

GMHS Parent Council Minutes

Tuesday, October 18th, 2016

In attendance: Kathy Schulze (Co-Chair), Garry Bell (Principal), Jim Reilly (Assistant Principal), Chris Robertson (Assistant Principal), Valerie Benson, Lisa Freisen, Linda Stadnyk, Norma Lang (Trustee), Nancy Geier, Sue Wroe, Karen Lewall, Shawna Polsfut, Duane Goudie

Regrets: Shannon Mauro, Sheryl Page, Charmaine Penner

1. Call Meeting to Order: 1:31 p.m.

2. Welcome and Introductions:

Kathy Schulze chaired this afternoon meeting and welcomed everyone. Kathy introduced herself and shared that the other Board members gave regrets for this meeting. Nancy Geier took minutes in the absence of Sheryl Page, Secretary. Kathy introduced Mr. Bell for newcomers and Norma Lang who attended for Sylvia Eggerer (Trustee) who sent regrets. Jen Williams was also introduced. Jen is a Grade 12 student who was asked to attend this meeting as a representative of Student Council and Leadership.

3. Approval of Agenda: Karen Lewall motioned to approve the agenda. All in favor.

a. Approval of September 20, 2016 minutes with the change of confirming the 9:00 a.m. meeting on January 17th, 2017. Kathy will double-check that. Karen Lewall motioned to approve the minutes of the September 20, 2016 meeting. All in favor.

4. Principal's Report:

Kathy asked to defer the Principal's report in order to allow Jen Williams to speak and return to class. Kathy indicated this is one of the positives of having daytime Parent Council meetings as it allows the group to hear from students and staff members. Jen told us about the new Student Council that has started this year with Ms. Stapor. Their first big project is selling raffle tickets to the student body for the chance to win one of the best parking spots in the student lot. They are raffling 4 different parking spots. Tickets are 1 for \$3 or 3 for \$5 and will be sold during lunch hours. Half of the proceeds will go towards Ride of the Mustangs and half will go to Pinktober. Jen explained that the goal this year is to bring the school closer together and get students involved in various activities, hoping this will create an overall better school atmosphere. The recent pep-rally was a great success as the group put in a lot of effort to make it more fun and interactive. Airdrie Bowl was a good success too this year. This is the final year for Airdrie Bowl as Croxford now has a football team, so it will be 3 schools participating going forward. For many years it has been a football match between GMHS and Bert Church. GMHS has won 6 years in a row. They are planning different games and also filmed all the sports teams, which was shown at the pep rally. Students commented that it was a really good addition at the pep rally. There was discussion about getting a t-shirt launcher to use at future games and activities. The group is looking at ways to inspire kids in the school and perhaps getting a school Mascot. Linda Stadnyk suggested that perhaps some Athletics money from Casino funds could be used towards the Mascot. This

will be followed- up by Mr. Reilly. Jen's next update was regarding Grad 2017. She said the Rockyview meetings are going very well. Each school will be able to personalize their grad. A caterer and event planner has been hired for grad. Ms. Grosh is in charge of the Legacy sub-committee and Ms. Reichert is in charge of the Decorations sub-committee. Approximately 40 kids have signed up to be part of these 2 sub-committees. There were references to the successful parent grad meeting that occurred recently. Kathy mentioned that it will be Canada's 150 birthday next year and perhaps the grads could recognize this somehow. Jen also said they were discussing theme's and one was being the last of the 90's kids as this group of graduates would have been born mainly in 1999. Jen was thanked for all of her information.

Before resuming the Principal's report, Parent Council was given a tour of our school during Literacy Block, which began at 1:55 p.m. The group was able to see and hear what the school is like during this time. Mr. Bell said the Literacy Block is going well for the most part and students are beginning to embrace this time in their day. As with anything he indicated there are challenges as it is difficult for some older kids to be reintroduced to "reading". Literacy Block occurs 4 days per week for 20 minutes alternating a.m. and p.m. Books, graphic novels and tablets are allowed. No audio books or cell phones. The goal is for everyone in the school, including teachers and staff to read during this time. One parent suggested that it allows the kids to re-set their thinking.

Mr. Bell presented the School Council with a \$500 cheque from GMHS to put towards the annual Association of Alberta School Council's AGM in Edmonton in the spring. Kathy thanked Mr. Bell for this contribution. Kathy Schulze and Mr. Bell will discuss how to handle the cheque, as Parent Council does not have a bank account.

The Accountability Pillar from Alberta Education was discussed next. Mr. Bell shared the recent results from the survey that is sent out to parents of Grade 4, 7, and 10's. Grade 9 PAT's are an area to focus on as well as parental involvement in schools. This is something they are seeing across the board. Mr. Bell said this is something he has chosen to tackle in his first year at GMHS and is challenging staff to find creative ways to involve parents in the school.

Mr. Bell reminded everyone of the Post-Secondary event occurring on October 26, 2016. His "Friday Fan-out" email that he sends to parents and guardians every Friday was discussed and the consensus was very positive about this form of communication. Duane Goudie suggested that to increase parent involvement it might be helpful to streamline the process of the Police check that is required to volunteer in the school, by perhaps including it in the package that is sent out at the start of the school year. Mr. Bell will investigate this.

The Literacy Block tour was discussed with some suggesting there was a good feeling in the school during this time. Mr. Bell is hoping parents will be on-board with this initiative and have conversations with their kids about reading. He

reminded the group of the importance of adults modeling good read habits. Anxiety and mental health were referenced and downtime is an important part of this. Literacy block forces kids to experience downtime, which many don't usually have. Increasing literacy is part of Rockyview's 4-year plan. Mr. Bell said they are also going to begin playing movement music for 5 minutes each morning between the warning bell and the first period bell. Other schools are doing this and is viewed as a positive way to start the day.

5. Trustee's Report: Please see attachment. Notation: The ward boundary presentation in Airdrie has been moved from the Dec 5th date that Ms. Lang reported, to Thurs Dec 8 at 7:00 pm at the Education Centre in Airdrie.

October 2016 Report to George Mac School Council

Oct 6 Board Organizational Meeting – Colleen re-appointed Chair and Todd Brand as Vice chair. Also did committee appointments – about 20 or so committees and boards that board members participate with.

Modular Classroom submission due for Nov 1 – will be reviewed by board on Thursday this week at board meeting – Airdrie implications will be reported in November

Ward Boundary Review Airdrie & Area @ Education Centre December 5th 7:00 to 8:30pm, or go online, review the information and respond to the questionnaire.

<http://www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca> - ASCA School Council Resource Guide

Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) is pleased to announce the release of the NEW School Council Resource Guide. This Guide replaces the Alberta School Council Resource Manual released in 2006, revised 2007. More than an updated version, the new Guide is 20 pages and a valuable resource for the the [School Council Resource Guide](#) (embedded link) is available on the ASCA website.

RVS JOINT Council

Joint Meeting in Airdrie – Thursday November 17, 2016, 5:30 pm – to review the Alberta Education Curriculum Re-Design project and provide a way for parents and community to provide input and feedback on Alberta Education's plan for this six year project

Carbon Tax information – Boards advocating to government about whether we should be charged Carbon Tax – and if we do get charged (most likely) – whether we will be funded for the increase or be able to access dollars from the Sustainability Account created to do environmental retrofitting or establish sustainability programs in our schools

Attendance Innovation Campaign Kick-Off

October 6 was a kick-off for a promotional campaign - RVS' Attendance Innovation initiative. Project Lead **Dr. Mitchell Colp** spoke to the board about his three-tiered approach: *educating* communities about the importance of attendance, *empowering* schools to utilize data to improve practices, and *eliminating* barriers to through effective interventions. Being piloted in four schools – R.J. Hawkey Elementary School, Muriel Clayton School, W.H. Croxford High School, and Beiseker Community School. To find out more about the attendance campaign, [Present for a](#)

[Purpose](#), and why #schooleveryday is so important, check out the resources and information posted on the RVS website.

6. New Business:

a. At this point in the meeting, we toured Mr. Casey's Horticulture program. We were invited into his room which houses hydroponics machines where the students have hands-on experience growing things such as lettuce and herbs. In previous years, this was part of the Knowledge and Employability program but due to decreased numbers they opened it up to the rest of the school. There was also a brief explanation given of the Knowledge and Employability program when we returned to the meeting room.

b. Grad 2017. Mr. Reilly provided a brief update regarding the recent parent meeting. The School was pleased with turnout. The grad handbook will be posted very soon on school website. They are waiting to fill in a few technical parts before posting. He reiterated that there will be 3 high schools participating in grad week held at Croxford High School and Genesis Place. They are pleased to have more parent involvement in grad within committees and for the grad's BBQ, which will be held after the rehearsal at Genesis Place.

c. Parent sign-up for Committees. Kathy Schulze brought 3 sign-up sheets for parent volunteering. This was for Ride of the Mustangs, Staff Appreciation, and Athletics.

d. Questions, ideas, concerns and updates: The meeting concluded with a few additional questions regarding School fees, the receptionist position and French substitute teachers. If there are any concerns with using School Cash on-line please call the office. The receptionist position has been short-listed. Mr. Bell explained that hiring and keeping French substitute teachers is a challenge as they are in high-demand and move on to teaching positions quickly.

Everyone was thanked for attending the meeting.

7. Next meeting date: November 15th, 2016 7:00 p.m.

8. Adjournment: 2:50 p.m.

Attachment: Trustee's Report