

ALLENBY PARENTS ASSOCIATION MEETING

December 16, 2013

MINUTES

Held: Allenby Jr. Public School Library

Meeting called to order at 7:00pm with the following agenda:

1. Welcome & Introductions – Chair Paula Riczker
2. Adoption of the Agenda – Chair Paula Riczker
3. Adoption of November 2013 APA Meeting Minutes – Chair Paula Riczker
4. Principal’s Report – Cate Spidle
5. Treasurer’s Report – Scott Larin
6. Field Update & Motions - Shannon Phillips & Gillian Uy
7. Technology Update & Motion - Lisa Parker
8. Motion for Traffic & Safety Program - Robin Halpern
9. Motion for Digital Keyboard – Cate Spidle
10. Motion for Math Manipulatives for Primary Grades – Cate Spidle
11. Committee Updates
12. Open Question Session

1. Welcome & Introductions – Chair Paula Riczker

Paula Riczker welcomes everyone. Everyone in attendance introduced themselves.

2. Adoption of the Agenda– Chair Paula Riczker

Paula Riczker moved that the Agenda for the December 2013 APA Meeting as posted on the APA website be amended. The order of certain items was changed to accommodate the availability of presenters. As well, two motions were added.

Shannon Phillips seconded the motion to amend.

MOTION CARRIED. (Unanimously passed)

Paula Riczker moved to adopt the amended agenda.

Lisa Spiegel seconded.

MOTION CARRIED. (Unanimously passed)

3. Adoption of the November 2013 Minutes – Chair Paula Riczker

Paula Riczker moved that the minutes from November 2013 APA meeting as posted on the APA website be accepted.

Stuart Baltman seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED. (Unanimously passed)

4. Principal’s Report – Cate Spidle

Cate Spidle advised that December has been a very busy month, starting with a Traffic Safety meeting with City Councillor Karen Stinz, Ms. Stinz's assistant Adah Pettingall, the Principal of John Ross Robertson PS and the Vice Principal of Ledbury PS on December 2nd.

There have been several different professional development sessions offered for staff both centrally (Beginning Teachers, Taking It Global, Reading, Math) and internally at Allenby (Full Day Kindergarten, Technology).

The construction for the two new classrooms and the retrofits in existing classrooms is scheduled to begin over the December break. Fencing will be installed around the hording area.

Project Giveback has been happening again in December for our grade 4 students. As well, the gym was full on December 10th with the dress rehearsal for SHOWCASE #1 in the morning and the junior students experiencing Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" first-hand in the afternoon (presented by the Children's Opera Company).

On December 11th, some Principals from neighbouring schools (Armour Heights PS, Lawrence Park SS, John Ross Robertson PS, John Wanless Jr PS) visited Allenby PS in the morning. Of course, also on December 11th was the amazing first SHOWCASE for 2013-2014 in the evening! Cate gave her thanks to the teachers and students who put in so much time and energy into the performances.

Skating has started. Grade 1, grade 2 and some grade 3 students enjoyed skating on December 12th after a very cold walk to the arena. Students in grades 4 and 5 and the remaining grade 2/3 classes will be taking their skates to the arena on December 17th.

There will be two Sing-A-Longs this year in the gym (Wednesday AM and Thursday PM) so that all of our kindergarten classes will be able to participate. The last day of school in 2013 for the students is Pyjama Day (Thursday, December 19th).

In response to an inquiry about Mrs. Marshall and Mrs. Gold, Cate Spidle advised that they each continue to recover. Each of the Gr.1-6 classes will be participating in making quilt squares to be made into quilts for Mrs. Marshall and Mrs. Gold.

5. Treasurer Report – Scott Larin

Scott Larin reminded the attendees that the APA's financial statements are posted on the APA website. He then presented the November 2013 Results:

- Ending November 2013, the APA had a Net Revenue of \$57,900. Big revenue drivers were: Big Night Out, which had ending November 30, 2013, a net income of \$17,500, the Annual Donation Drive, which had ending November 30, 2013, a net income of \$16,700, and the After 4 Program, which had ending November 30, 2013, a net income of \$4,400.

- Ending November 2013, the APA had a Net Profit of \$49,350.
- At present, the APA has surplus (cash) of \$132,400 and a tax receivable of \$9,400.

Scott then presented some draft fundraising results for December 2013 (half month only).

- As of the meeting, Big Night Out raised \$17,900 net; the Annual Donation Drive raised \$17,100 net, and the After 4 Program raised \$3,600 net.

Scott advised that the APA has spent some money on technology previously approved through past votes. This includes 35 laptops and 5 DVD drives for the school.

By the meeting, 15 teachers had submitted expenses to be reimbursed for Classroom Enrichment Grants (December 31, 2013 is the deadline). As well, 9 teachers had submitted expenses for Scientists in the Classroom, and long term items have been purchased for the gym and sports programs.

A parent inquired whether all the teachers were aware about the Enrichment Grants. Cate indicated that all teachers have been advised and that some teachers are still in the process of submitting their requests.

Another parent requested that the APA Budget as approved and the actuals and forecasts be presented each month at the APA meeting. Scott agreed to do so.

In response to a question regarding Big Night Out, Scott Larin advised that the net revenue from Big Night Out is ahead of what was budgeted in the 2013-2014 APA budget (we have raised to date \$17,900 and we budgeted \$12,525). For the Annual Donation Drive, the APA budgeted a net revenue of \$20,790 and the draft December 2013 results indicate that we have raised \$17,100. At present, Scott is forecasting net revenue of \$10,000 from Pizza Lunch and our APA budgeted revenue for Pizza Lunch is \$7750. Finally, for 2013-2014, the APA budgeted a net revenue of \$5000 from After 4, and the APA has raised already approximately \$3,600 from the fall After 4 Program.

A parent asked about whether LTO teachers are aware of the Scientists in the School Grant. Cate Spidle confirmed that they have been told.

Scott Larin moved that the November 2013 financial results as presented be accepted. Lori Miller Pike seconded the motion.

MOTION CARRIED. (Unanimously passed)

Scott Larin then presented the Forecast for the 2013/2014 Fiscal Year. The forecast is based on actuals where available (otherwise based on budget numbers). The forecast is for a net revenue of \$73,200, a net income of -\$33,600, and a planned/projected surplus of \$68,200.

A parent asked whether the APA ever discussed an appropriate surplus for the APA to keep. Scott Larin indicated that he has spoken with other Parent Associations/ Councils. Some carry \$5000 and some carry \$10000. We have some timing differences with other

Parent Associations regarding tax filing. There was a discussion among the attendees about whether this was an item for another APA meeting for further discussion.

6. Field Update & Motions - Shannon Phillips & Gillian Uy

Shannon Phillips and Gillian Uy gave a slide presentation on the Allenby Field and Playground. The slide presentation is available on the APA website.

Highlights include:

- TDSB plans to pay for and install artificial turf at Allenby in the summer of 2016. This includes design, materials, labour, installation, maintenance and replacement of the turf.
- To have turf installed earlier would require the APA to secure the full amount of the turf (\$450,000). Discussions have occurred with Trustee Howard Goodman regarding bridge financing and the North Toronto Soccer Club regarding a funding partnership. The North Toronto Soccer Club would require 2014 installation, and the TDSB is unable to actively pursue a long term partnership. Therefore, a partnership with the North Toronto Soccer Club appears unlikely.
- Additional funding for Field/Playground improvements may also be available from the City of Toronto and community agencies.
- APA Parent Survey 2012/13 results confirm that the Allenby community is very dissatisfied with the current field and playground, and wants to prioritize the spending of APA dollars on related improvements.
- A master plan by a TDSB-approved landscape architect is required if a multi-phase Field/Playground initiative is to be pursued.
- TDSB will assist with funding the design aspect of the master plan a year earlier than it planned (e.g. 2014 instead of 2015), but solely for the artificial turf component; APA would be required to pay for the design aspect of the remaining playground enhancements (e.g. track, multisport court, greening, shaded areas, seating, basketball nets, playscape improvements etc.)
- TDSB has suggested Victor Ford and Associates, which is a landscape architect and planner. The firm has been involved in field discussions in the past and worked on other TDSB projects.
- A master plan, which includes consultation and detailed design work for main and kindergarten playgrounds, is \$6000; the TDSB would cover the field aspect of the design (part of the \$6000)

Questions were asked about the potential of bridge financing, and what the advantage would be of bridge financing. The response was that the field's condition has been a pressing issue for a number of years. Bridge financing would move up the date of the turf installation and therefore alleviate faster the pressure on the field. However, given the timing, even with bridge financing it is unlikely that the turf would be installed before Summer 2015. Cate Spidle advised that the TDSB's Budget for 2015-2016 starts September 2015.

Shannon Phillips tabled the following motion:

Motion: to release the \$10,000 in segregated funds that was reserved in September 2012 to demonstrate the APA's commitment to playground and/or field improvements.

Seconded by Lisa Spiegel.

Shannon Phillips tabled the following motion to be voted on at the January 2014 APA Meeting:

Motion: to spend up to \$6000 on landscape architect comprehensive planning and design services for Allenby Jr. Public School's main and kindergarten playgrounds

Seconded by Lori Pike

7. **Technology Update & Motion - Lisa Parker**

Lisa Parker reminded the attendees to keep a look out for shops that support Allenby financially by looking for special Allenby supporting stickers in the shop windows.

Lisa Parker did Technology Update Presentation:

- In May 2013, a motion was passed to spend up to \$18,000 for 5 Smart Boards, 5 Laptops and 5 External DVD drives. The school would purchase an additional set. Another motion was passed in May 2013 to spend up to \$18,000 for 30 Mini-HP Notebooks (with the school purchasing the appropriate cart and wireless hub).
- The Mini Notebooks and Cart have been purchased and delivered (\$17,956)
- The 5 Laptops and External DVD drives were purchased and delivered (\$3,259) but the 48" SMARTBoards have been discontinued by SMART therefore SMARTBoards have not been purchased and \$14,741 has not been spent.
- As such, alternative technology appropriate to the size of Allenby's classrooms has been explored. The alternative SMART technology is the SMART Interactive LightRaise Projector (LRP). The projector combines touch capability with SMARTnotebook. The "board" is no longer required. There is an issue about installation as the TDSB approved reseller offers the LRP on a cart, which SMART does not support. SMART supports the LRP being mounted (allows optimal reliability).
- There are 11 classrooms (plus the two new classrooms for 2014-2015) that do not have classroom specific technology.
- Discussions between with the TDSB approved reseller of the SMART technology and the TDSB are occurring regarding the installation questions.
- Pending further resolution of the installation issue, there was discussion about tabling a motion to increase the technology budget previously approved to cover the increased cost of the new SMART model. There was also discussion about tabling a second motion to return the amounts approved for spending on SMART technology in May 2013 to the budget if it was determined that the alternative model was not appropriate for Allenby's needs (due to installation issues). It was determined that the second motion to return funds did not need to be tabled because funds not spent automatically are returned to surplus. Lori Pike

reminded the attendees that a motion passed to spend APA money is an authorization to spend; not a requirement to spend.

Lisa Parker tabled the following motion to be voted on at the January 2014 APA Meeting:

Motion: to increase the 2013-2014 APA technology budget by up to \$4000 to augment the funding available in the technology budget as voted on at the May 2013 APA meeting to allow the purchase of Smart Technology for 5 classrooms

Seconded by Lori Pike

Cate Spidle agreed that if the motion passes Allenby PS will purchase interactive technology for one additional classroom.

One parent suggested that if the APA wanted to complete the technology spending plan (e.g. classroom specific technology for every classroom) then we need to go through the budget with a “fine tooth comb” to find funds.

8. Motion for Traffic & Safety Program - Robin Halpern

Robin Halpern tabled the following motion:

Motion: to amend the current APA budget to include up to \$900 for expenses related to walking promotion and safety concerns regarding traffic around the school

Seconded by Mike Cacciavillani

MOTION CARRIED. (Unanimously passed)

Robin Halpern then highlighted some of the initiatives that she has implemented regarding traffic and walking promotion, including the traffic signs reminding people about the Kiss N Ride, the traffic and walking board near the lunchroom, and the Smelly Sneaker and Wacky Walker awards for the children in the primary and junior grades on Walking Wednesday.

To date, \$150 on traffic and safety initiatives, which include the movie tickets for the Kiss N Ride raffle winner.

9. Motion for Digital Keyboard - Cate Spidle

Cate Spidle advised that Mrs. Bannerman (Music Teacher) wants to replace the existing two acoustic pianos with a digital piano. It is no longer possible to tune properly the very old acoustic pianos at Allenby, and once tuned they quickly lose their tuning. They need to be tuned several times each year (\$100 each time). Also the sustain pedal on one piano is broken, and the soundboard is cracked. Because the pianos are not tuned properly it is difficult for the children to sing in tune when the piano is used to accompany the choirs and classes, and it distracts from their performances. Digital pianos never need to be tuned. A digital piano can easily be moved from the music room to the gym for a performance so only one is required. The sound quality of a digital piano can be equal to that of a concert grand. Mrs. Bannerman has called several suppliers and the lowest price

is \$2400 plus taxes. The remaining quotes were \$100-200 more and she is confident that \$2400 plus taxes would be sufficient for Allenby's needs.

Cate Spidle tabled the following motion to be voted on at the January 2014 APA meeting:

Motion: to spend up to \$2400 plus applicable taxes for a digital piano for Allenby Jr. P.S.

Seconded by Paula Riczker

10. Motion for Math Manipulatives - Cate Spidle

Cate Spidle discussed having the APA purchase math manipulatives for the primary grades to support the teaching of geometry. A math manipulative is an object which is designed so that a learner can perceive some mathematical concept by manipulating it.

Some parents questioned whether this was a purchase that should be made through a Classroom Enrichment Grant, or through any funds that are directed to the Principal's Discretionary Fund based on Classroom Enrichment Grants that are not used by teachers. In response to a question from a parent, Cate Spidle indicated that there are other pressing classroom needs for which any money in the Discretionary Fund would be used (e.g. there are certain new classrooms in comparison with more established classrooms which could use additional supplies).

Cate Spidle presented the following motion to be voted on at the January 2014 APA meeting:

Motion: to spend up to \$2000 for math manipulatives for the primary grades to teach geometry.

Seconded by Lisa Spiegel

11. Committee Updates

(i) School Programs- Shannon Phillips

Shannon advised that some After 4 programs for Winter are full but other still have availability.

10. Open Question Session:

No questions.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Next APA Meeting: Wednesday, January 29, 2014 at 7pm in Allenby Jr. P.S. Library