

BOWMORE SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Date | time May 13, 2019 @ 6:09 pm | *Meeting called to order by* Lyndsey Camps

In Attendance:

Lyndsey Camps, Andrea Maugham, Sarah Kelar, Jody Sadofsky, Anndrea Hughes, Natalie Poissant, Koreena Audette, Cindy Perry, Ruth Lee, Emily Boffa, Shelly Baboolall, Tova Lieff, Jolane Folts, Jenn Engels, Anjali Misra, Jennifer Cloke-Campbell, Jamie Zancai, Heather Groves, Shelagh Smith, Karin Eaton, Marike Emery, Stephen Parsons, Michaela Jeffs, Abby Smallwood.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes from the April 2019 Bowmore School Council Meeting were approved by Jen Cloke-Campbell, seconded by Jolene Folts.

Call for New Business:

Lunchroom Supervisors – Jody Sadofsky

June Meeting Agenda – Present Spending Plan - Andrea

Any committee members or individuals who want funds set aside, or have new ideas, please put together a brief description of the request. That will be what the co-chairs will base the proposed 2019-2020 spending plan on. A similar request has been put out to teaching staff. The chairs will put all proposals together, sit with administration and council will vote on it in the fall.

Carnival Update - Lyndsey

We now have lots of volunteers but having broken shifts out in an Excel spreadsheet, it now it looks as if we closer to 200 volunteers. Grade 7's and 8's can volunteer, high school students can get volunteer hours if they do a shift; each shift is 45 minutes. If you can't contribute time please contribute some baked goods; store-bought are welcome as well. If it rains the Carnival will be postponed, and we will do a fall 2019 Carnival.

Expecting vs. Accommodating Queer Identities presentation – Jamie Zancai

Jamie Zancai, Junior Kindergarten teacher currently pursuing a Masters in Arts / Social Justice at OISE (University of Toronto) gave a presentation on *Expecting versus Accommodating Queer Identities*. The goal is to start the dialogue around the subject, to foster inclusive environments for students, staff and family.

By letting students know that queer identity is a natural and expected part of our community there will be less anxiety and less feeling of needing to “come out of the closet”. A clip from *The Mask You Live In* – about negotiating masculine identity <http://therepresentationproject.org/film/the-mask-you-live-in-film/> was shown, and Jamie also suggested watching *Miss Representation* which examines how mainstream culture and media contribute to the under-representation of women in positions of power.

<http://therepresentationproject.org/film/miss-representation-film/about-the-film/#synopsis>

A clip from *Advice to Parents* with Trent academic and author Karleen Pendleton Jimenez was shown. She discussed parent-teacher meetings and developing a good rapport with the teacher as being the primary way that parents can ensure there is proper representation the classroom. Pendleton Jimenez' book *Tomboys and*

other Gender Superheroes <http://people.trentu.ca/~kpendletonjimenez/books.html> was also suggested as a valuable resource.

Upcoming school initiative Gender Splendour, which will be the last of the House System/Door Decorating Projects will help to have this conversation active in all the classes.

A parent raised an issue that she has repeatedly brought to teachers and the administration about the heteronormative celebration of Mother's Day and Father's Day which doesn't adequately represent all families of the Bowmore community. The notion of celebrating one "Caregivers Day" to more accurately represent all family units was raised; this is something that the Diversity Committee will continue to discuss with the administration; it was also suggested that this should not remain an ask solely from the queer community, but that more members of the wider Bowmore community should ask for fairer representation when celebrating caregivers.

Jamie began his talk by showing artwork by artist Benjamin Lee Hicks <http://leehicks.weebly.com/> whose comic book work became part of Hicks' Masters thesis. The work spoke to this idea of "accommodation of" vs. "expectation of" queer identities continuing to marginalize students. A parent wondered if it would be possible to have this artwork reproduced for Bowmore as the visual impact of the work brings home that message in a direct and meaningful way. Jamie said that he would be happy to discuss with the artist.

Hot Lunch Program – Lyndsey & Andrea

Now that the Hot Lunch Program, provided through The Lunch Lady <http://thelunchlady.ca/> has been in place for most of the year, the question was raised as to whether or not we should continue with this provider. Two issues in particular were in question:

- 1) Can we find a provider that is more Eco-Friendly? The main issue here is waste. The meals are delivered late to the classrooms, students are rushed through their meals, they often don't finish and the packaging and the uneaten lunch are thrown away, resulting in a lot of mess for teachers/caretakers. A suggestion to the administration was made that a policy of bringing home the uneaten lunch would be sensible, as this would reduce waste/mess at the school and parents would be able to see how much of the meal was going uneaten and make decisions accordingly. Other vendors such as Rose Reisman were consulted; although compostable packaging could be provided, the overall costs would be higher.
- 2) Is the program equitable? How can we get closer to equity (where all families regardless of income have access to the program) or can we not? The numbers of 200 students / week participating vs. 700+ a participating for pizza lunch seem to indicate that the program is geared more towards parent convenience than ensuring adequate nutrition for students.

Since The Lunch Lady should be advised by the end of the year that we might not continue with the program, it was decided that a committee should be formed to determine certain things: overall level of parental/student satisfaction with the program, what improvements might be made, then sit down with the various stakeholders – administration, teachers, Eco Club, and then send out a survey through Survey Monkey so that appropriate decisions about whether or not and how to continue in the fall can be made. Committee with consist of Anjali Misra, Cindy Perry, and Abby Smallwood, and will consult with Jen Cloke-Cambell of Eco Club.

Staffing for 2019-2020

The Class Organization document will be shared separately.

54.5 teachers will be hired for next year. There was a lottery for the first time for Grades 7/8 students in Extended French. The administration has been able to reclaim an extra classroom space because the Bowmore Daycare Centre closure.

Next year there will be 1020 students but we will not require portables. Primary numbers are up to 20. Intermediate classes are up to 26. JK/SK numbers are slightly higher.

Admin Team Update – Heather Groves & Stephen Parsons

School Improvement Plan -

Asked to review on a regular basis along three lines: Achievement, equity and well-being.

In terms of **equity, accessibility** is under consideration – how is the school structure, how are the bathrooms designed to serve students with accessibility needs. How do we ensure that Special Education students are integrated more effectively with the rest of the student body? Opportunities will be found so the French programs can cross-pollenate with English students, Gifted students can work with other streams in social studies and science.

Achievement - the big emphasis this year was on raising mathematic standards (geometry was especially emphasized with many professional development hours devoted to that), students with additional reading needs have a chance to practice three times a week for 30 minutes to get their reading mileage up.

Well-being – there is a strong committee operating, and Mr. Overby's efforts to raise awareness and spirits during Mental Health Week was greatly appreciated. The house system has been one of our greatest successes this year to bring students together, as well as Indigenizing our classrooms. Next year we will all operate on one time clock. Intermediate students will have a morning recess, creating opportunities for intermediates to help younger students with conflict resolution. Intermediates won't have an afternoon recess so they can leave early and pick up younger students in their families.

EQAO (Grades 3 and 6) will take place at the end of May, which helps to drive programming for next year.

Caretaking Update -

After concerns were raised with the administration about the quality of caretaking on the school premises, a discussion took place to understand challenges and improve service. There are conditions and situations with the snow, clearing the sidewalks. One problem came from the TDSB-wide snow day that was called this winter – caretakers were also dismissed for the day, and when everyone returned to school the caretaking team had one hour to clear the entire school property. The administration understands that caring for such a large school with so many students is a big job. There is definitely room for improvement. Nutrition program and hot lunch creates a lot of problems. VP Parsons has taken on having reminder conversations with all the classes, as well as 'fireside chats' talking about showing respect for the school. Currently the team is down 2 caretakers, with one caretaker being on medical leave. Communication is always the key: if a message gets to VP Parsons right away, the caretaking team is very responsive.

EDP Update -

The new Extended Day Program <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/EarlyYears/Child-Care/Extended-Day-Programs> is slated to begin in September of 2019. There is a great demand and the administration is planning to hire 6 more staff members accordingly; between 120-180 people are on the list. A parent suggested it might be wise

to check in with those on the list as many parents pay deposits and put themselves on multiple lists in order to cover their bases.

New Business – Lunchtime Supervisors

There have been many complaints by parents and students about the noise and chaos of the lunchrooms, most specifically about the Junior Gym lunch room. Currently the school is meeting the board mandated numbers - but with only 2 supervisors (TDSB minimum) in the Junior Gym it is chaotic and incredibly loud, not a relaxing environment conducive to enjoying lunch. Jody Sadofsky brought a letter on behalf of Bowmore parents addressed to the School Trustee, the Superintendent of Schools, and ideally the Minister of Education, inviting them to come witness the controlled chaos, and underlining the need for increased funds. Those proposed funds will allow for additional supervisors in order to create an additional space where kids might eat.

Jody read the letter to the group who approved it; the administration will provide the most up to date data to include in the letter ,and we will hopefully get a response before the next school year.

Meeting Adjourned

Meeting adjourned at 7:59pm on Monday, May 13, 2019.

Next Meeting

June 12, 2019 at 6:00pm