

Hopewell Ave. Public School Parent Council
Tuesday, September 13, 2011 Meeting Minutes

1. Welcome and call to order

Neal called the meeting to order.

2. Approval of Agenda and June meeting minutes

Mike moved that Council accept the agenda. Seconded by John.

Minutes for June 2011's meeting will be passed at the next meeting.

3. Chair's Report

Accommodations review:

The last meeting for the ARC was in June and no further information was presented at that time.

The next meeting is Sept 20th. The core issue is overpopulation, particularly at Glebe schools and to a lesser extent at Hopewell. Staff will make their report available before the next meeting. It is expected that staff will present 2 distinct views: neighbourhood school perspective and consolidated program view.

Council expressed its thanks Chair Neal Hill, Mike Stewart Jeea Saraswati, and Jenny Haysome (OSCA rep) for representing Hopewell in the Accommodations review so well

4. Principal's report

It was a wonderful, calm start to the year.

Class projections were closer to actual this year; approx. 900 kids enrolled in 40 classes; there is one grade 1 class that is over the cap so there will be a reorganization of classes. No final decision has been made yet on what that will look like but it will be in the next two weeks (by end of Sept) Admin will be working with teachers to make the right decisions; Affected families will be contacted. The reorganization takes a long time because the whole Board has to re-organize at the same time to achieve no more than 10% over cap across the Board.

All research shows there is no loss of learning in split grades.

About 300 intermediate students; 250 juniors; 220 primaries and 130 JK and SK.

Recycling Council of Ontario – Hopewell has joined the waste free lunch challenge. Hopewell was audited for recycling and didn't do very well. Please try to package lunch in waste-free, re-usable packaging.

EQAO results have come in. All of Hopewell's results are over 80%, with one over 90%. (80% or over of students received a level 3 or 4)

More info on the school improvement program will be presented at the next meeting. We plan to focus more on numeracy for the next two years. Parents will be hearing more about how to work with their children; evening sessions for parents will be planned to help parents work with their kids.

Nicole explained the difference between lockdowns and “secure the school”: lockdowns are used when there is an intruder in the school that could be dangerous. During a lockdown, the kids hide in their classroom with doors and windows locked. This is the most severe scenario. A new, less severe approach has now been introduced called “Secure the school” where kids go back to their classrooms and doors closed but teaching can continue; this might happen in a medical emergency where stretcher or medical professionals need to come in so halls need to be evacuated; nobody is allowed in or out of the school during those secure the school measures. There will also be practice lockdowns where kids will be told it’s only practice (to lessen anxiety). Police come in to check the practice lockdown.

Richard Simpson introduced himself; he is now the permanent VP and will be at all council meetings to update on sporting and extracurricular programs.

Donna Boyle will be the contact for website updates. A volunteer is being sought to assist with website updates as the current resource is no longer able to do it.

Merri Legris, one of Council’s teacher representatives will be bringing forward more info from teachers at future meetings.

5. Ongoing Council Activities

a) External Environment:

John Loop updated Council on the upgrades to the grass yard. The plan was executed exactly as promised; more drainage work was done than was expected to ensure proper drainage with great results! A new fence was also put in which was an unexpected bonus.

Work has taken a bit longer than expected and the completed yard will be fully open to kids shortly. A ribbon cutting ceremony will be held to officially open the yard.

John Loop thanked Nicole for devoting the last dollars needed to complete the project; Neal Hill and Rob Coplan were also thanked for their support in getting the yard completed. Currently the upper yard is open on Sat and Sun (A parent is in charge of opening and closing the gate). The new field could be used by OSCA for t-ball or tykes soccer. If this is done, we could have a discussion with the City about additional funding to enhance the yard even further.

For this year, there is interest in doing some murals. We could get an Ontario Arts council grant to remunerate artists and pay for supplies. It is in the works already.

A tree is being planted in the center of the renovated yard. It is hoped we can box in the trees and put cedar tops to protect trees and roots and also provide space for kids who want to sit quietly.

Clean Sweep happening on October 1 (Saturday); working with grounds keeper to figure out 5-6 key areas of focus for the day. Volunteers are needed and should contact Lori Mockson. It is a great opportunity for kids who need to book volunteer hours.

Council expressed its gratitude for John many, many hours of work in pushing the grass yard project forward.

b) Budget Committee:

There is a substantial amount of money left over from last year. We are looking at contributing 10K for the yard improvements. As well, Safe and Caring Schools committee has requested \$600 to have a full day with Tina Daniels (A school-wide assembly, with follow up visits to each classroom with a team of grad students).

Neal moved that \$12 000.00 be allocated to relocating the play structure in the grass yard. Seconded by Heather.

The original plan called to have the structure moved for drainage and safety reasons, but the School Board did not provide funds. The cost was \$30K to move the structure and ground it correctly. Hopewell school paid the \$30K to have the move done in a timely manner. Discussion continued on how to help pay for this large cost over time.

Motion was approved.

Heather moved that \$1 000 be allocated towards a school wide anti-bullying day led by psychologist Tina Daniels. Seconded by Judy.

Tina will also be involved in a staff meeting with teachers at the end of the day and parent assembly at night. Focus will be on preventative measures and setting a positive culture in the school. The objective is to kick off the school year in a very positive way; getting kids thinking about kindness, respect, etc.

Motion was approved.

Jennifer moved that \$797.25 be donated to Clifford Bowey School's yard accessibility project. Seconded by Lori M.

Money from last year's ski and skate sale was earmarked towards this school's accessibility project.

Motion was approved.

6. New Business

Judy Calder requested a volunteer to take over Subway lunch. There is some paperwork at the beginning then it runs itself. Any interested volunteers should contact Judy Calder who will walk the new volunteer through the process.

Additional volunteers also needed to assist with communications (e.g., taking minutes at meetings) and communicating with parents.

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Jennifer. Seconded by Lori.

Motion was approved.