

# APA Meeting Agenda

## Wednesday, May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2013

### 7-9 pm

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**1. Welcome & Introductions – Andrew Heitelman**

Andrew Heitelman welcomed everyone and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

**2. Adoption of the Agenda and April Minutes – Andrew Heitelman**

Andrew requested an amendment to the Agenda as follows: merge the Principal Report with What is 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning? as Mrs. Ucar will be presenting both.

Andrew presented the following motion:

**Motion:** to accept the agenda as presented with an amendment to indicate merging the Principal Report with What is 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning?. Seconded by Shannon Philips. All in favour. No objections. Motion carried.

Andrew presented the following motion:

**Motion:** to accept the April minutes as posted on the Allenby website. Seconded by Stuart Baltman. All in favour. No objections. Motion carried.

**3. What is 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning? – Jennie Ucar**

Jennie Ucar introduced the idea of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning. Jennie outlined that the presentation tonight would include:

1. How and why Allenby is addressing 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning
2. The shift in teaching and learning practices
3. Examples of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning at Allenby

Jennie introduced and thanked the following teachers for their work at Allenby and attending tonight's presentation: Mme Line, Mr Scott, Mr Hussain, and Mme Payne. Jennie explained that these teachers have agreed to showcase what they are doing in their classrooms around 21<sup>st</sup> century learning. She explained that teachers at Allenby are at different points on a continuum when using technology and around what and how students should learn. A shift is happening in our understanding of the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century learners, and therefore the teaching practices are being to change to meet this shift. Teachers and administration are having conversations about what 21<sup>st</sup> century learning means.

Elizabeth Lau outlined the School Effectiveness Framework set out by the Board and Ministry and that all schools have to work within this framework. She explained that Periodic District Reviews take place. During a District Review the school is monitored for a day by principals and superintendents from other schools and feedback about what is working and how to improve is provided to the school. All aspects of school life is examined, under the headings of:

Learning

Global Education and Learning

Community

Collaboration/Instructional Leadership

Elizabeth explained that teaching and learning incorporates 21<sup>st</sup> century content, learning skills, resources and technology. She showed the video [Shift Happens](#). Elizabeth explained that the video has American statistics; however, it is very applicable to the Canadian educational context around technology use.

Jennie introduced a Ted Talk on education by Ken Robinson entitled [Changing Education Paradigms](#). Only 5 minutes of the 11 minute video was shown owing to time constraints. Jennie explained the main ideas being put forth by Ken Robinson, i.e. that the future is unpredictable, the education system is based on the 19<sup>th</sup> century industrial model - linear, standardized, with predictable outcomes.

Jennie explained that we need to remember that we are teaching children not curriculum. She explained that the teachers are setting and maintaining standards as they are doing grade team planning, moderated marking, and EQAO preparation. She explained that at Allenby conversations are being had about the incorporation of creativity. She explained that teachers are already doing lots of this but it is not totally integrated – it's a continuum. She explained that the teachers and administration are giving themselves permission to be creative.

Elizabeth presented the concept of Global Perspectives as follows:

A personal and local perspective is cultivated so that each student can make relevant links to the curriculum.

A global perspective is developed and presented including:

- Cross disciplinary approach
- Students respect, value and celebrate other cultures.
- A sense of global citizenship is developed and there is an increased awareness of the difference that individual and collective actions can make.
- An understanding of global interdependence and increased awareness of students social and environmental responsibilities.
- Connections among peoples, cultures and environments around the world are understood.
- Students have an informed understanding of justice, human rights and responsibilities.

Elizabeth then introduced Mme Payne.

Mme Payne provided an update of library resources and explained that the library this year has worked to make the materials available that are a little more reflective of the concepts being taught in the school. She explained that there is a display (in the middle of the library) for parents to check out. There has been lots of support for resources from the school and the APA for the students and the teachers. She

has been reaching out to community groups, such as Oxfam, for access to resources that can be used in the classroom as well.

According to Mme Payne, as a teacher-librarian and as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning, her role is to collaborate with other teachers. She collaborated with other teachers this year to create '[SnapGuides](#)'. These are online guides that students created. These were shared instantly, and students received immediate feedback from their peers.

Mr Hussain, then explained that he has been working with Mme Linka this year on [Global Partners](#). This program combines literacy, technology, and global awareness. The curriculum is supplied by Global Partners and the focus this year was on theatre.

The students interact with peers online in different countries. Students at Allenby looked at theatre locally, across Canada, and internationally. The students work to eventually create a theatre and share this with their peers internationally. A parent asked whether this program is being offered across the school and whether other staff can participate. Mr. Hussain and Mme Linka are presently running the program. At the end of the year, there will be a Global Partner's fair to showcase the program and encourage other teachers to be involved.

Jennie posed the question: what is it that we need to address to make better students? She then explained that the role of the teacher is to promote Critical Thinking. She stated that 21<sup>st</sup> century learning is not all about technology; however, technology is a tool that can be used. Jennie used an example of flip chart to discuss teaching critical thinking. For example, inferring is a comprehensive thinking strategy. She explained that teachers are now moving towards increasing the metacognition of students. She provided the following scenario: The teacher engages the class in co-creating the success criteria with the students to get the students to think about their thinking. The teacher is now the 'guide on the side' and no longer the expert at the front of the room. She explained that the process of teaching is changing.

Elizabeth then explained that technology is a tool to help facilitate learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. She explained that other skills are just as important as technology. These important skills include:

communication skills, numeracy skills, and thinking and problem solving.

Jennie then explained that using technology can facilitate collaboration, support life long learning, inquiry, and reflection. She explained that Instruction includes how to assess resources, connect with others and create e-communities and learn about the ethical/legal issues surrounding access and use of information technology. She explained that professional practice, lifeline learning and leadership are modelled through the effective use of digital tools and resources. Policies for the safe, legal and ethical use of digital information and technology are established, modelled and promoted through the proper use of technology and online learning.

Mlle Line was introduced to share her website. She explained that many teachers have classroom websites. She presented her [website](#) and explained that a number of teachers are using *Classroom Jump* as well as other classroom websites. She explained that this is a direct way to communicate with the parents and students. Students can check due dates, as well as use the site to send emails directly to the teacher. A parent asked whether more teachers are using such websites. Mlle Line explained that more Allenby teachers are beginning to use the website. Teachers are collaborating on the website. This is a different way of communicating with parents and the students.

Mlle Line explained that it is important for students to be able to critical analyse digital sources. A large part of using technology is having the ability to access and evaluate sources. Also working on citing sources and providing credit to authors.

A parent asked why choose *Class Jump*. Mlle Line explained that this is free to the teachers. Mme Payne explained that the TDSB licenses software that they promote such as Academic Workspace and Google docs; however, Class Jump is not licensed software but is free for teachers to use.

Elizabeth explained that a shift is occurring in the province of Ontario. She used an example of Language Curriculum, specifically the Achievement Chart. She outlined the four categories of the

Achievement Chart that is becoming more consistent across all grades in Ontario as: Knowledge and understanding (knowledge and understanding of content), Thinking (use of critical and creative thinking skills), Communication (oral, visual, written and media forms and sense of purpose and audience), and Application (application, transfer and making connections).

Mr Scott was introduced. He explained that his grade 1/2 class was invited to partner with Glen Park PS to examine the rights and privileges of children around the world. The students were first asked to complete surveys around rights and privileges. Two students from John Polyani CI, who had been to Nicaragua, were streamed to his classroom. The grade 1/2 students created a self-reflection using Movie Maker on the MCS 2.0 HP laptops (from the pilot) and then shared this on Google Drive with Glen Park students. The Glen Park students did the same. M. Scott shared some student produced videoed reflections with the parents in attendance. The students were asked to compare, contrast, and draw conclusions about rights and privileges of children.

Elizabeth then presented the processes found in the Math Curriculum, i.e. problem solving, reasoning and proving, reflecting, selecting tools and computational strategies, connecting, representing and communicating.

Jennie then presented a fundamental concept of Sustainability and Stewardship as found in the grade 1 Science & Technology curriculum. She shared the Big Ideas that must be covered in grade 1 as:

Living things grow, take in food to create energy, make waste, and reproduce. (Overall expectations 2 and 3)

Plants and animals, including people, are living things. (Overall expectations 2 and 3)

Living things have basic needs (air, water, food, and shelter) that are met from the environment. (Overall expectations 1, 2, and 3)

Different kinds of living things behave in different ways. (Overall expectations 2 and 3)

All living things are important and should be treated with care and respect. (Overall expectations 1, 2, and 3)

She then shared the Overall Expectations as:

1. Assess the role of humans in maintaining a healthy environment;
2. Investigate needs and characteristics of plants and animals, including humans;
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the basic needs and characteristics of plants and animals, including humans.

She explained that the similar shifts are taking place as curriculum is being revised by the Ministry. For example, the new social studies curriculum. She explained that looking ahead Allenby will continue to address 21<sup>st</sup> century learning through professional learning and dialogue and enhancing the purposeful use of technology. She explained that teachers still struggle with what is developmentally appropriate at different grade levels. The staff are have conversations about and struggle with the appropriate balance between process and content, as content is still important.

A parent asked why don't all teachers have a website. Jennie explained that she is reluctant to say to all teachers will use any specific tool or website. She explained that Allenby teachers are moving forward with the incorporation of technology and that this needs to grow organically. She explained that it is through collaboration that gradual increase in technology integration will occur.

A parent enquired when the District Review happened in February where was Allenby at in comparison to other schools. Jennie explained that the feedback from the District Review for Allenby was very positive in the technology area. She explained that the Allenby kids are very compliment. The evaluators stated that they would like to see more engagement. They were happy to see the art and connections to other subject areas. There was evidence of global awareness in the school and there was positive feedback around critical thinking. Overall, the school did very well.

A parent prefaced their question with a comment about this school year being a tough one with the job action and FDK discussion. She stated that she is excited about all these innovations. She enquired whether such innovations can this be shared on a more regular basis through the news letter. Jennie explained that she recently sent home

information about Taking It Global in the newsletter. She explained the possibility of hosting a learning fair with focus on 21<sup>st</sup> century learning and equity. She has spoken to the APA executive about the idea of hosting an evening with students sharing their learning around innovation in the technology, and global and environmental awareness. The parent followed up that we should be celebrating the learning at Allenby.

A parent also suggested that a challenge facing teachers is how to keep students engaged given the range of student abilities and learning styles in each of the classroom. Jennie explained that differentiated learning happens in the classroom. Teachers are committed to respond to the needs of the children every day by offering choice, grouping, extending the depth of the curriculum or enrichment opportunities.

Andrew thanked the teachers and the administration for their presentation.

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

Stuart Baltman presented the APA financial statements for April 2013. He explained that the APA accounts on a cash basis. For the period ending April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013, the net revenue was \$95020.88. The net expenses were \$52644.97. The net income was \$42375.91. Projecting a net loss at about 22K. Stuart explained that the Fun Fair has still not occurred; however, he is forecasting a net revenue of about \$83K budgeting net revenue from the Fun Fair of about \$13K. There are two major expenses still to be incurred: i.e. 1. Enrichment Grants, which were budgeted at \$16K of which about \$13K has been spent; 2. Artists in the Classrooms, which to date \$6.5K has been spent of the \$10K allocated. Stuart explained that to date only about \$16,000 of the \$22.5K approved has been spent on computer resources. Therefore, expenditures on computer resources is \$5.5K under budget. Stuart is forecasting for the year operating expenses of approximately \$93K; a net loss of about \$13K, with a closing surplus of approximately \$65,902. Please note that an additional \$10K was segregated for field enhancements.

A parent asked what the cash surplus at the end of last year was. Stuart replied: \$79577.50. He is forecasting a surplus at the end of this year of \$60902.50.

Stuart put forward the following motion:

**Motion:** Accept the budget as presented for the period ending April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013. Seconded by Bonnie Joynt. All in favour. No objections. Motion carried.

## **5. Accelerated Reader Motion – Andrew Heitelman**

Andrew read the following motion:

Move to spend up to \$2000 on the web version of the Accelerated Reader program for the September 2013 academic year.

Andrew opened the motion to debate. A parent asked whether the web version was accessible at home. Yes it is.

A parent asked whether this cost was subscription or one time fee. It is a subscription. Stuart explained that this would have to be added as a line item of the budget. A parent asked should the motion involve adding this to the budget. Stuart explained that the budget for next year is presently being devised and it can easily be added for voting on in September.

A parent asked whether 300 users have signed up for the program. The 300 number aligned with the number of students currently using the program at Allenby.

A parent explained that if we do not purchase this subscription the program will die.

**Motion:** Move to spend up to \$2000 on the web version of the Accelerated Reader program for the September 2013 academic year. Seconded by Shannon Philips. All in favour. No objections. Motion carried.

## **6. Technology Deferred Discussion & Motion – Lisa Parker**

Andrew read the motions out to the group as follows:

**Motion:** To spend up to \$18,000 for 5 SmartBoards, 5 Laptops and 5 External DVD drives.

**Motion:** To spend up to \$18,000 for 30 mini HP Notebooks.

Lisa Parker explained that the original goal for the technology committee was to have a Smart Board in every class. Presently there are 12 classrooms without Smart Boards. She explained that we are one year away from meeting this goal.

She explained that Risa Levitt presented at the last meeting regarding the purchasing of a cart of notebooks to support teachers for classroom instruction.

A parent asked how regularly are the current notebooks being signed out. Lisa explained that Ms Levitt could not complete the project because the cart was not available. Mr Hussain explained that the cart of notebooks were given to the school as part of a pilot and thus the programs associated with the pilot have first priority.

A parent explained that she is in favour of supporting the motion. She has been learning with her child. Her concern is that she is uncertain that Wi-Fi and exposure for children. She explained that she is concerned as to how the Wi-Fi affects children. She wondered whether the routers could be turned off when not being used. Mr Hussain explained that it would depend on where the cart is and the need to have the Wi-Fi for instruction. The carts are plugged in overnight. The Wi-Fi is on all day. The parent asked for clarification as to where the routers are placed. It was explained that the routers travel with the carts. The parent asked that the administration keep the following in mind: Do the routers have to be on all the time? Can we keep this in mind as we increase technology in the school?

A parent asked who is responsible for the maintenance of the technology that the APA purchases? Lisa explained that this purchase would be supported by the Board. The HP laptops have a 3 year warranty. The HP notebooks come with TDSB supported software.

A parent asked whether there are still teachers who want Smart Boards that do not have them. Yes.

Lisa tabled the first motion as follows:

**Motion:** To spend up to \$18,000 for 5 Smart Boards, 5 Laptops and 5 External DVD drives. Seconded by Paula Rickzer. 20 in favour. No objections. 1 Abstention. Motion carried.

Lisa tabled the second motion as follows:

**Motion:** To spend up to \$18,000 for 30 mini HP Notebooks. Seconded Bonnie Joynt. 21 in favour. No objections. Motion carried.

A parent then asked why haven't more iPads been included in the motions. Lisa explained that the 10 iPads that are currently in the school are still in a trial phase.

Stuart explained that there is a lot of work involved in putting together this presentation and motion and he thanked Lisa. Lisa thanked Elizabeth Lau, Risa Levitt, Steven Dawang, along with the teachers who presented.

## **7. Committee Updates**

Fun Fair – Lisa Parker & Paula Rickzer

Rain or shine the Fun Fair will happen. There are some new rides and activities. The class baskets and silent auction are valued at over 15K. All volunteers spots have been filled. Thank you to the parents whom have volunteered. Please note that only cheques or cash will be accepted for the baskets/auction.

A parent asked when the wristbands will go home. It was explained that these went home yesterday. If these did not make it home, please contact Lisa if there appears to be a problem. The early bird draw was done for the 50 tickets and the prize winner was Erin Cooper.

A parent asked why there was not a visa machine available at the auction. Lisa explained that the cost is \$500 per machine. She explained that it is easier if people have cash. There is also 2% per transaction on credit card. Given there is so much effort into raising funds, the committee felt that keeping the 2% was a good idea.

## **8. Program Area Review Team (PART) Process – Heather Stark**

Heather Stark sent regrets as she was not able to make the meeting tonight. Andrew read an email from Heather as follows:

Everything is continuing to move in the right direction toward a build for Allenby. We have a pre-construction meeting with the TDSB planning department and the architects to look at preliminary drawings and review the building site. The Planning and Priorities meeting is June 12 and the Board meeting is on June 19th. The recommendation is to hold back any lobbying of the trustees at this time given the positive reaction this build has received. We will continue to keep you posted of any new developments.

A parent asked if the TDSB is going to build can we address the field at the same time. Jennie explained that this question has been raised at the construction meeting; however, the Board does not have funds for this. Andrew explained that it might be good to get a commitment but the field renovation cannot occur while construction is occurring.

Shannon Philips explained that information about the field that was gleaned from the APA fall survey was sent to Howard Goodman's office. She has been informed that this information was also passed on to the TDSB planning department. This was all done before the PART process officially began. Shannon explained that the lobbying and push for the field enhancements may need to occur and thus a committee may be formed to look at the field as the build process continues.

## **9. Open Question Time**

A parent explained that there are potential cuts to Itinerant Music Teachers within the TDSB. She explained that these Itinerant Music Teachers work with both teachers and students. More information will be coming out in the Allenbeat. A petition is being created and the link will be in the Allenbeat. If you are interested in saving this, please check out the Allenbeat.

Andrew thanked Ms. Ucar for her dedication to Allenby, personally and on behalf of the parent community. Ms. Ucar is retiring at the end of this school year. Andrew expressed sadness at her departure but wished her the best of luck with whatever she decides to do next. Jennie stated that it has been very interesting, challenging, and rewarding at Allenby. She explained that a new principal will be

selected by mid-June. This new principal will be at the June APA meeting. She explained that there are purposeful efforts made to find someone who is aware of the direction Allenby is moving in. She thanked Elizabeth Lau for her dedication to Allenby. She thanked the community.

Andrew also thanked the administrative staff and teachers for their commitment and dedication to Allenby. Andrew shared a story about an example of the Allenby staff's caring and commitment to the students and the community. Tamara Lowe asked whether parents wish to get involved in the APA. She explained that the next meeting date is Tuesday, June 18<sup>th</sup> from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm. She explained that the APA will table the draft budget for the next school year.

Andrew explained that if parents are interested in volunteering please get involved. All parents are welcomed to be involved directly in the activities of the APA.

Tamara Lowe explained that parents indicated in the APA fall survey that they wanted more information about the school and routines in grade 1. Tamara explained that she is looking to create a hand out to support parents in grade 1.

A parent explained that she would like to see information from kindergarten teachers as to scheduling, etc. Jennie explained that this information should be communicated from the school. She committed that this would be better organized for the fall.

Tamara Lowe explained that the pizza coordinator is stepping down at the end of this year. The APA is in need of a volunteer to oversee the once a month pizza lunch. If interested, please speak to or email Tamara Lowe.