

Sherwood Heights School Council Meeting

Tuesday, November 19, 2019

In Attendance:

Parents: Ashley Frayn (Chair), Faith Neville, Rammi Pandher, Kaila Tipton, Dean Johnston, Wendy Bouwman Oake, Sheena Singleton

Staff: Paul Pallister, Sherri Johnston, Randy Bouwers

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. Approval of Agenda and Review and Approval of Minutes for September and October

Motion to approve September Minutes: moved by Rammi Pandher, seconded by Ashley Frayn. Carried.

Motion to approve October Minutes: moved by Dean Johnston, seconded by Ashley Frayn. Carried.

3. New Business

- a. **Parent Communication Platforms – Review of Start Up of Facebook page “Sherwood Heights Parents Connect”** (public page, but participation is managed to ensure only parents participate and follow Admin procedures) - 30 parents have joined thus far, and all Sherwood Heights parents are encouraged to join – communication is parent to parent, without school administration involvement
- b. **Review of Next Steps on the SCETF parental survey on Vaping** – tabled for next meeting
- c. **Staff Appreciation: Ideas and Commitment to Ensuring Ongoing Teacher Support** – parents have identified desire to have a plan for staff appreciation activities – notes of appreciation from parents and students are always appreciated by staff, as are food treats (i.e. for monthly staff meetings), and a notice board could be used – parents agreed to discuss appreciation activities after the meeting

4. Information Reports

- a. **COSC – no report**
- b. **Band Parents Report** – no report – Band Parents are continuing to have discussion about the Hot Lunch program, as there has yet to be a parent who has volunteered to be on-site to organize lunch distribution on Mondays
- c. **Logos Report** - Chapel happening on November 25th, shoebox campaign was just concluded, a Grade 6 invite Chapel will be scheduled for January/February, students will go to the Mustard Seed to volunteer in January/February after raising funds to provide a meal (likely through a bottle drive), weekly bible study with Pastor Clint is well attended this year (15-20 students)
- d. **French Immersion Report** – Grade 8s and 9s are going to a play on Friday, Grade 9s are going to Ardrossan next week for a school tour – Grade 7s may go to Flying Canoe Festival, and

there is hope for another cultural activity later in the year – students read at Read-In Week at Campbelltown - December 5th is a French Immersion information meeting for parents in Elk Island, being held at Sherwood Heights – there will be a Quebec trip April 20-26 for Grade 9 French Immersion and French as a Second Language students

e. Principals Report

- **Budget Impacts** – Provincial budget resulted in a shortfall for Elk Island Public Schools – to make up the shortfall, any reserves over 1% held by schools were moved to central funds (schools had been able to hold a reserve of 2% for a future project - Sherwood Heights did not have a reserve over 1%), there has been some reduction in central services, and the School Board is accessing reserve funds – there will be no direct impact on Sherwood Heights this year, but impacts are anticipated in 2020-2021 when reserves will have been used up
- **School Fees for 2020-2021** – Sherwood Heights has no plans to implement new school fees for 2019-2020, but would like to engage in discussion with parents about fees for user programs for 2020-2021, including what types of programs parents want to have offered in schools knowing that there have to be fees to cover costs – plan is to have a discussion at the January School Council meeting
- **Results Review** – review of School Education plan data with junior high administration/teachers, parents and the Board was cancelled by central office due to the current climate (uncertainty around school changes and budgets as a result of new government)
- **Follow up on Parent Information session: Community Learning Series: Social Emotional Awareness** – schools plan to coordinate to offer different information evenings to parents – Sherwood Heights working on a Social Emotional Awareness information night
- **In the Know – Parents Empowering Parents** – included in Cougar Tracks, to give parents access to information to help better support their children – parents are welcome to made suggestions for content for the “In the Know” segment
- **Parent/Teacher Interviews** – take place next Tuesday and Thursday – signups started this morning – staff had opportunity last week to organize meetings directly with parents that they felt they wanted to meet with
- **Accountability Pillar** – Grade 7 parents will be asked to complete in mid-January – parents are encouraged to reach out to the school for information if they feel they need to respond “I don’t know” as “I don’t know” responses are viewed as negative responses for the school and the school would prefer parents are well informed about the school
- **Holiday Activities and Future Events**
 - Bullying Awareness Week - classroom activities and positive peer comments – Team Jersey day tomorrow to emphasize teamwork – school wide art project on Friday –
 - November 29th PD day for Staff to focus on department goals and project based learning

- Tuesday, December 10th band concert at Salisbury Composite
- Christmas School Dance will likely be scheduled
- Principal's Advisory Council will be started soon for students
- Custodial Appreciation Event – planning something to allow students and staff to show appreciation to the school's custodians on December 4th– parents could participate if they like

f. Trustee's Report

- Meeting with MLAs – on November 1st, Board met with our 3 MLAs with a focus on Fort Saskatchewan enrollment pressures (in three years, all schools will be at full capacity)
- Replacement School - Sherwood Heights was not selected for a replacement school when the capital announcements were made for the next 3 years (Board had offered to pay for design of a new school if the Province approved the project, so that it could be fast-tracked and to sweeten the proposal in addition to the partnerships that are being negotiated) – Minister did advise yesterday that there will be more capital announcements coming in the Spring so there is some hope Sherwood Heights will still get a replacement school
- School Fees – parents will be invited to give input on 2020-2021 school fees at January School Council meetings and there will be a survey to share input for those who cannot attend–fees will be announced at April School Council meetings
- Survey - Minister released an on-line survey on education options as part of the Choice in Education consultation: <https://www.alberta.ca/choice-in-education-engagment.aspx>
- Budget
 - the Board chose to build a conservative budget for the current year based on a number of assumptions due to the delays in the Provincial budget being tabled. Assumptions included no increase in funding, growth in student enrollment, and elimination of the classroom improvement fund and nutrition program. School staffing was also capped at 95% of a school's budget.
 - The Provincial Budget was tabled on October 24, 2019, and left a funding gap despite the conservative budgeting by EIPS, due to cuts like the elimination of Class Size funding and School Fee Reduction Grants. In addition, EIPS learned insurance premiums for facilities would increase by \$1.5M for the 2019/20 school year. Between the budget shortfall and insurance premium increase, EIPS is looking at a \$5.5M mid-year adjustment.
 - The Board met October 31st to review the Budget and determine how to make the midyear adjustments. The Board will be using \$3.7M from its unallocated reserves leaving a reserve of only \$2.6M (\$4M was previously determined to be the minimum prudent reserve). The Board is reversing its commitment to items that were expected to be funded from allocated reserves (i.e. air conditioning in modulars, "Off to a Good Start" program for new teachers). The Board is also calling back all central department carry forwards, including the Governance budget, except for Supports for Students.

For the 2019/20 year, the allowable carry-forward for schools will be reduced to a maximum of 1%. These measures mean that there will be minimal to no effect to students in the classroom.

- The Board will begin working on plans to address the reduction to education funding for the next three years. \$8.2B will remain the Provincial budget for the next three years despite 15K more students entering schools each year in Alberta. Wages are by far the biggest expense so staffing is where cuts will need to be seen in 2020/21, with the hope that will be absorbed with retirements and possibly provisional staff layoffs. The Board is advocating with Minister to have funding formula shared in advance of budget announcements to allow better budgeting by the Board. There will be no way to avoid larger class sizes, which may impact capacity of teachers to lead clubs/teams/activities/etc. so parents may want to keep thinking about how parents may be able to fill gaps. Parents are encouraged to reach out to their MLAs to share concerns about these budget impacts.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM.

Next Meetings: January 28, February 25, March 24, April 29, May 19