

MINUTES FOR VIRTUAL SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING DJPS December 1, 2020

Welcome, land acknowledgement.

TDSB TRAFFIC SAFETY – Laura Zeglen from TDSB

Ms. Zeglen presented current school catchment area, and asked questions regarding concerns the community may have upon our return to the new build.

Parents were able to highlight high traffic and dangerous crossing areas – including on Millwood and Belsize (school path), Belsize and Acacia, as well as Davisville (in front of the school as well as in the June Rowlands area).

Ms. Zeglen level set parents that the TDSB can work with the city in some areas, ensuring that previous crossing guards that had been approved are returned; additional crossing guards as required. Part of their goal is to offer a plan for parents and students to be able to walk, cycle safely to school – while reducing vehicular traffic from the local community. She will be organizing a walkabout the neighbourhood (tentatively late January 2021) with stakeholders (including parent representative, daycare, school staff, city representative).

Q: Will parking be addressed, as there is only limited parking in the area – with many streets only offering parking from 10 AM.

A: Reviewing current signs and timed parking allotments will be part of the traffic safety assessment.

Q: Will traffic calming and crossing guards be put in place for the opening of the school – as the neighbourhood will likely be surprised to see hundred of children and parents walking in the neighbourhood the first week of September?

A: We hope to be able to communicate with the broader community about the re-opening of the school, as well as get some signage that supports safely walking to schools.

ADMINISTRATION/TEACHERS REPORT: Acting Principal Miles, Ms. Anna Gibson

Acting Principal Miles and Vice Principal Bozzo:

1. Nutrition Program:

The nutrition program is under way, and has been successfully received.

Q: Is there a way that parents can receive a calendar such that we can make sure that we are providing our kids with a variety of snacks, as opposed to duplicating, say – cheerios?

A: Yes, hopefully we will be able to provide this with parents. I believe that they are updating with an expanded new menu, so we can share that with the community as soon as we receive it.

2. Recess/Lunch Schedule:

The TDSB has deemed that lockers can be used by students – with the caveat that only clothes (jackets, snowpants, gloves, hats, boots, etc) are allowed in the locker. No locks. Personal items are still to be kept in the classroom.

Q: There are reports of bullying – specifically, when the older students in the co-horting classes are rough-housing and the lone lunchtime supervisor’s attention is being diverted, allowing for quiet bullying with the other class. How are you addressing this during the ½ hour in the hallway?

A: I have not heard of this, if there are specific examples please contact me directly. Although we are in a large school, we unfortunately cannot utilize many of these spaces, as it is a safety concern to have a lunchtime supervisors attention diverted in a larger space.

Students are finding ways to entertain themselves, through individual activities or playing games together.

3. Winterfest production by the Grade 7 class from Spectrum:

The Students from the Grade 7 Spectrum class will be presenting a Winterfest production scheduled for December 17th – and we hope to be able to show it to the whole school – virtually. We should be able to provide a link for parents as well.

4. Davisville COVID practces Audit:

Davisville recently completed an audit by the Toronto Public Health and we passed with regards to protocols vis-à-vis our program. We also now have one point of contact for COVID cases.

Q: Would it be possible to have this point of contact/or someone from public health speak with the school parents from the community?

A: I think that it may be possible, although probably not at a council meeting. Perhaps as a stand alone virtual event. Will look into it.

CHAIR REPORT: Lynne LeBlanc, Geordie Sabbagh and Charles Zhu

1. Financial overview (attached to minutes):

Month of November (financials)

Expenses in October included outdoor class materials, a fundraising refund as the family is unable to use the camp (no cost to school council), and Pizza lunch refunds (carried over from June 2020, cheque was just cashed in October).

Operating funds on hand at the period of November 27, 2020 = \$81,674.13

Budget for 2020-2021

We are in a good position for this year. Council has decided to be careful and mindful of everybody's financial situations, and the uncertainty that surrounds us all.

We are focusing on filling gaps for the school overall and for classrooms. Will be reviewing 'wish lists' from teachers with admin and identify areas that we can support.

Areas of focus include: Classroom supplies/wish lists; Outdoor activity supports; possible special events (community events later in 2021).

We will also be carrying over for future initiatives (ex: Technology).

Key areas:

Budget for class enhancements and Set-up:

- Class enhancements, products to enhance learning during COVID (ensuring each child has their own set of learning tools, for example)

Specialty Classes:

- ESL and FSL, Core French, Library enhancements, Phys Ed dept, School wide initiatives

External Activities:

- Online seminars/events, Field Trips (2021), In-Class seminars, outdoor items

Special Events and Clubs:

- Graduation, Annual events (Skate night, Games night - 2021), Fun Fair, Lunch club subsidy (Literacy and Activity materials)

Motion to approve the budget presented - approved.

In terms of Specialty classes, one area of interest is with a program Mind Up! Which provides emotional mindfulness developed for students from K to grade 8. The program early investment would be in purchasing 2 books detailing the process to develop the program most successfully. This would also allow for two sets of information to be shared between two teachers/groups.

Q: Would you require teacher buy-in?

A: Acting Principal Miles: it is a good program, and I think has value for teachers and the school. From our end, the school would not be able to provide instructional support other than allowing time for teachers to attend seminars, which we are happy to coordinate.

For this year, it may make sense to invest in the books for use in the future (as organizing the instructional time will likely be challenging in light of a lack of resources across the TDSB. Also, COVID restricts how we could coordinate a learning session.

Depending on how we feel about the program roll out, perhaps some parents who are informed about the program could assist in the presentation, introduction and development.

Q: Is this program available in French?

A: Unknown. However, teachers would still be able to participate and utilize strategies within their class.

Motion to approve the purchase of 2 books with regards to Mind Up! Program - approved.

Q: What supports are available for virtual students? At this time, there is no supports available through the virtual school. These students will be returning to the in-person school next year, and so comparable investments would make sense from the point of view of ensuring that all students have similar access.

A: Davisville was able to invest in a few online programs for in-person students, and we are not able to manage where the other Davisville students are located and how to best extend similar programs. Contacting the virtual school executives, possibly the Trustee may have some effect.

Q: In my previous school, all students had access to iXL – and now that we have moved to Davisville, we no longer have access:

A: iXL is an expensive program – sometimes upwards of \$15,000 – and is primarily based on ‘work sheets’. Davisville invested in online literacy programs in French and English – which have proven to be useful for teachers.

2. Fundraising for this year (at this time):

Thank you for your continued support. All that the School Council provides for our children would not be possible without your support and commitment to our community events.

At this time, and in light of our current COVID situation, we will be focusing fundraising efforts in ways that can maximize people's funds, including through Indigo and Mabel's Labels – where a % of sales is returned to the school.

We will also be sending some information regarding how Davisville families can support local with retailers who have supported our school fundraising efforts.

Other opportunities may arise in the latter part of the year, and we will keep you posted.

3. HVAC:

Council is pleased to report that school council and our Trustee were able to ensure that the TDSB evaluated – and identified areas where we qualified for additional funding at VRA for fans to increase healthy air flow.

4. Bylaws:

In the past, there were areas where it was not clear what the process should be in terms of approving funds for various budget lines, how to address conflict within the council, and what the council roles had voting privileges. There was a lot of work that was done to develop bylaws for school council to address challenges that we have faced in the past. We will be posting the bylaws on the website and distributing them to our community.

At our January meeting, we will be reviewing and answering questions in regards to these bylaws, as well as voting to approve them (as is or amended as per parent feedback).

5. Meeting Dates:

Council meeting dates will be posted online as well as noted in the newsletter for parents to be able to include in their calendars.

Adjournment

Thank you and next meeting January 19, 2021 at 6:30 PM – virtually. Agenda and link to be sent prior to meeting.