

Ecole Connaught School, 101 8th St SW, Medicine Hat AB, T1A 4L5

SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes – September 29th, 2021 6:30 pm Zoom Meeting (Virtual via Zoom)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81198011823?pwd=Q1hCZzhiR2NWVDZvYXlFOUpnRlBwdz09>

Chaired by: Heather Hunt and Michelle Millington

Minutes by: Rose Paulgaard

In Attendance: Jennifer Stang (Co-Chair), Michelle Millington (Co-Chair), Heather Hunt (Chair), Rose Paulgaard (Secretary), Deni Neigum (Principal), Diane Cartier (Vice Principal), Stephanie Funk, Jeanine Hughes, Bridget Neigum, Joanne Hulme, Ashley Reimer, Yvonne Sissons, Julia Harris, Lee Krasilowez, Erin Grujic, Jane, Jason Miller, Kristine van, Brent

I. Welcome and Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 6:32 p.m. by Heather Hunt

II. Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we are on the traditional territory of the Blackfoot Confederacy, and the people of Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta. We also acknowledge and honour the homeland of the Métis people.

III. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve agenda as presented by Ashley Reimer, seconded by Yvonne Sissons.
Approved.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve minutes as presented by Yvonne Sissons, seconded by Ashley Reimer.
Approved.

V. Introduction of 2021/2022 Council Executives

- a. Jennifer Stang (Co-Chair), Michelle Millington (Co-Chair), Heather Hunt (Vice-Chair), Rose Paulgaard (Secretary)
- b. Role of School Advisory Council (Jenn Stang)

VI. Role of 2021/2022 Fundraising Society (Callie Fichter)

- a. While council focuses on parent engagement, the Society is the fundraising arm of operations. All funds from the School Advisory Council have been moved into the Society. The next Society meeting is Sept. 30 at 6:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome!

VII. Financial Report

A new budget has been developed and will be submitted for review at the Society meeting on Sept. 30. Approval to be confirmed.

VIII. Old Business

- **Review of Council Activity 2020/2021 (Jenn Stang)**

- Despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, Council coordinated many successful activities and opportunities for engagement throughout the school year:
 - Established dedicated council Zoom link
 - Resumed hot lunches in January
 - Introduced monthly draw for fundscrip participants
 - Hosted family paint night, medalta pottery, cooking decorating, yoga activities via zoom. Tried to keep costs low so everyone could participate
 - Organized two bottle drives
 - Launched Heart project with ninjas/videos
 - Held most successful spell-a-thon to date
 - Installed Literacy Lane in the hallway
 - Supported Grade 6 Farewell
 - Offered year end popsicles
 - Hosted staff appreciation lunch at the end of the year.

- **Fundraising Association Annual Returns Update (Callie Fichter):** Tabled until Oct 2021

IX. New Business

- **School Year Priorities: Wellness & Literacy (Deni Neigum)**

- Wellness: Students, staff and families were surveyed on various occasions, with common themes emerging. The number one theme was around wellness.
- Literacy: Similar to trends across the province around the world, Ecole Connaught and MHPD 76 have noticed a slide in literacy. Ecole Connaught wants to focus on effective literacy instruction, identify skills necessary to help close gaps, and make literacy a family activity, preferred activity. Work on this priority started in February 2021 and we are continuing that journey.
- Please think of ways to support wellness, literacy

- **School Community Connections: Ideas for events/activities?**
 - (Lee Krasilowez) Consider the communications aspect with teachers to make them feel seen and heard and ensure they know our parent community is here for them. How can we split the load to check in on our teachers? Our constant priority should be to take care of teachers. Maybe an Adopt a Teacher concept? What else can we do to spread positivity? Lee volunteered to lead future initiatives.
 - (Stephanie Funk/ Erin Grujic) – Sweet treats with a sweet message for teachers? Maybe a parent council member could work with students to collect nice messages about their teachers to create a poster for the classroom door? Or a digital version using Jamboard?
 - (Jane) Classroom support? Are we able to provide support to teachers in the classroom?

- **COVID Protocols and Processes (Deni Neigum)**
 - When there is an active COVID case (student or staff), info is now shared on the school web page. No individual identification is attached, only the classroom. If there are two or more cases, a letter goes out to parents. Isolated cases are communicated on the web page.
 - An updated isolation requirement document is now available. If a child has symptoms and
 - does not take a COVID test: they must isolate for a full 10 days or until symptoms resolve, whichever is longer
 - has a negative COVID test result: they must stay home until symptoms resolve.
 - Allergies /pre-existing condition: Documentation from a physician is encouraged to support teacher communication and response.

- **Welcome Back Bottle Drive** was held on September 19, great support from school and community. Thank you! (Callie Fichter)

- **Outdoor Classroom Upgrade** (Bridget Neigum)
 - How could our school family come together to enhance the outdoor classroom space? The Neigum family is in the construction/heavy equipment business and is interested in supporting a project, other parents may be willing to contribute time and resources as well.

- River Heights has a nice outdoor space, Bridget connected with the school about their project and noted an overhead closure requires city planning and development, Blue Imp was the supplier of musical playground equipment.
- Jane noted there may be an opportunity for kids to provide input about the space and be more invested in the project.
- Need to create a committee to move the project forward and support: grant writing, required city and division approvals, parent communications, pitch to Revitalization Society, possible corporate sponsorship.

- **Screen Time Reduction (Julia Harris)**

- Questions regarding screen time in classroom: Is there a mandate around chromebooks in the classroom? What does it look like, are there any school wide regulations, or is it on a class-by-class basis?
- (Deni) Grade levels have min?max times for device usage.
 - K-2: 10% -25%
 - Grade 3 – 6: Minimum 25% – Maximum 50%
 - Have let teachers know that they aren't to show movies at lunch. Want children to socialize and eat in a calm space. Movies are ok for a reward or special event.
- Will chromebook mandate go away? Not likely post-covid, but it is recognized a balance is needed. Flexibility is valued but there are concerns as well. There was a division/school decision to allow access to certain sites. Firewalls in place should manage some extraneous sites, and there is a rider on pages that indicates approved SD76 place. Teachers /parents can put additional blockers in place. Diane noted letters should have gone home from teachers, Deni will include info in her Sunday note.

- **Hot Lunch (Jenn Stang)**

- Hot lunches are running again. TLC Farms is not available this year but we have gained Dee's Bakery who supported our first hot lunch.
- Jane is our new hot lunch lead, Amber is the back up
- Clean up process: COncerns were raised about the amount of juice boxes in the kitchen fridge, additional fridge space is available downstairs for council use.

- **Questionnaire for Trustee Candidates (Ashley Reimer)**

- 14 candidates, lots to choose from. As parents, there is an opportunity to ask questions.

- Looking for input on questions to share online and support from council.
- Lee noted a request came from CHHS Council (Karen Saffran) to present a coordinated effort when approaching candidates.
- Ashley to connect with Karen about collaborative opportunities. Any parents interested in supporting this initiative, please email a-reimer@live.com.

X. Principal's Report (Deni Neigum)

- **School Start Up**

- Very proud of our school community. Big thank you to families, teachers and students for another great start up. We were hoping for something a little more normal, but students are doing a tremendous job.
- Questions welcome! Please connect with Deni, Diane, or Tamara.
- What about the front doorbell? The doorbell is sensitive, parents are asked to please stay with their kids until the door opens, and please call the number on the door if the bell doesn't work. Noted that a replacement may be necessary, a suggestion was made to install a Nest.

- **AEA survey results - tabled**

X. Correspondence

- Nothing to report, hot lunch flyers

XI. Gratitude

- Thanks to everyone for coming!
- Noted that the wellness theme for next week is gratitude.
- Diane: Kudos to the parent group for supporting students and teachers!
- Welcome to new students/families. Thank you for choosing Connaught School!

XII. Next Meeting

- Wednesday, October 27th, 2021

XIII. Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned at 7:42 p.m.