

Howard Jr. P.S. Parent Council Meeting Minutes
June 10, 2020, 7-9 pm
Zoom

- 1) Approval of February 2020 meeting minutes

Deferred.

- 2) Approval of today's meeting agenda

To add: Information sharing in August (Kathy Narraway)

To add: Proposed budget framework (Samantha Rupert)

- 3) Principal's update

Esme is appreciative of parents' patience while we all navigate this unfamiliar situation. She'd like to give parents at this meeting an opportunity to ask questions.

Question from parent: Are there any guidelines for how much online learning the kids should be doing daily? Can Howard teachers provide more structure? Teachers at other schools seem to be providing more structure.

Answer: The inconsistency in remote teaching is an issue across the Board. Staff are having equipment issues and the school building has been inaccessible because the Board has forbidden entry without Public Health guidelines re: how to do that safely. The Ministry of Education has been vague about expectations on teachers so it has been difficult to create consistency around what Howard teachers are offering. In order for Esme and Suzy to enforce expectations, they need stronger, clearer language from the Board. Families' expectations and capacities are different as well. The expectation is that children should be completing 5 hours a week of school work. Two weeks ago, there was direction from the Board that teachers must do two live teaching sessions per week (each should be a minimum of 15 mins in length).

Question: Are we still doing something to honour Mr. Ing?

Answer: There will be a graduation award for empathy in his honour - to be presented this year for the first time. A Buddy Bench with Mr. Ing's name will be incorporated into the schoolyard. Other ideas for how to celebrate Eddie will be carried out in the Fall. Note that the Council has \$357.58 set aside for celebrating and/or memorializing Mr. Ing.

Question: What will school look like in the Fall?

Answer: Nothing has been decided yet but the province is considering 4 different scenarios:

- 1) Full, in-person school attendance as usual
- 2) Full-time remote learning (and discussions re: how to improve consistency)
- 3) A hybrid of in-person and remote learning that involves shortened school days

- 4) 'A hybrid of in-person and remote learning that involves alternate days of school attendance

If school goes ahead in the Fall, because Labour day is so late, school may technically begin in late August with two Professional Development days. Howard will be accessible during the last few weeks of August for touching base and discussing the school year.

Question: Can Esme and Suzy pass information onto parents and be accessible earlier in the summer to ask questions? Can teachers provide better guidance to parents re: improved structure for online learning if that is the case for the Fall?

Answer: Yes. Esme confirmed that the school email list should still function during the summer.

- 4) Financial update

Summary of our current financial position:

- \$12000 to be kept in reserve for 2020/2021 school year and used to cover this year's outstanding expenses
- \$1590 to be donated to school yard renovation (meaning that school yard renovation will have \$40k so far)
- Subject to change pending review of outstanding expenses for 2019/2020 school year

Next year's school council will have to decide on ongoing fundraising efforts for school yard. Esme and Suzy have met with Board and School Yard Steering Committee regularly to push the school yard project forward. As of now, infrastructure money for schools is still there so project still moving forward on the previously established timeline. We need to let them know in June (now) how much money we have but if in September, we can project another number, they will support that and add to the plan for the school yard.

Proposed budget framework:

In an effort to make the budget planning process more transparent and easier for all involved, Samantha Rupert and Lise Anne Gougeon are proposing a budget framework that clearly defines budget priorities and processes. This idea was first brought forward in the Fall and was intended to be discussed during the April Council meeting. Given the closure due to Covid, this discussion is being deferred to the September 2020 Council meeting so next year's Council can have the discussion and take action as they see fit.

Here is a link to the proposal:

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1kDZVX0dcj5AG6S9u1qFVjlsZhx1JA9UI7-F4PXwSzPc/edit?usp=sharing>

- 5) Mental Health Committee - Calming room

Confirmation that \$1600 from this year's budget (\$1000 allotted originally plus \$600 rollover funds) available for calming room on third floor. Remaining costs will be paid for by the School. Samantha to work with Esme to issue payments to suppliers.

6) Grade 6 graduates

Virtual graduation will be held on June 25, 2020 at 2 pm.

Erin McCaughan organized for lawn signs to be placed in front of the homes of our 2020 graduates (ref image below).



7) New JK students

Welcome letter to be sent by the School to all JK families letting them know their teacher and classroom. They are considering holding small lemonade parties (up to 10 people) for JK families in late August as meet and greet, opportunity to have questions answered. Cindy Wye, Taralyn Fodor and Alison Rowland to help Esme and Suzy organize something to facilitate connection for JK families.

8) Musical update

The hope is that the Lion King Musical will happen next school year. They have already spent money on script, and many families have spent a lot of time working towards the musical. Grade 6s will still be given an opportunity to perform in it next year. Students can be brought up from Chorus to fill gaps if certain grade 6s won't be participating next year.

9) Call for Fall Fete Chairs

Ongoing. Anyone interested in finding out about the role should contact one of the Council Exec or reach out to us at howardschoolcouncil@gmail.com.