

APA Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 25, 2012

7-9 pm

1. Welcome & Introductions – Current Chair, Lori Miller Pike

Lori Miller Pike, co-chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited everybody to introduce themselves.

2. Adoption of the Agenda and March Minutes — Chair, Lori Miller Pike

Motion: Lori moved to accept the agenda as presented. Heather Rowland seconded the motion. All in favour. No objections. Motion carried.

Motion: Lori moved to accept the minutes as presented. Catherine Vivash seconded the motion. All in favour. No objections. Motion carried.

3. Principal's Report — Principal, Jennie Ucar

Jennie explained that she will provide an update about staffing at the May meeting.

Folk dancing group has been created at the school by a few teachers. They are participating a festival on May 15th off site.

Open house is next week, Wednesday, May 2nd. Information will appear in the Allenbeat tomorrow. The purpose of the open house is not to put on show, but to give parents a window into a day in the life of the school. Parents will be able to see a wide range of teaching and activities. The timetable will remain the same for the day. This will provide everyone opportunities to see what is happening in the various classrooms of the school. Parents are invited to meet in the gym at 9:00 am where they will be introduced to what is happening. From 9:15 to 10:15 am people will be able to visit the classes on the morning schedule. In the afternoon, parents are requested to meet in the gym at 1:00 pm. From 1:15 to 2:15 pm parents will be able to visit the classes on the afternoon schedule.

Jennie mentioned that she received a couple of parents in her office this

week complaining that Allenby parents are blocking their driveway or parking in their driveways on St. Clements. Jennie explained to the parent that they should contact the police. Parents are asked to park where appropriate. There is a lot of parking west of the school. Parents are requested to park away from the school.

There was a lock down drill on Monday of this week. Jennie explained that the drill went well. There will be another *unannounced* drill in the coming months in the afternoon. The students will not be told in advance, with the exception of the afternoon kindergarten students who did not participate in Monday's drill.

A parent posed the question about the length of the school day for kindergarten and the different drop off times for students in kindergarten versus the other grades. Jennie explained that the kindergarten students begin at a different time as their day is shorter than the other students.

Another parent requested better communication from the school around recreational extra-curricular activities, especially track and field start dates. She explained that she did not hear about the track and field tryouts until after it occurred. Jennie explained that the announcements are made each morning and that announcements are made in the gym classes.

The Allenby track meet is next week May 3rd. Several parents commented that their children also did not know about the dates. A parent suggested whether a bulletin board could be set up for posting the announcements. Jennie will look into this.

A parent raised a point about integrating chess in the curriculum. She mentioned that this is happening at another school, i.e. Cottingham. Doug Jones explained that he worked with Chess Institution of Canada at his previous school. The program ran from grades 2 to 6. Jennie explained that the idea of a Chess Club here at Allenby would be great. She will attempt to promote this for next year. A parent explained that she would like to see it connected to the curriculum versus just a club.

4. Treasurer's Report — Treasurer, Stuart Baltman

Stuart explained that the APA net revenues as of March were

\$78585.63 on a cash basis. The next expense is \$50,251.75. Therefore, the forecasted net income is approximately \$50,000 to March.

Motion: To accept the financial statement as presented. Seconded by Lori Miller. All in favour. No objections. Motion carried.

5. **Proposal for New Technology spending for year 2012–2013 and related discussion – Stephen Dawang**

Stephen Dawang presented information on a proposed technology spending up to \$42995.23.

His presentation included the purchase of the following technology:

- *Four Rover Smart Boards and 4 Laptops*
- *Document cameras* – teachers would use their classroom grant and the APA Technology Committee would pay for other half.

A parent explained that this concerns her about matching the grants with APA funds. She suggested that maybe the APA should only purchase 4 instead.

Doug Jones explained that he feels more opting in occurs when there is no need to sign out items in the office. Stephen explained that if teachers are committed to using their grants for document cameras this suggests that the teacher really wants the camera. Discussion ensued about whether teachers should have the ability to roll over their grants from one year to the next.

- *Monitor in the Front Hall* - with rotating exhibit of student work and daily announcements. Plus two digital cameras to assist with capturing student work. Cost of up to \$1000.00. Discussion ensued about the value of the monitor and its potential location at the front entrance of the school. Jennie suggested that the long-term vision may be to place a monitor on each floor.

Total: \$23,075.32 for the above. Stuart enquired whether this includes taxes. Stephen explained that the price includes 6.5% tax as the APA recovers half.

Stephen then also made a proposal for spending on the following items:

- *iPads & Covers* – Stephen suggested that the APA could

purchase from 10 to 30 of these as follows:

10 @ \$398.70 each for a total with 6.5% tax at \$4778.66

15 – broken down as follows: 10 @ \$398.70 and 5@ \$419.70 for a total with 6.5% tax at \$7279.81

20 @ \$398.70 each for a total with 6.5% tax at \$9557.31

30 @ \$398.70 each for a total with 6.5% tax at \$14335.97

A parent enquired whether purchase of a set of iPads would come with training from Apple for the teachers.

A parent enquired about the change of course from netbooks to iPads. Stephen explained that the two have different functions.

A parent enquired about the use of the iPad and impacts of technology on student learning. Doug Jones explained that the 'jury is still out' on this. He explained that the TDSB presently has a mobile computing initiative.

A parent enquired about the equity of the technology resource. She enquired as to which teachers, students, and classes have access to the technology. She also enquired as to what the objectives of the technology were. Discussion ensued. It was indicated that the list of teachers that have opted to have a Smart Board is available and was presented at a previous APA meeting during the Technology in the Classroom Teacher Presentation.

Another parent enquired about the offer made by Avy – the Manager of Apple Education around piloting a set of iPads at Allenby. Jennie explained that one could start with 10 and run the pilot at the same time.

Another parent expressed concern about using APA funds on technology versus other items that could be used to support education and learning. Lori presented information from a survey of parents from a few years ago. Please see *APA Surplus Spending Suggestions: Parent Preferences from November APA Meeting* document attached to the last page of these minutes.

Stephen explained that at the end of the abovementioned meeting there had been a vote held.

A parent enquired whether the APA can save the funds for next year and not necessarily spend the funds this year. Another parent explained that it is necessary to look at best practices and research around technology. Lori explained that parents suggest that should spend as we raise it.

Another parent enquired about the need to push money forward for big projects. Another parent explained that there would need to be targeted fundraising for targeted spending.

Jennie explained that she attended a presentation today with Karen Grosse. She explained that the following had resonated with her:

- i. Good pedagogy should drive the technology
- ii. What do you think is really most important things for students to learn in school? What will engage students in school?

She explained that it is challenging to determine how to spend the money, but that consideration should be given to the above ideas.

Lori proceed to read out the results of the above mentioned APA survey.

Lori posed the following question: Where do we want to be in three years? Some discussion ensued.

Stephen Dawang put forward the following motions:

Motion: To spend up to \$20,000 for four roving Smart Boards and 4 laptops with the understanding that the school will cover the costs of peripherals.

Motion: To spend up to \$2,500 on up to 8 document cameras.

Motion: To spend up to \$1,000 on one monitor and 2 digital cameras with the school to cover the installation costs.

Motion: To spend up to \$5,000 on up to 10 iPads.

6. Committee Updates

Public Awareness/Schools:

Educational Assistants in English in Kindergarten being Reduced – A request from another local parents association was sent to the APA requesting that the APA take a position and forward a letter to the TDSB about the reduction of EAs in the kindergarten English stream. Discussion ensued as to whether the APA should take a stance on this policy. Parents were encouraged to write a letter to the TDSB and the Ministry if they are concerned about this.

Space Accommodation Review – There has been no new information forthcoming on this topic.

Community Awareness:

Speaker Series – Another speaker Alex Russell, a psychologist who has published *Drop the Worry Ball*, has offered to speak to Allenby parents in for free. The confirmed date is **Thursday, May 24th from 7:00 to 9:00 pm** in the library.

Fun Fair – Mark your calendars as the Fun Fair is scheduled for June 9th from noon to 4:00 pm.

7. Open Positions and Volunteer needs for 2012–2013

Lori explained that all positions are open as follows:

Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, Fundraising Director, Communications Director, Public Awareness Director, School Programs Director, Health & Safety Director. Lori explained that she will be stepping down next year. She explained that many of the executive positions presently operate with two directors that work together and encouraged individuals to consider this. A parent enquired about which executive members wish to return next year. Lori explained that all positions are open.

8. Open Questions:

A parent explained that a teacher had told him that the wireless will be shut down on the non-imaged computers and that the wireless is temporarily down in the FOS. Doug Jones explained that he has heard that the wifi would be up and running in a few days.

APA Surplus Spending Suggestions: Parent Preferences from November APA Meeting

Under \$5K

- ✓ Funding the purchase of additional band and string instruments (8)
- ✓ Financial support for a sister-school council (3)
- ✓ Bike racks (2 yes, 1 no)

No support:

- School store
- Allenby gear to give to students
- Vending machines (10 no)

\$5-50K

- ✓ Sports equipment (5 yes)
- ✓ Smart boards (6 yes)
- ✓ New basketball hoops, repaint track, games lines (4 yes)
- ✓ Provide agendas, pay for field trips (2 yes)
- ✓ Breakfast club (1 yes)
- ✓ Buy books to replace photocopying (1 yes)
- ✓ Sports uniforms (1 yes)

No support:

- Classroom furniture
- Signage
- Produce/purchase smaller, less bulky student agendas
- Vandalism prevention
- Produce a school show for everyone to participate in
- Automated solution for APA directory
- Large community art project

Over \$50K

- ✓ Playground equipment (level kindergarten playground too?) (15 yes)
- ✓ Security: cc cameras and 2-way intercoms (6 yes)
- ✓ Pool fund (6 yes)
- ✓ Resurface track (5 yes)
- ✓ Renovate stage, include new lighting and sound system (3 yes)
- ✓ Astro-turf (3 yes)
- ✓ Computers: provide state-of-the-art applications in the classroom (3 yes)
- ✓ Gym: install 2 ceiling fans (2 yes)
- ✓ Improvements to washrooms (1 yes)
- ✓ Crossing guard (1 yes)
- ✓ Green roof (over lunch room?) (1 yes)
- ✓ Renovate library (eg. new carpet) (1 yes)

No support:

- Electronic speed signs
- Class helpers/assistants
- Prevent hillside erosion
- Renovate staff room
- Playground lights (1 no)
- Fundraise less (3 no)