tool, podcasting, website development, and more. The afternoon is typically spent in team meetings and there is (hopefully) some time left at the end of the day for individual teacher planning. They are normally very busy days!

Another very important part of our PD is the work our teachers do in small groups with representatives from the Galileo Educational Network. Typically, a pair of teachers will sit down for a half day of release time with a Galileo representative to develop an inquiry-based unit of instruction.

Student Teachers

We are again hosting student teachers this year. We have 5 first year student teachers and 2 second year student teachers. Year 1 student teachers are primarily observers in the classroom, though the more adept and eager ones will take on some of the teaching. Year 2 students will eventually be responsible for all of the planning and instruction in the classroom, under the guidance of the cooperating teacher. These are our student and cooperating teachers this semester:

1. Adrian Textor (5.3)	John Cadman icadman@ucalgary.ca
2. Emily Brown (7.1)	Daniel Fraser dgfraser@ucalgary.ca
3. Carolyn Armstrong (7.3)	Year 2 TBA
4. Neil Stephenson (7.2)	Maikol Solis Hernandez hmfisolis@ucalgary.ca
5. Amy Park (8.4)	Michael Jamrozak majamroz@ucalgary.ca
6. Jennifer Woodard (9.2)	Nathan Gignac ntgignac@ucalgary.ca
7. Shashi Shergill (9.4)	Year 2 TBA

Terry Fox Run

Our Terry Fox run on September 26th was very successful from many perspectives. We raised just over \$8200 for the fight against cancer! Another “success” that day was a phone call I received from a member of the public who was walking in North Glenmore Park while our grade 4-6 students were on their run. This person called to say how impressed she was with how polite and considerate our students were; many of them said “hello” or “good morning” and made space so she and her friend could get past. She also mentioned that she was pleasantly surprised at how many of our boys demonstrated such consideration and politeness. One other success that day was the sense of community and camaraderie. Everyone, from our parent volunteers and student volunteers to our teacher and student participants, had a good time and enjoyed the chance to contribute to the fight against cancer by participating in the run.