

APA General Meeting Wednesday November 29, 2017, Allenby Library, 7-9 pm

Agenda

1. Welcome and Adoption of the Agenda and September 2017 Minutes – Lisa Parker
 2. Treasurer's Report – Sarosh Nanavati
 3. Committee Updates
 - Fundraising
 - Safety
 - Health and Wellness
 - School Programs
 - Communications
 - Community Awareness
 4. Principal's Report – Tracey O'Toole
 - EQAO
 - School Budget
 - School Improvement Plan
 5. Open Discussion, Questions and Feedback on APA Related Items
-

Minutes

Attendees – approximately 25 parents

1. Welcome & Adoption of November Agenda/September Minutes

- Changing APA General Meeting format – APA updates will take place first, followed by Principal's Report and general APA focused Q&A at the end.
- Lisa Parker moved to adopt the Agenda and September 2017 minutes. Gillian Uy seconded the motion; all in favour.

2. Treasurer's Report

- Parent contributions are down slightly from last year but still above forecasted budget – thank you for your contributions!
- We have planned for a net loss of \$40K this year – hoping to spend some of the surplus generated in previous years
 - Sarosh Nanavati moved to accept the financial statements for the period of September/October 2017. Gillian Uy/Valerie Midmer seconded the motion; all in favour.

APA General Meeting Wednesday November 29, 2017, Allenby Library, 7-9 pm

3. Committee Updates

Fundraising – Meredith Palmer

- Tomorrow is Family Night Out. Almost 60 cars registered for this event, and over 300 people expected to attend. Tickets available for \$12 at the door. All concessions are cash only
- Thank you to the lead sponsors – Community Trust donated \$2500 towards event, David Batori sponsored prizes, Bilingual Source sponsored concessions and parent lounge
- Silent auction has over 140 items totaling almost \$30K in merchandise and services; thank you to all who have donated!
- Lisa Parker thanked the fundraising committee for their hard work on planning this event

Safety – Lisa Parker (on behalf of David Heath)

- APA met with city councilor on November 6/17
- Parking in the Drop Zone on St. Clements Ave will be prohibited between 8:30 – 9:10 am; signage pending
- APA is working on putting together a petition related to parking on St. Clements Ave. and Castlefield Ave. Currently, parking is allowed only after 8:30 am however many Allenby parents/staff members have received parking tickets (e.g. day care drop off). The petition will request that parking be permitted earlier in the morning on both streets – ideally shifting to 7:30 or 8 am.

Health & Wellness – Amber Christie

- Many thanks to contributions to the winter clothing drive. The bulk of the clothes will be sent to Flemington Public School, where a former Allenby Vice Principal now works (Frances Themeliopoulos). The rest of the clothing will be sent to New Circles Community Services.
- The APA is also participating in the Abundance program this holiday season and will sponsor a family of 5. Those wishing to contribute towards a gift basket can contact Robyn MacKenzie.

Community Awareness – Krista Chaytor

- TDSB Equity Report shared with the Allenby community earlier in November (Lisa Parker summarized some highlights from the report in the APA newsletter a few weeks ago). The deadline for comments has passed however this will be discussed again at TDSB in

APA General Meeting Wednesday November 29, 2017, Allenby Library, 7-9 pm

December. The report is expected to go back out for public consultation in the new year.

- On December 8, 2017, there will be a public consultation session on EQAO as an assessment tool.

School Programs – Jennifer Bain

- Fall session of After 4 coming to end next week (with a few extensions beyond that for classes that have been cancelled.)
- In the process of finalizing After 4 schedule for winter session – aiming to make schedule available the 2nd week of December so that a longer registration period is possible. Sessions will begin 2nd week of January.
- We are researching whether or not After 4 can be made available for Kindergarten students.

Music – Samantha Atkinson

- The Itinerant Music program is up and running
 - All interested grade 5/6 students attended an assembly with Mrs. O'Toole, band teacher and strings teacher. A series of assessments (e.g. melody, rhythm) were completed and students tried out some of the instruments. Students provided their top 3 choices and they were subsequently matched up with instruments.
 - Grade 5: 25 in band; 26 in strings – more interest in strings than we have instruments right now however there are extra strings in the system that we may have access to. Money contributed by the APA at the beginning of the year will help to pay for repairs.
 - Grade 6: Students carried over from last year's IM program with most in band, a few less in strings program.
 - Music night in April – mark your calendars!
- Lisa Parker and Mrs. O'Toole noted that the Itinerant Music program is a great success story. Last year, there was much discussion and some controversy over the program but in the end, this year's program is stronger than ever. There has been great collaboration between the school administration and parents.

APA General Meeting Wednesday November 29, 2017, Allenby Library, 7-9 pm

4. Principal's Report – Tracey O'Toole

A. EQAO

- A year ago, EQAO math scores across the province dropped significantly and the province invested significant dollars in funding a renewed math strategy. Unfortunately, at a provincial level, EQAO math scores from spring 2017 were still low.
- Allenby used last year's math funding to send 12 teachers to a Stanford University online mathematics education course (Jo Boaler) and invested in additional math manipulatives for the school.
- Mrs. O'Toole shared Allenby's 2017 EQAO results as compared to TDSB and the Province over the last 5 years

Grade 3:

- Reading (English only): Allenby scored higher than both TDSB and the Province
- Writing (English only): Allenby scored higher than both TDSB and the Province
- Math (English and French Immersion): Allenby scored higher than both TDSB and the Province however, scores in 2017 were noticeably lower than in prior years

Grade 6:

- Reading (English and French Immersion): Allenby scored higher than both TDSB and the Province and similar to 2016
- Writing (English and French Immersion): Allenby scored higher than both TDSB and the Province and similar to 2016
- Math (English and French Immersion): Allenby scored higher than both TDSB and the Province and scored higher than 2016
- The school receives detailed break downs of EQAO results – e.g. score sheets by section, by question, by student etc... Early analysis of the detailed results highlight the following:
 - Grade 3 English students who scored lower on EQAO math questions already tended to have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) at Allenby. Grade 3 French Immersion students who scored lower on EQAO math questions did not necessarily have an IEP in place at Allenby.
 - Grade 3 students don't do as well on multiple choice questions – likely because students at this age haven't had a lot of experience with multiple choice questions.
 - There is a noticeable discrepancy between English and French students on a few questions – don't necessarily want to attribute it to second language but this could be a factor. Need to ensure we give students the skills to decode and correctly interpret the questions.
 - By the time French Immersion cohort gets to grade 6, scores tend to catch up.

APA General Meeting Wednesday November 29, 2017, Allenby Library, 7-9 pm

- What Allenby is doing with the results:
 - Math Committee is reviewing the results in detail and will share observations with staff (e.g. look at individual questions and determine which questions Allenby students are not doing well on and provide teachers with other similar questions to practice with students)
 - Math Committee has also completed an inventory of math manipulatives in the school and will purchase additional resources as necessary
 - The vast majority of Allenby teachers will be taking the Stanford University (Jo Boaler) math education course this year – to be completed by February 2018.
 - Continue to leverage Innovation lab and provide students with the opportunity to practice math through real world application.
- Parent Questions
 - Concerned that teachers will start teaching to the EQAO test in order to improve scores
 - Response: We will not just teach to the test. The skills we teach students which help them to be successful on EQAO are applicable everywhere (e.g. carefully read the full question, review all multiple choice options, decode language)
 - Are the resources and supports available to English and French students different at Allenby?
 - Response: Resources for both teachers and students are equal. Support staff is the same for English/French students with the exception of:
 - Empower Reading Program is available in English only; however, a full time French Educational Assistant and 0.5 French teacher are now on staff to support French students with reading
 - Home School Program (for students working 2 or more grades below) is only offered in English

B. School Budget

- A few highlights:
 - Photocopier and office supplies – pleased to see that this continues to drop year over year (teachers only get 1 box of paper for the year)
 - Key priorities remain same in terms of spend (below figures are matched by APA):
 - Innovation/STEM/technology = \$15000

APA General Meeting Wednesday November 29, 2017, Allenby Library, 7-9 pm

- Literacy = \$10,000 (need to invest more than originally planned in kindergarten leveled libraries)
- Mental health and wellbeing = \$3000
- Each full time teacher receives \$300; part-time teachers receive \$150
- Additional \$100 to all staff (on top of above \$300/\$150) because it was determined that they need to purchase supplies in advance of the next school year
- Teacher collaborative inquiry and PLC = \$28,000 (large amount however it costs \$250 to release a teacher for 1 day of professional development; Groove School of Dance brought in to teach kids during teacher PLC time)

C. School Improvement Plan

- Allenby's 3 areas of focus for 2017-2018 include:
 - Achievement Goal:** How does a direct focus in mathematics teaching on growth mindset, STEM and inquiry improve student engagement in mathematics and the image girls have of themselves as problem solvers?
 - Wellbeing Goal:** How can mindfulness strategies implemented on a weekly basis improve student's abilities to manage themselves and assist with peer relationships?
 - Equity Goal:** How do our own biases about the Allenby student impact our ability to serve our students? How can a direct and measured focus on knowing our students' lives inside and outside the classroom lead to better student success?
- Mrs. O'Toole has challenged the staff to get to know at least 1 student in their class really, really well and also to share best practices with a colleague that they don't normally share with.
- Administrators also goals for the year – Mme. Zamin is focused on teaching best practices related to math; Mrs. O'Toole is focused on driving adoption of global competencies and 21st century learning in every grade/class.

5. Open Discussion, Questions

- Kindergarten Playground - construction is in progress. Awaiting construction/installation of the stage, benches, storage, kindness bench. Line painting to be done in the spring. Mrs. O'Toole has purchased extra equipment for the kindergarten yard to help transform to an outdoor learning space (e.g. giant lego, ramps etc...)
- Winter Skating Field Trips – dates not yet determined but will not occur in December as per usual. TDSB has put high risk excursions under review; first part of review was swimming; next focus is on skiing and skating trips. TDSB wants to ensure the right policies are in place.