

Ecole Robert H. Smith School Parent Council Minutes  
Wednesday November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
RHS Library 6 pm to 8 pm

**6 pm Call to Order & Attendance**

Chair called the meeting to order at 6:15pm

Attendance: Danielle (Chair), Kathryn (Vice-chair), plus six parents, and Adam (Principal) and Sarah (Vice-principal)

**Approval of Tonight's Agenda**

Agenda was reviewed and the matter of Holiday Hampers and Fundraising were added

Motion to approve by Kathryn. seconded Jill. All in favour. Agenda approved.

**Approval of Minutes for October 2, 2024**

No quorum at last meeting, so no official minutes to approve.

***Holiday Hampers***

Teacher Ashley Edgar – 5/6 French Immersion – spoke on the hamper program and the impact of the program on students. Last year set a high bar and were able to complete 32 hampers for 32 families within the community. The approach is to look at school needs first, then connect with Christmas Cheer board for additional families, as needed. All classes involved, parents helped assemble and deliver hampers – just before the break. They are thinking of raising the goal and to start now. In 2023, had 7 boxes of food excess donated to Kelvin HS food bank. School needed to raise \$3k as they provided \$50 grocery gift card (Walmart), plus gifts for the kids valued at \$25/kid. Aim was two hampers per classroom last year, \$10 a kid on average needed. Discussion ensued. Was noted that multiple reminders to and mechanisms for what is needed from parents is valued. Could purchase gift cards through Fundscript fundraiser and families can donate through CHF. Settled on a target of 35 hampers this year

***Administrators' Report***

The principal gave a report on 1<sup>st</sup> Term. First, there has been a noticeable impact of the class size change (previously average of 27, now at average of 20) – described as amazing Things have been calmer overall. The new staff have melded well into RHS. The one class at 26 students (English 4-5-6) being given as many supports as possible, including full time EA. This raises larger questions

around the English program at RHS – and Admin have been discussing with the WSD. More discussions to come.

Halloween dance was a big hit overall and a great way to further build community.

Lunch program – Cheryl will be retiring at the end of this school year – things will change, but not sure what it will look like. WSD wants free lunch supervision by September 2025. Schools are tasked with determining how this will be supported. Some schools are doing it now, some starting in January and all others to start next school year. This has increased attendance in some schools where kids would go home for lunch and not come back. Many schools have significantly more EAs that can be tasked to lunch duty. Things will change with Cheryl's retirement as this is unstructured time that requires effective supervision. School will also likely lose microwaves. Not changing things currently although lunch program is always in need people to assist.

Through the Universal School Nutrition Program RHS received money from the province for the year. You must buy from specific vendors with minimum orders. Previous nursery snack money is now rolled into this fund. Food should be made available to everyone in an easily accessible place for students to grab if hungry. Because our needs are different from other schools, the money could be used for a couple of larger events school wide. Discussion ensued and some felt this program/initiative that has not been well thought out.

Doug Duff has come to WSD to help with math staff training – MathUP. Works from a place of additive reason, embedded quantity in math, and doing better at helping kids understand math at a deeper level. Have been applying the approach in the classroom – seeing results already and will continue throughout the year.

Quiet recess will start up the week of November 25<sup>th</sup> and an email will go out to parents. Kids can opt to come to the library for recess where they can read, draw, etc needs to be quiet, not playing. Want kids to be able to make these choices for themselves.

Report cards come out Nov 22<sup>nd</sup>. Goal is for any child that is able to get a 3 or 4 on the report card to achieve at that level; school's job to get them there. If a student is at a 1, there needs to be a plan in place to try and get them there – if students aren't learning, what will we do about it? It was noted that the WSD does not have programs for enrichment or gifted students. In cases like this, school will do a student specific plan to challenge them further beyond grade level curriculum

*Home Teams* are a way to build communities and leadership amongst the students through the creation of Learning Buddies. Every classroom has two

sets of buddies – older with younger that meet regularly during a cycle. Kids switch buddies, so they get a to know more people. Has had implications outside the classroom in the schoolyard – kids know each other, play more together, sense of belonging. Been a success so far and applying to the whole school this year. Has had long-term benefits through River Heights and Kelvin HS – relationships hold and helps with wider inclusion

### ***Chair's Report***

Halloween Dance was fantastic. Tara has financials – overall broke even. Danielle put forward a motion to repay RHS the upfront costs up to \$2800, seconded by Jill. All in favour, motion passed.

### ***Previous Business***

*Fundraising* - Chair discussed a possible fundraising idea - fundraising for board games and other items for indoor recess for each class. Discussion ensued.

Danielle put forward a motion of a fundraising goal of \$4k towards indoor recess items, Mercedes seconded. All in favour, motion passed.

### ***New Business***

*Community Gardens* - Mark requested permission to clean up the community garden in preparation for a spring planting. No concerns were raised and was told to proceed.

### ***Future Meeting Dates***

December 3<sup>rd</sup>, January 14<sup>th</sup>, February 4<sup>th</sup>, March 6<sup>th</sup>, April 8<sup>th</sup>, May 6<sup>th</sup>, June 10<sup>th</sup>

***Quorum lost at 7:55pm***

***Meeting adjourned at 8:10pm***