

APA Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 28th, 2012

7-9 pm

1. Welcome & Introductions – Chair, Lori Miller Pike

Lori Miller asked for everyone to introduce themselves.

2. Adoption of the Agenda and October Minutes – Chair, Lori Miller Pike

Motion: Lori moved to accept the agenda as presented. Paula Riczker seconded. All in favour. No objections. Motion carried.

Motion: Lori moved to adopt the October minutes as presented. Paula Riczker seconded. All in favour. No objections. Motion carried.

3. Principal's Report - Jennie Ucar

School Library: Jennie explained that the school library is presently closed. The library is undergoing a renewal process. The materials in the library are being weeded. Materials in the library are judged for weeding as follows:

- materials that are outdated or in poor condition are removed;
- materials are checked for curriculum connections and up to date content. If the material does not support the curriculum or is outdated, it is removed;
- if the material is current and still can be used in classrooms and is no longer wanted in the library, the teachers are requested to move these materials to the classroom.

Window Replacement Project: Jennie explained that the window replacement project has begun. She explained that there have been a few glitches to date with regard to issues around measurements and thus the process is going slower than expected; however, once the process begins it appears move quickly through each classroom. It is predicted that this will take 6 to 8 weeks. Jennie suspects that it may take longer than predicted.

Stop Gap Foundation Assembly: an assembly will take place this Friday afternoon at school. A current Allenby teacher has a brother who is a paraplegic. He started the Stop Gap Foundation to ensure access to people in wheelchairs. He will speak to Allenby students to outline his personal experiences.

Anti-Bullying Week: This week is anti-bullying week at Allenby. Teachers have been working on anti-bullying through literature, lesson plans, etc. Jennie explained that young children have difficulty differentiating between *telling and tattling*. Jennie will send out a message in the Allenbeat this week. She explained that when a child is going to be hurt, then the student must tell. Jennie requested that parents have a conversation at home about when it is necessary to report.

A parent enquired whether these messages were being communicated in the kindergarten classrooms. Jennie explained that a large part of the kindergarten program is interaction with peers and that this was definitely happening in all classrooms in the school.

EQAO Results At Allenby: Doug Jones explained that the detailed report at the school level is 50 pages in length and that he would present some of these details.

Grade 3 Reading, Writing & Mathematics: Allenby students at or above the provincial standard results were 81%, 85%, 83% respectively for the school year 2011-2012. He explained that Allenby scores are well above both the board and the provincial averages.

Grade 6 Reading, Writing, & Mathematics: Allenby students at or above the provincial standard results were 95%, 84%, 86% respectively for the school year 2011-2012. He explained that Allenby scores are well above both the board and the provincial averages.

A parent wanted to know how Allenby compares to local schools. Doug explained that the trend at Allenby in mathematics is approximately 86%. He suggested that we could potentially compare Allenby to local schools; however, the difference between a few percentage points could potentially be one or two students only since only 88 students wrote the grade 6 EQAO. Doug explained that Allenby's administrators and teachers are interested in the school's ability to improve and not on how neighbouring schools are performing.

Another parent asked whether Allenby is doing better than our sister schools. Doug explained that the EQAO data does not inform the administration and teachers about this. He explained that the data supplied to Allenby outlines the questions that the students performed poorly on. He explained that the administration and the teachers work to analyse the data and take steps to improve.

Doug then explained the Grade 3 Reading results. Of the 54 Allenby grade 3 students who wrote the EQAO reading test, 38 of these students or 70% scored at Level 3, i.e. the provincial standard. He further explained that 6 students or 11% scored at Level 4. Therefore, 81% of Allenby grade 3 students scored at or above the provincial standard on reading. He then explained that 7 students or 13% scored at Level 2 and that 2 students or 4% scored at Level 1. There was 1 student or 2% that did not demonstrate enough evidence to achieve Level 1.

Doug explained that teachers do not teach to the test and that the test is designed to evaluate what is outlined in the grade 3 curriculum documents.

Doug then presented the demographic data for Allenby students. He explained that in the 2011/2012 grade 3 group of 101 Allenby students, 78% of them have been at Allenby since kindergarten. 12% of the students entered Allenby 2 years prior to the assessment, 6% 1 year prior and 4% entered in the year of the assessment.

Doug further presented the Grade 6 demographic data, explaining that of the 88 grade 6 students 94% of the students writing had been at Allenby since kindergarten. He also explained that 3% entered Allenby in the year prior to the assessment and 2% entered the year of the assessment.

Doug explained that the students who attend the same school do better than children who transfer between schools.

A parent pointed out that she is concerned about the data. She explained that the numbers are less than 90%. This suggests that there are approximately 14 students in grade 3 not meeting the provincial standard. A parent enquired whether the data is affected by the attrition of the French Immersion program. She enquired whether students who leave the French program in grades 2 & 3 are prepared to write the grade 3 test. Doug was not certain as to how the students who left the French program scored on the test.

Jennie explained that the results change from grades 3 to 6. A parent enquired as to whether these students are tracked. Doug explained that these students are tracked. He explained that some of these students have an IEP for example.

A parent enquired whether the girls are underperforming in math – i.e. below level. Jennie stated there is less of a gap between girls and boys in math. A parent enquired whether this is addressed in the classroom. Jennie explained that this is. Jennie explained that the gap in math for girls needs to be examined year over year. Doug explained that the data for boys suggests that boys do better in math and less well in reading and writing in general.

A parent explained that she would like to see strategies of how to work with boys and girls around reading, writing and mathematics addressed at an APA meeting. Another parent enquired whether it is necessary to address this issue. Doug explained that Allenby does want to address the

differences in learning between boys and girls. He explained that that staff at Allenby does spend time working on this. He also explained that there are reasons as to why boys and girls perform differently and then he pointed out some of the data that the students self-reported on the EQAO student questionnaire located on pages 25 through 35 of the test results.

Doug explained that it would be possible to run a session during the APA meeting around multiple intelligences. A parent explained that she struggled with math and that she dropped out of math owing to lack of confidence. She wondered whether teachers can address the different styles of learning. Doug explained that teachers are addressing the different learning styles and the knowledge and understanding. Discussion ensued. Doug reiterated his offer to run a session on multiple intelligences.

A parent enquired what is happening in the school now that the EQAO results have been received and analysed. Jennie explained that there is a focus in the school to move the children who are on the cusp of the Level 3 to 4, etc.

Another parent enquired about strategies and whether methods other than the EQAO were being used to assess where students are at. She further enquired whether it was possible to inform the parents where each child is ranked with respect to the rest of the class. Jennie explained that such information is not reported.

Doug then went on to explain from the self-reported Assessment of Reading, Writing and Mathematics, Primary & Junior Divisions, students appear to feel that they like math, but the data indicated: 76% of the students read the whole problem first to make sure they know what they are suppose to do. Of this 76%, 88% of girls self-reported doing so, whereas only 68% of boys self-reported doing so. Doug also pointed that 22% of students self-reported that they talk about the math work that they do in school. Of this 20% were girls and 23% were boys.

A discussion ensued about data over time and the examination of data from one year on one test. A parent enquired whether there could be a meeting to discuss gender strategies. She also wanted to know about the teaching of multiplication tables. She enquired whether students are expected to know the multiplication tables. She explained that students were not expected in grade 3, but are required in grade 4 to know the tables. Jennie explained that there is limited time in the classroom to do drill work. Another parent explained that there are gaps between grade 4 and grade 5 math. She explained that the emphasis in grade 4 on mental math, but in grade 5 students must know the time tables.

For the public report, see <http://www.egao.com/results/>. Select the grade – i.e. 3 & 6, the year – i.e. 2011/2012, press view results. Scroll down the page and select the link to the Board and School. Using the drop down menus select Toronto DSB and Allenby Jr PS.

4. Treasurer's Report – Stuart Baltman & Andrew Heitelman

Stuart Baltman explained that the APA accounts on a cash basis and that this report is a formality. The APA financials for the month ending October 2012 were: net revenues of \$69203.57, net expenses of \$6469.74, and net income of \$62733.83.

He explained that there were significant revenues from After 4 program that have been collected, but that no payments have been paid to the vendors of these programs to date. His forecast is that there will be a \$50K instead of \$38K that he predicted in September. This comes from the revenue generated from Big Night Out, which garnered approximately \$30K with approximately \$7K expenses for approximate revenue of \$23K. He also explained that parental contributions to date are approximately \$21K, up approximately \$1K from the budgeted line item of \$20K. The APA also received a HST return for fiscal year ending in August 2011 of approximately \$2K. Stuart explained that the APA has been very conservative with predicted revenue generation from the fundraisers. Stuart presented the following motion:

Motion: Adopt financial statements for two months ended October 31st, 2012 as presented. Shannon Philips seconded. All in favour. No objections. Motion carried.

5. Hush Up Follow Up – Questions & Answers

Bonnie Joynt explained that at the last meeting she had a guest come in to speak to the parents about Hush Ups and Sound Systems. She explained that the Hush Ups look similar to blue tennis balls that are placed on the legs of the chairs. She explained that students who are moving in chairs are creating a background noise that distracts students from learning. She explained that Hush Ups eliminate this noise. She explained that she has been researching auditory development and noise in classrooms. She explained that students who sit at the back of the classroom will automatically hear 50% less than a student sitting at the front. The cost to outfit all 33 classes with Hush Ups at \$219 per class set would be approximately \$8200 including tax. Bonnie welcomed questions.

A parent enquired about the number of seats versus classes. Bonnie explained that the motion put forward would be up to \$8200. She explained that some classes have only 20 seats, whereas other classes have more than 30.

A parent enquired about the difference between tennis balls and Hush Ups. Bonnie explained that tennis balls emit a toxic chemical and that they come off easily. Another parent explained that the gas or chemical is toxic. Bonnie explained that the Hush Ups are not toxic and do not come off the chair legs.

Another parent enquired whether there is a competitor for Hush Ups. Bonnie did not know this information. Another parent enquired to the life expectancy of the Hush Ups. Doug explained that the guest speaker explained in October that this is the only brand that she recommended.

A parent asked who installs the Hush Ups. Bonnie explained that she would welcome parent volunteers to help with this. Another parent wanted to know whether the Hush Ups travel with students who have been provided with these as part of an IEP. According to Bonnie, each child with such an IEP has been allotted two sets and when the child moves the next class will get a new set of Hush Ups.

Another parent asked about timelines. Bonnie explained that if a motion goes forward then the next meeting will be a vote. Bonnie explained that a survey was taken with the teachers where 18 of 20 responded. All 18 wanted Hush Ups.

Lori asked for Stuart to reiterate the APA surplus amount. Stuart explained that there is a predicted surplus of \$50153.50. He further explained that this amount does not include the \$10K that has been earmarked for the potential field enhancements.

Bonnie Joynt put forward the following motion:

Motion: For the APA to spend up to \$8200 on the purchase of Hush Ups for the entire school.

A parent enquired whether it would be possible to equip half the class. Lori explained that this will be decided once the parents vote on the issue.

6. Co-Curricular Pause & APA Funds – Christine Helsdon

Space Issue – Christine explained that there is no further update on this issue at this time.

Co-Curricular Pause: Christine explained that parents were given the approval to move forward on the permit and insurance for use of the gym on Tuesday and Thursday mornings for grade 6 students. These students have been invited to try out tomorrow in the gym for volleyball. Both boys and girls have been invited. She has heard that both grade 5 & 6 may show up tomorrow. She explained that this is a community team for Allenby students. She explained that usually the budget for the permit and insurance is paid for by the school. She explained that she has spoken to the gym teacher and has been given the go ahead. The cost of the permit and the insurance is

approximately \$300. She has *heard through the grape vine* that many kids may attend tomorrow. The \$300 provides insurance for 20 to 30 people. She explained that she would like to put forward a motion for the APA to support up to \$500 to cover permit and insurance costs.

A parent enquired about whether putting forward such a motion would open the flood gates if the co-curricular pause continues. Christine explained that the key is the volunteers and that we have parents who are willing to do this. Many parents are willing and want to coach. She suggested that if other parents come forward to apply for additional permits and insurance that additional motions for up to \$1000 can be put forward at subsequent APA meetings.

Christine explained that Wanless PS has a volleyball team and the parental association has paid for permits and insurance. The students that have made the team are paying for the coach. The Wanless team is comprised of only 12 students.

She explained that she is trying to manage the demand for co-curriculars and that she is also attempting to be inclusive. A parent enquired how this is going to be perceived by the teachers. – Christine explained that she felt that Mr. G seems okay with this. She suggested that the teachers seem to be supportive. She reiterated that there appears that there will be many students who turn up tomorrow morning to participate in the volleyball. She is concerned that some grade 5s may have heard the announcements and that some grade 5s may attend as well. There was discussion about the equity issues if some grade 5s have an opportunity when others do not.

A parent enquired as to whether the parents whose children are on the volleyball team pay. Christine stated that some parents feel that they support the APA and that the APA should support the volleyball team. She reiterated what has happened at Wanless. A parent explained that other parents have not been given the funds. She explained that she is willing to do the paper work to make this happen. She suggested that every parent who is willing to do the leg work should be supported by the APA.

The question was posed by a parent what would happen if the \$500 doesn't cover the number of students. Christine stated that if the cost exceeds \$500 then she will come back next month and request more money. She also stated that the maximum number of grade 6 students is 80 and therefore there cannot be more than 80 students.

A parent asked whether a child can potentially be turned away. Christine stated that the program will run until March break. She also explained that volleyball as a team sport is fairly inexpensive. The key to the success of this team, according to Christine, is volunteers. She explained that there will be a need for three volunteer coaches.

Another parent enquired about the limited gym space and what would happen if other parents potentially wanted to permit the gym. Christine explained that a parent can also apply for a permit for Monday mornings. Lori explained that there is potential for more parents to come forward to want to run other teams as well.

A parent enquired whether it would be possible for the parents of the volleyball team to cover the costs above \$500 if there is a need for additional insurance. Christine explained that \$500 is 1% of the APA present surplus. A parent explained that if this is our first experience dealing with co-curricular and enquired whether there is potential for more people to come forward to ask for more APA funds to cover the permit and insurance costs.

Shannon Philips spoke to the After4 program and the request being made by parents for more sports to be included in this program. She explained that the gym is presently permitted for Monday, Tuesday and Wednesdays. She explained that the following will be potentially be added to the winter program: soccer, tennis, and kanga kids. There also may be ballet on Wednesdays.

Another parent asked for clarification around the After4 program and the need for permits and/or insurance. She wanted to know what the cost is for such permits/insurance. Shannon explained that the APA needs to have permits and that this is organized by Jennie Ucar. There are non-fee

permits. The main office completes the permit application. The vendor for each program provides the insurance. The parents who subscribe to the program pay the vendor. Therefore, the parent pays for the insurance through their purchase of the activity from the vendor. Jennie explained that if the school is using the space for school purposes there is no cost.

Christine explained that at the first two meetings many parents expressed their concerns about the co-curricular pause. She explained that spirit day has been organized by the parents.

A parent expressed need for criteria around what the APA funds. She expressed concern around the setting of precedent. Christine suggested she was not worried about this.

Another parent expressed concern about the number of students that would benefit from the \$500 that would be spent to support a volleyball team. She enquired whether the parents of the students could fund this. Christine explained that she felt that if a parent is willing to volunteer and take on the liability, that this is great. She hopes that she will see more requests for other sports and volunteers coming forward. She reiterated that the \$500 is only 0.8% of our surplus.

Another parent pointed out that this is the final year for this group of grade 6 students. She expressed that these grade 6 students are interested in sport. Lori explained that we may be confusing issues around having sport and funding grade 6s. A parent enquired whether this will happen if the APA do not vote in favour of this. A parent explained that after an hour of discussion that she now felt that she should support this. Another parent stated that personally he would like to fund it but concerned about number of students who could potentially show up. Christine mentioned that if not enough children in grade 6 show up, that she will include students from other grades.

Motion: APA to reimburse up to \$500 to cover the cost of permits and insurance related to volleyball experience for the students. Seconded by Lori Miller. 12 in favour. 0 opposed. 3 abstained. Motion carried.

7. Committee Updates

Owing to the lateness of the evening, it was decided that all committee updates would occur at the next APA meeting; however, Shannon Philips mentioned that a Survey of Parents will appear in next Allenbeat.

8. Open Question Time

This section of the meeting did not occur owing to the lateness of the evening.

Meeting Adjourned