

# **October 20, 2020 Hopewell Ave PS School Council Meeting Minutes**

**Attendees:** Daphne Dumbrille, Deborah Gomes-Schultz, Martina Sherwood, Christopher Werely, Claire Kerry, Peter Neilsen, David Coyle, Diane Wessman, Norah Lynn Paddock, Andy Thompson, Cecilia Fritz-Gegesy, Matt Brown, Bryce Colenbrander, Beth Macleod, Chantal Saunders, Erich Schultz, Fran Morrison, Helen Mackie, Jennyfer Majerome, Josie Huges, Karen Skelly, Matt Brown, Sarah Parke, Tara Gray, Connor McGarry, Beth MacLeod, Allison Kelley, Anita Lahey, Katie Breen, Mike Matheson, Zainab Majerome, Petra Heitkamp, Alex Randall, Danielle Sinclair.

**Regrets:** Erik Van der Torre

## **1. Welcome, Approval of the Agenda, Approval of June 2020 minutes**

Agenda approved by Katie Breen and seconded by Beth Mcleod

Minutes approved by Cecilia Fritz-Gregesy and seconded by Fran Morrison

## **2. Principal's Report**

Welcome to the 2020-2021 School Year! This has been an interesting one for all members of our school community. At this time we are in full swing with many protocols that are quite different. A school day for our children now includes a designated distanced line up right upon arrival, teachers meeting students outside and walking in together, all students remain in the same classroom throughout the day in a designated seat, masks are required for grades 4 to 8 students and recommended for students in Kindergarten to grade 3. All K-3 students have desk shields. Recess takes place in zones. Individual classes remain in their zone for recess. Outdoor time is maximized – gym, outdoor learning, recess... we are out a lot! Hand sanitizing takes place prior to each entry. Hand washing takes place every time a class returns to the classroom and prior to eating. Library books are delivered. Materials are not shared. Individualized bins are a common practice.

We are all so happy to be back together and collectively understand the importance of following all of our new protocols so that we can stay together. As we have said in previous messages to our community, the support of our parents and guardians has fueled us. We are so grateful for the partnership.

Our in-person enrolment is currently approximately 720 students. We have approximately 125 students who are registered in the virtual school. We have 36 homeroom classes and 1 specialized behaviour intervention program class.

We have had one positive COVID case in our school. We do not currently have any active cases. This is good news. Ottawa Public Health continues to review their processes and receive feedback from schools. If we receive information that there is a positive case we confirm that the individual is not at school or is immediately placed into isolation pending parent pick up. Once the case is confirmed by OPH, principal will now send an email to the community indicating that there is a new confirmed case. Contact tracing will have started- this includes gathering all possible points of contact for staff and students. Attendance lists, sign-in/sign-out logs to all spaces, bus lists, EDP lists, occasional teacher logs are all reviewed to determine who may be a high risk contact. Letters to high risk contacts will be generated by Ottawa Public Health with a goal to get these distributed asap. Principal will send out a letter to the school community on behalf of OPH indicating that high risk contacts have been identified and will be contacted. Principal will ensure that students and staff who are required to self-isolate have been informed and know not to attend school. The number of cases and whether they are student or staff is public.

The names of the individuals and grades are not shared publicly. At school we rely on Ottawa Public Health for confirming suspected positive cases and identifying high risk contacts. We have seen refinements to the process in recent days and anticipate that continued monitoring and refining will take place as we gain more insight and experience.

We have one staffing update. Kathy Manser, intermediate teacher at Hopewell for many years has announced her retirement. Her last day will be Friday, October 30th and she will be missed. We will be welcoming Jade Cummings to the team on November 2nd. She comes to us from Fisher Park Public School and will be working closely with Ms. Manser to ensure a smooth transition.

We are beginning to develop Progress Reports for Grades 1 to 8 and Initial Observations for our Kindergarten students. These will be available on November 20th through the parent portal. More information will be coming on accessing the portal.

**Question** regarding Proper ventilation HVAC upgrade in school to help reduce risk of COVID transmission?

This summer the school had huge upgrades to the ventilation system and the system is now double filtered. This was scheduled pre-COVID.

**Question** Regarding mental health crisis: why are police called? Martina was not able to speak specifically to the incident earlier when the police were called due to privacy issues, but there was a concern the student involved was going to flee. The school had to contact police to protect the child. If the school has children with non-emergency mental health concerns, they contact CHEO and other mental health supports available to the school.

Hopewell has a Public Health Nurse aligned with the school that is available to answer questions on health topics.

**Question** regarding concern that there may be a shortage of Occasional Teachers (OTs). What contingencies are in place when school is short on OTs? - Vice Principal Christopher Werely answered that there was a time when there were concerns as per the email sent to parents earlier in the school year, but HR has since hired and built up the Occasional Teacher list. At the start of the year, teachers were often absent because they had children showing COVID signs and needed to isolate. Now that COVID results are coming back quicker and no need to test if symptom free after 24 hours, we no longer have as many teachers off as we were at the start of the year. There are Dedicated Occasional Teachers (DOTs) within school and emergency OTs can be sent from the board. Lots of plans in place and DOTs can be shared with other schools.

### 3. VP Report

Office is certainly different this school year. Not bringing students into the office as normally would. If there are problems in the yard we are dealing with them outside in the yard or at the Friendship tree in the atrium. There seems to be fewer problems as social circles are tighter due to having recess only with class. Martina and Chris are also out in the yards during Recess times.

Fire and Safety plans have to be completed in a specific way, certain hallways are unidirectional and certain cohorts can only be in parts of school. In a fire alarm and evacuation drill we have a short amount of time, where all occupants in the building evacuate simultaneously, not able to do that during physical distancing. Fire drills therefore will look different this year. There will be a one time sounding of fire alarm to acquaint students with what that sounds like, along with Lights flashing for those hard of hearing. Teachers will be explaining to students what is going to happen, how they still have to maintain physical distance. Classes will practice doing a drill within individual classes, in the manner of Public Health measures. On their return they will sanitize upon

entry to school and wash hands when they get to the classroom. By-law requires 6 fire drills in a school year, usually conducting 3 in the fall and 3 in the spring trying to avoid drills in winter as there isn't time to put on winter gear.

#### **4. Teacher rep report**

Teacher rep for 2020/21 is Karen Skelly

Karen introduced herself saying she had waited 10 years to get into Hopewell. Karen is teaching Grade 1 and 2 this year. She reported that staff and students were excited to be back, this week it had started to feel calmer as kids are back into learning routines after learning all the new COVID routines.

Teachers are focusing on health and well being parents were sent emails for teachers in PPE and without trying to reduce anxiety in students before school started. sent Social and emotional learning in the new Math curriculum, incorporate it into the whole curriculum.

Anti-racism and diversity workshops and google meets were held and anti-racism and diversity team - focus was on inclusion, read alouds for inclusion and anti-racism strategies. Whole school participated in Orange Shirt Day, learning about residential schools in Canada,

Intermediate students on October 16th (Grade 7 and 8 ) participated in an anti racism workshop by "Get Real" they worked on the topic of racial bias and had the opportunity to anonymously ask questions.

On a fun note, Student Voice Group has been set up to discuss what types of virtual clubs/groups need to be held one new group is virtual fitness group for grade 4-8.

Costumes will be allowed for Halloween, no costume masks or make up or change of clothes.

November 9/10th Grade 7 and 8s will look at the impact of technology in their lives workshop conducted by Rideauwood Addictions and Family Services.

Kindergarten groups are outside lots for education and recess, the kindergarten wing is busy but calm.

**Question:** Why did you want to come to Hopewell? Many other teachers had recommended Hopewell as a good school and that it has a close-knit family, despite being a large school.

**Question** Asked if books could still be donated to the school library - yes they could still be donated and that they can be dropped off to office staff at the front door.

#### **5. Treasurer's Report (Allison Kelley)**

Previous school year's financial year ends on October 30th - gives time to pay off invoices/fees and set a budget for the new school council year.

##### **Revenue**

Hot lunches revenue was \$52,874.44 (\$6k refunds made) this is much higher than anticipated due to missed school days due to strike action and COVID lockdown. Some fundraising events did not happen this year, e.g. Bike sale

Total revenue was \$58K

## **Outgoings**

Yard: Money is put aside to maintain the yard (eg for mulch and watering)

Curriculum and enrichment to offset some of the costs they have for those groups. Many events did not happen (eg Grade 8 Graduation)

Philanthropy: donated more to the Education Foundation; additional donation was funded from the revenue gained during the COVID shut down for the hot lunches, parents could have a refund or could donate to council, council promised that and 35% would go to Education foundation and the rest would offset the the inability to fundraise this coming year, due to COVID restrictions.

Other spending includes photocopying and the welcome mural (Maritina commented that the Welcome Mural is in progress - staff were talking about creative ways to get this going)

In total \$36k spent

**Project Sandbox** - amount that has been allocated from the school council that belongs to Sandbox that is held in the School councils account.

\$3,2318.70 allocated for next year.

Budget committee will be set up to allocate where money needs to be allocated for the new School year.

## **6. SANDBOX Update**

Raising money for the Kinderyard - There are drainage issues in the yard which was a main driver for the need for a new yard. We had a strong community active fundraising year that brought in \$90k and had hoped to raise \$120k but with COVID lockdown we weren't able to raise the final amount. Tried to scale down the design but due to costs to build it have increased (eg price of lumber raised) so weren't able to go to tender. There is a need to fundraise more this school year, but some of our traditional methods of fundraising aren't open to us. Definitely some work to do, and want to get more people involved.

Parents who might like to be involved in fundraising they can find more information on the School Council page on the Hopewell school website.

[https://hopewellaveps.ocdsb.ca/school\\_council/project\\_sandbox\\_yard\\_renewal](https://hopewellaveps.ocdsb.ca/school_council/project_sandbox_yard_renewal)

Or email [parentspeak@gmail.com](mailto:parentspeak@gmail.com)

**Question** Can information be provided on Timelines on what we can expect? Had hoped to build this summer, Project SANDBOX has been advised by the board to go out to tender in January 2021 as there should be less competition and to aim to build next summer.

**Question** Any thoughts on how the lumber shortage may affect the natural aspect of the yard? Costs would be more, so would be willing to go with more off the shelf structures to bring down costs.

## **7. School yard usage**

There were some concerns raised since the start of school year that students were not able to play in the yards after school, due to the Glebe Parents Day Care (who run the Extended Day Programme) having sole use of the yard. It was confirmed that children

from outside of the daycare program may access the turf yard after school. They will also be using the space but will ensure that distancing is in place.

## **8. School Resource Officer (SRO)**

We have had some questions about the role of our School Resource Officer in our school. These were sparked by our recent reference to our SRO as a support during incidents where we shared concerns about the safety of a student.

The purpose of the SRO program is to liaise with schools within the four public school boards and private schools in Ottawa. SROs work closely with families and schools. SROs may support families to be a resource and provide referrals for issues occurring in the family home. SROs build healthy and trusting relationships with children in our schools and become a familiar presence in school experiences – such as ceremonies, assemblies and special events.

Specific roles might include:

- Presentations on topics such as internet safety and anti-bullying
- Consultation and support with school administration and families when issues arise (internet concerns, for example)
- Responding and following up on a missing child report
- Supporting families who reach out for assistance in working with their children to help them understand the law (children who may have shoplifted, for example)
- Connecting families with supports such as Crossroads, Youth Services Bureau, Youth Office Support Line
- Assistance with practice lockdowns (as an extra pair of eyes and to provide feedback)
- Specialized traffic requests (presence along off property walking routes – Terry Fox, Walkathons)
- Advice on street safety – traffic flow, effectiveness of parking signs, traffic calming measures
- Notifying the school if there is a suspicious incident that we need to be aware of (stranger alerts)

Our SROs are Constables Bernard Covic and Abe Kazan. They are accessible by cell phone and advise as we require it. Sometimes they also just drop in to say hello.

Our School Resource Officers are one of our many partners. Other include, The Ottawa Fire Department Fire Education program, Crossroads Children's Centre, Rideauwood Addiction and Family Services, Ottawa Public Health, Youth Services Bureau, CHEO, School Based Rehabilitation Services (formerly LHIN) and our own OCDSB Learning Support Services which includes psychologists, social workers, social emotional learning specialists, behaviour specialists, and speech language pathologists.

**Questions** - *What is the criteria for calling in the police if there is an incident at the school?* If a threat to safety is imminent or there is an emergency (worried a student will flee), the school calls 911. They call the SRO to be a presence or if it is not an emergency (i.e. they need a police officer who is a "friendly face" / calming presence in the school), the administration will contact the SRO.

**Question:** It was raised that after the incident in the school where the police were called there is a worry that some students might be feeling more marginalised and there is a sensitivity on anti-black racism.

It is our practice to inform the community whenever we have emergency responders on site. This includes the fire department and paramedics.

The reason an email is sent to inform parents what happened is to prevent parent speculation to who was present and build confidence that the situation was handled appropriately.

### **Executive positions and Committee lead positions for 2020-2021 School Council: Elections and other roles.**

**Co-Chairs:** Deborah Gommers-Schultz will be stepping down as Co-chair  
Bryce Colenbrander - interested in co-chair - no other nominations.  
Daphne will co-chair along with Bryce.

**Treasurer:** Allison Kelley has confirmed staying on as Treasurer

**Secretary:** Claire Kerry has confirmed she will be staying on as Secretary

**Yard Committee:** Heather Martin and Katie Breen

#### Division Representatives:

Kinder Rep: Mathew Brown

Primary (grades 1 - 3): Vacant

Junior Rep (grades 4 - 6): Vacant

Intermediate Reps (grades 7 - 8) Vacant

**Ottawa Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC) Representative:** Vacant

#### School Council Committee Chairs:

**Safe and Accepting School Team:** Vacant

**Diversity Subcommittee:** Vacant

**SANDBOX committee:** Fran Morrison

**Teacher Representative:** Karen Skelley

**Members at Large:** Vacant

**Question** - Are there written descriptions available for these committees and positions?

Yes on the school council web page

[https://hopewellaveps.ocdsb.ca/school\\_council/about\\_us](https://hopewellaveps.ocdsb.ca/school_council/about_us)

For this year there will be a capped limit to those who have voting rights so that we don't run into quorum issues/ Parents can still be a voting member if you are a community member/virtual (your child is not currently in the school but is likely to return post COVID)

Martina thanked Deborah for all her hard work on the School council. Her time on council was very much appreciated.

## **9. Varia**

**Question:** Have teachers had success in using the space outside as a classroom and would there be any desire to have more outdoor classroom boards? Martina wasn't aware that teachers would want this since teachers are using individual whiteboards, but she will ask if this is something that teachers would be interested in.

**Next meeting: November 17th 2020 7pm via Google meet**