

BOWMORE SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Date | time June 6, 2018 @ 6:06pm | *Meeting called to order by* Lyndsey Camps

In Attendance:

Lyndsey Camps, Andrea Maugham, Jenn Engels, Nancy Botelho, Michelle Aarts, Shaileen Casimiro, Jody Sadofsky, Shelley Baboolall, Jennifer Cloke-Campbell, Steve Steers, Leah Jarvis, Ashley McKay, Heather Groves, Michaela Jeffs, Christina Varga

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes were read from the April 2018 Bowmore School Council Meeting and approved by: Nancy Botelho, seconded by Michaela Jeffs.

Call for New Business –

Shout outs!

Principal's Report - Heather Groves & Steve Steers

Staffing – Almost finished hiring new staff; adding a full time core 7/8 French teacher. Very pleased about the staff for next year; 10 new staff members will be joining us. 940 students next year; possibly more. Almost every classroom will be utilized. Daycare poses a real issue for new families; looking at opening at least one more room for school ages. Allocating the basement daycare room during the day for a new FI kindergarten class. Lunch program will continue for daycare. Will be adding an additional grade 4 French immersion class for next year, in order to adhere to class size ratios.

Facilities – Library currently being renovated, turning it in to a cooling facility with 3 large AC units in that space. Going forward Library will always be available to provide a cooling space for students.

Many thanks to Council for sourcing and getting fans for every classroom. Ms. Jarvis and her class labeled and distributed them all.

School Day – Will be making minor changes to scheduling for next year so that all of our grades will have an equal experience of teams, gym, music, art, so that it is similar across all divisions. Mr. Norris, who is moving on to another school, will share his wisdom and train other staff in looking at big picture, completing goals of the school, including the integration of gifted students, teaching leadership and empathy, bumping up core students, with an eye to when we have school events all students may have an opportunity to join.

The administration has identified unstructured times for intermediates as being problematic. The proposed solution is a streamlined lunch hour. Trying to have shorter lunch hour for Grades 7's and 8's and have all students eat at one time. The compromise will be to use half the gym for 20 minutes of lunch hour, the other half of gym will be used for co-curriculars, 10 minutes shaved from lunch will end the school day at 3:02 instead of 3:10. This will have the added benefit of supporting families where an older student needs to collect a younger sibling who finishes their day 8 minutes later. This will all be communicated in end of year newsletter and at beginning of next year.

A short discussion about Kindergarten ECE's who are supposed to be at the playground no later than 8:30 AM; Principal Groves will look into this.

TDSB survey - Vice Principal Steers gave an update about surveys conducted last spring for grades 4-6 and 7-8. The school just received this treasure trove of data; Administration is still in the process of unpacking it all. Currently continuing to review it with staff. Within this data include students' attitudes towards learning, how supported and safe students feel, their sense of well being, self-experience, whether or not they see their background reflected in the school. Where as many / most grades 4-6 responded "I really like school", by grade 7-8 this tails off very significantly, raising many questions as to why that happens. One nugget VP Steers found very telling was about responsibility: "How much time do you spend doing chores?" 16% responded "None". "How often have you been involved in leading an activity?" 18% responded "Never".

Safety - Another reminder about safety of the parking lot; it is obviously a high traffic area as it's always being used, and yet we continue to see students walk through parking lot. Use the community grapevine to spread the message about safety; question of whether we can leverage our TPS police rep, Officer Brian Spade, to help with this urgent issue.

Volunteer Appreciation – The Administration will be hosting a volunteer tea to thank all volunteers who have helped over the year; before school, 8:00 AM on June 14th.

2018-2019 School Year Planning - Andrea and Lyndsey

PARENT AND TEACHER FEEDBACK RESULTS: (SEE 2018 BSC Parent & Teacher Survey Results – Updated)

Methodology: Feedback from Council focus group and Teacher focus group, from that data developed a survey. Distributed in April. Got 220 responses from parents, 18 from teachers and support staff. Respondents felt very well informed about and engaged with school Council; 96% received Council communications in some form: especially newsletter or class rep email. 85% contribute to more than one fundraising activity; 50% attended one School Council sponsored event – or attended a meeting. Good representation from the different grades. Areas covered were **Spending priorities, community engagement, Diversity and Inclusion, Fundraising, communication, Health/wellness.**

For **Spending**: parents prioritized STEM, Technology, sports equipment. Low priorities for parents were Kindergarten playground and parent workshops. For Teachers, high priorities were Technology, student and parent workshops.

For **Community Outreach** events: snack program and School carnival got very positive feedback. Make-it fair and School Year kick off, and School Council meetings ranked Medium Priority. Low priority were Hot Chocolate mornings, Bowmore Rocks, Movie Nights.

Diversity and Inclusion – less than 60% said they always feel welcome and included. Thoughts to address this include starting a Diversity committee, putting on some more community engagement events such as welcoming events for new grade 7's and the Gifted program.

Fundraising: Pizza lunch, Carnival scored highest, QSP scored lowest. Potentially losing QSP next year and having the Direct Donation Program (DDP) in October. Going to provide a schedule of fundraisers throughout the year, possibly in the Welcome Package in September so people can decide what they want to take part in.

(There was a brief discussion about creating a House system for the school, based on the English school model. Each student would be assigned to a house upon enrollment, competing in sports and different ways, creating a focus for school spirit and group loyalty. This is still notional but received positive feedback.)

Health and Wellness - Parents indicated that it's very important for Bowmore to focus on Health & Wellness – with 79% rating physical activity and 77% rating mental health as a “6” or “7”.

Snack program – 60% of respondents thought snacks provided were healthy. Great improvements made this year especially in terms of fresh options, less waste, and less packaging; the program ends June 7th and will begin fresh in September. Still could use a greater influx of volunteers; considering an option to serve different food to the older kids.

Communications – very positive feedback on communications – 90 % of respondents felt informed / well informed. We could do a much better job communicating with the teachers. Co-Chairs have a couple of ideas to improve that. For those parents getting the Classroom Representative email, don't like it being inconsistent; we weren't able to reach all parents. This year we will get that piece into the Welcome Package: Parents will agree to get a weekly communication Class Reps – and then this will then be automated. (A discussion of the Classroom rep role ensued; it works on a smaller level to foster a community feeling within the class, take pressure of teacher for all communications. Streamlining the communication portion of the role will strengthen it.) We will stop using Twitter as a communication source; Facebook is good but not completely reliable.

Comment highlights / Suggested Changes:

Requested Pizza lunch more frequently, looking into receiving online payment for that. School Council Meetings to be held at different times (not just weeknights 6:00-8:00 pm; possibly one or two during the day,

or even later than 6:00-8:00 pm) which might help the Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) side of things; a D&I committee to have a diversity lens on events, communication – e.g. for students beginning in Grade 4 or Grade 7 - helping new students/families to feel more inclusion. Make it school curriculum related, e.g. - Pride month – what’s the school doing? Looking to have more automated communications, a calendar of events. Will not be doing QSP in 2018-2019. Respondents liked the idea of multicultural potluck, keep it, but make it different; more of a week, tying into the curriculum if possible.

Overall survey results were extremely positive. Much appreciation to Jenni Cathcart and Co-Chairs for spearheading the survey and community engagement.

Proposed 2018-19 spending plan – (SEE 2018-2019 BSC Budget and Proposed Roles.pdf)

ECO just received new pollinator plants, donated by a parent. ECO club would like money to buy more plants; plan on holding two clothing drives for next year.

Pool – TDSB collects \$280,000 from the city for the pool, this is not feeding back to Bowmore. Looking into it whether or not we can access a portion of those funds for diving blocks and other needs. Will find out where that money goes and go from there.

Technology – granting \$10,000 with another \$10,000 matched by the school. Items will be more Chrome books, iPads, projectors, smart boards. Arts might be overhauled: Artist in the classroom is harder to book; Prologue went up in price. Will have a new part time art teacher in 2018 and will look to creating an art program that can engage everyone in the school. Musical instruments will be paid for by school

Beginning of the School Year BBQ – we have an Enbridge Community outreach grant. Either the first Thursday or Friday of the first week of school. A chance to welcome new families, let them see what’s going on with Council, start getting volunteers.

Discussion: A request for more money to be put aside for music, confusion about what is covered by the TDSB – sheet music, instruments, repair, etc. Mr. Butters raises money through the musical; if we’re to contribute more money need full transparency from everyone else.

Not enough dates left in the year to do dance a thon (mini-Bowmore Rocks). Will do it next year.

Proposed school council roles for 2018-19

Health and Wellness lead, Caring and Safe Schools Lead, Diversity & Inclusion lead, Community Engagement leads.

Parent reps – this has gotten off to a great start and we can fine-tune the role and responsibilities going forward.

Co-Chairs suggest if you’ve been in a role for two to three years to pass it on to get fresh blood in there.

Jenn Engels suggested that an incumbent could create a “passing the torch” document outlining the responsibilities and job description so that potential new recruits could have an idea of what’s entailed in the job but also how to proceed on Day 1.

Over the summer Ashley (Volunteer Coordinator) will put some thoughts into streamlining and improving the volunteer recruitment process.

Going forward there will be no more Members-at-Large; only Council members with defined roles will have a vote; anyone and everyone still welcome to attend the meetings.

New Business

Shout-outs to Co-Chairs Lyndsey and Andrea for a terrific year on Council. Great new initiatives and the survey led by Jenni Cathcart was incredibly robust and helpful in determining new ways forward.

Staff Appreciation lunch tomorrow. Sarah Mavrou and Kate Summers will be decorating. Drop off food to staff room or office. Precook and volunteers will heat it up in the late morning.

Carnival Update - Michaela Jeffs

If you haven't signed up yet, please do. Teachers volunteering from 3:00-4:00 requested to sign up at mailboxes and list their preferred times. Did not get sponsorship as in previous years. There is a bake sale, cake walk, items for these urgently required. Permit is a lot more expensive this year.

Meeting Adjourned

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 on Wednesday, June 6, 2018.

Next Meeting

Fall 2018! Have a great summer!