

BEDFORD PARK PARENTS' COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Bedford Park Parents' Council ("BPPC") held at 81 Ranleigh Ave, Toronto, Ontario, on the 25th day of October, 2016, at 7:05 p.m.

Heather Robertson chaired the meeting and Jeff Graham acted as Secretary in the absence of Kas Lingenfelter. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

The Agenda

The Agenda as posted at the Bedford Park website was circulated and without objection was adopted.

Minutes of September 27, 2016

The Minutes of the meeting on September 27, 2016 were approved as written.

Council Update

Ms. Robertson reported on various matters starting with a brief report on the family math night. Next she updated the Council on the planning for Community Night scheduled for April 28.

Next, Ms. Roberston reported on the status of the donation letter noting that response had been encouraging but more funds were needed to be able to ensure that the current activities and support could be sustained. The status of the Bedford Facebook page was noted and the role that Ms. Emma Davies was playing with respect to the page. Ms. Robertson noted that planning was under way for a "Parents Night Out" in February or March. Committee Volunteers for the event were being recruited.

Next Ms. Robertson reported that Stacey Matheson Young had agreed to join the Council as a member at large. FOLLOWING MOTION DULY MADE AND SECONDED, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY AGREED that Ms. Matheson Young is elected as a member at large.

Next Ms. Robertson noted that the Board was holding informational events on Parent Involvement Advisory Committee. The event was scheduled to be held on November 19.

Next Mr. Graham and Ms. Turner reported on the status efforts to advance plans to revitalize the playing field and install artificial turf. They noted that the Principal and representatives of the Council had met with the staff of the Board and that a preliminary planning process was underway. The Board staff had agreed to fund the development of a master plan and that a

decision as to whether the School would be on the Board's list of schools that are to have artificial turf installed in 2018 would be made in March 2017.

Council Budget

Ms. Turner reviewed the Council's financial status and its allocation year to date of its 2016-2017 budgets. In general, the expenditures to date track budget allocations made in the budget-making process in June 2016.

Principal's Report

Principal Mantia began her report by showing a video entitled "School and Parents Working Together For Our Students". The video included a message from the Director of Education. Set out below are the comments of Principal Mantia that she delivered at the meeting:

"The Vision for Learning outlined in the video is something that we began at Bedford last year by implementing structures that support Achievement, Well-Being and Equity. We have three committees that I have asked every member on staff to be part of and that align with the board's vision...Literacy, Numeracy and a Community, Culture and Caring Committee. Two teachers chair each committee and there is representation from each grade team on each committee. These committees meet monthly. Through these committees, teachers share their expertise, experiences and work together to set improvement goals. Each committee is in the process of setting goals. For example, the Literacy and Numeracy Committees will each set an achievement goal through the lens of global competencies supported by technology. The focus is not technology, it is the learning supported by technology. We continue to work towards the equitable access of technology among all grade teams and have invested in making sure this is available. For example, our kindergartens will now have 5 iPads as well as charging stations in their classrooms at all time to use in their centres. We have purchased iPad minis and chrome books as well.

The other structural element we implemented was to ensure that the views and opinions of each grade team are considered in making school wide decisions. Each grade team is assigned a grade team leader who facilitates a group discussion around topics concerning the team and those designated by the Leadership Team consisting of the committee chairs. Grade teams also meet monthly and we have done our best to incorporate common planning time into their timetables.

Why the team approach? I am a strong believer in shared and collaborative leadership. The team approach is an efficient way to improve communication between administrators, resource staff, and other team members. It is also a way of sharing the workload and providing support and encouragement to each other, beginning teachers and new team members. Collaborative

leadership is essential for us to move towards solution-based school improvement. We aim to cultivate a culture that focuses on growth, learning and capacity building so we can ultimately maximize learning.

Being a parent is the hardest job in the world and I truly believe that it takes a village to raise a child. I see the school as part of that village. We want to focus our efforts and work collaboratively to support our students. We hope to share our goals, initiatives, information and successes at our School Council Meetings as we will do tonight through our EQAO presentation. Other topics of interest that we can address in the future are things such as Special Education, how to get the most out of your interviews, Documentation in kindergarten, how parents can support learning. We have experts on staff, our students, and we can also utilize board personnel to speak to various issues of interest.

I feel very strongly about ensuring the voices of our students are heard and that they are part of this shared leadership model. I work closely with our Student Council members which we are in the process of putting together. We have added the element of class reps starting at grade 1. Just as in the staff model, we want to ensure that the student voices in each grade are heard and considered.

In order for us to have a strong learning culture, our environment needs to be one of trust and high expectations where we listen to one another and foster relationships that are positive and supportive. We are committed to working with you to create a supportive and collaborative learning culture where all voices are heard and one where students are optimistic, confident, resilient, have high self-esteem; an environment where we are all looking after one another to be healthy and effective."

Next, Mr. Levy provided a report on the School's record on the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) testing conducted in the 2015-2016 school year focusing on what we had done well and what could be areas for further improvement. The EQAO assess how well Ontario's public education system developing students' reading, writing and math skills. He explained that the teaching staff had worked very hard to prepare students and that the strategy of spreading testing over a number of days had proven to be successful. Mr. Levy shared results for both the Grade 3 and Grade 6 testing. The results showed that Bedford had scored substantially higher than the Board and the Province in both Grade 3 and Grade 6 testing. The results were being used by the administration and teachers to identify areas of strength and weakness and to identify where further improvement could be achieved, for example in the area of mathematics where testing results, while still stronger than the Board and the Province, leave room for improvement. He circulated some draft sample questions and those in attendance were invited to try their hand at the sample questions.

Technology Report

Mr. Chan provided a brief report on the status of the School's recent efforts to improve the quality and availability of technology (Chrome books, iPads, Smart Boards) in the school, supplementing comments made earlier by Principal Mantia. In general, the effort was on track and progress was being made in better equipping the school with important technology tools to assist students and teachers. Mr. Chan noted the School's creative program to replace broken iPad screens in a cost-effective manner.

Other Business

There was a discussion of a Young Yogis program led by Samara Enchin and the options available to the School if such a program were to be made available either to the Kindergarten or to the entire school. Also, there was a discussion of the Drum Fit program.

Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:50 pm.

Next meeting is scheduled for November 29, 2016.