

**MINUTES
NORTHLEA SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING
NOVEMBER 22, 2012, 6:45 PM, LIBRARY**

Present – Wilmar Kortleeveer, Sarah Dawson, Shelly Lowe, Kathy Ribeiro, Mike Kennedy, Julie Brown, Rachel Chernos-Lin, Lynda Debono, Nancy Baillie, Kiki Plytas, Sylvia Franklin, Peter Baugh, Bernadette Vanneste

Regrets - Guy Larivière, Taggett Cornish, Becky Jenkins, Sue Brookes, Sue Thurow, Kara Pearson-Kane, Frank Chang

Meeting was called to order at 7:06 pm.

1. WELCOME / INTRODUCTION – WILMAR KORTLEEVEER

- **Regrets sent from executive members – Sue Brookes, Sue Thurow, Kara Pearson-Kane and teacher reps, Guy Lariviere and Taggett Cornish, and also Becky Jenkins. Reminder to sign in.**

2. MOTION Julie Brown, Nancy Baillie
APPROVAL OF COUNCIL AGENDA CARRIED

3. MOTION Sylvia Franklin, Kiki Plytas
APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES, OCTOBER 3, 2012 CARRIED

4. CHAIR'S REPORT – WILMAR KORTLEEVEER

- It's been very busy with events like Cross-country and Hallowe'en
- We have started 4 council committees recently – Safe Schools; FDK/Full day Kindergarten; CATs/Council Advisory Team; and Technology.
- Over 30 parents (over 20 new) have volunteered for these committees, some for more than one
- Wilmar and Sarah have represented Northlea at meetings with Trustee Gerri Gershon and with the Superintendent, Rauda Dickinson
- They also attended a coffee meeting with Gershon earlier this week re labour dispute
- People for Education conference and TDSB conference attended in the last few weeks as well
- Our teachers and Administration are doing many things – our children are some of the most fortunate in the TDSB and province
- Current state of events – labour dispute has not been resolved. All withdrawal of services are voluntary by teachers or a group of teachers – varies from school to school and day to day
- Elementary teachers do not have a strike position – strike could involve job action and teachers away from the school
- Gerri Gershon included a list of non-mandatory elements in the event of a strike (elementary will be similar to secondary)
- A number of secondary local units have come to agreement – hoping this will be the beginning of more
- Dec 31st is deadline and a contract can and may be enforced by the Government
- After strike vote (week after next), there could be more withdrawal of services at Northlea
- As soon as we know more, we will let everyone know
- We have had Curriculum Day and will also have our Winter Concerts during the day
- Whether there is an agreement or not, there are elements in Bill 115, that will be in place either way: 1) Change in hiring practices after January 1, 2013 – hiring of LTOs (Long Term Occasional Replacements) – where a Principal had ability to hire anyone meeting requirements, the Principal will have to pick a replacement from the 1st 5 people on the seniority replacement list. It takes away the opportunity to choose freely, who we think is the best candidate. This affects our

freedom and flexibility in hiring. An opening will be posted and any teacher can apply for a long term occasional position. We like to hire based on fit within the school and the staff, so choices will be restricted.

- Question came up where this is coming from – started with other School Boards where it was part of their negotiations (French and Catholic) – province has determined it should be part of all Boards

5. ADMINISTRATOR'S UPDATE – KATHY RIBEIRO

- Becky Jenkins is at a Selection Committee meeting tonight for Forest of Reading – children will read books and have book talks and then get to vote on the books – this is very popular with the students
- November was a fabulous month – trip to Royal Winter Fair and Fort York, Junior Achievement, Remembrance Day, ILTC every Thursday, Greenhouse Trip (part of Tusk), Public Health Nurse in, ROM, Officer Marcie, Primary Opera performance on Tuesday. Holiday concerts will go forward – Mitch Bondy and Kathy worked to continue this event. December 12th – there will be two day-time concerts – 10am and 1:30pm, during the instructional day. We tried to give as much notice as possible so parents can attend if possible. We have now given up the evening time, so this will not be changed back. Question re whether the concert will be taped. Kathy will ask Mitch if there is a way to record the concert. We would have to figure out the legalities of doing so.
- Kindergarten concerts will take place on Dec 19th, in morning and afternoon.
- Upcoming event at Queen's Park on Dec 19
- Holiday Fest will be on Dec 18th.
- Free the Children Assembly will take place on Dec 20
- Northlea was selected to host visitors from the Netherlands – our visitors gave Kathy clogs and a bandana
- Birthday Book Program started this year – with an Amazon gift certificate, the teachers have picked out their favourite books. Ms Millar said we can buy these books for any occasion.
- Scholastic Book Fair coming soon. Ms Millar will be here at 8am each day, during recess and after school.
- Two committee meetings will take place in the next few weeks – Safe and Caring Committees, and Full Day Kindergarten Committee meeting on Dec 6 – we will get reports back to Home and School meeting
- Ms Cioban and Mr Albright have started Grade 4/5 Basketball; Mr Ellis created a team, going to a tournament tomorrow and again on Monday; Boys Reading Club is going really well; and we've had a very successful Grade 6 dance. The dance had great reviews from the kids. Next dance will be on Valentines Day
- Tomorrow is blue and white day for the Argos. There will also be trivia questions: What Northlea graduate plays currently for the Argos? Guess the correct score.
- Remembrance Day Service was outstanding.
- We continue to thank administration and staff for everything at our school that is still going on.
- Question re service vehicles in north laneway – there have been painters here for 3 weeks, boilers have been having issues, alarm testers have been in and has taken several days. No problems with the heat, but they are doing some maintenance (welding). \$3B backlog of maintenance in the school board, as per Trustee Gershon
- Tomorrow, there will be a letter re Holiday Hampers going home, where we will have the opportunity to supply gifts, foods, etc. for chosen families – this will last until 2nd week of December

6. PORTFOLIO UPDATE - SCHOOL SUPPORT – RACHEL CHERNOS-LIN AND KARA PEARSON-KANE

- Safe arrival doing really well - always happy to have new volunteers.
- PSP is running well and we are looking for more volunteers for winter
- Full Day Kindergarten Committee and Safe and Caring Schools committee – great parent interest
- Mike Kennedy mentioned to please avoid parking in daycare parking lot

- Rachel and Gina are running a program for people in need at Northlea – this is not run through Home and School and anyone interested in donating can talk to Rachel and get added to the list

7. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN – KATHY RIBEIRO

- This is an annual document – it was passed around the meeting room
- EQAO targets are mentioned in it – we will not cover now, but it will be on a future agenda in Jan/Feb timeframe
- We had the Council Advisory Team in initial meeting last week – they looked at it and questions have been forwarded to Kathy
- Northlea is now part of East Region 16. In September, Superintendent Rauda Dickinson visited all schools
- We are establishing our ELC dates and the School Effectiveness Framework
- Hubs (schools that are similar) have changed this year – we are with Bennington and Bedford
- In the past we were part of 3 or 4 hubs, so this has been streamlined by Superintendent
- Admin team are the instructional leaders so work closely with the teachers – we have unique needs and challenges – still part of a French immersion hub
- We do planning of Personal Development for teachers, discuss challenges and share Best Practises
- October – diagnostics done by classroom teachers – they upload results online
- Teaching learning critical pathways – all teachers at a particular grade work together
- Our grade teams and divisional teams are larger
- NTIP – for new teachers to evaluate them
- TPA – experienced teacher
- PPA – for administrators
- District reviews – going into every single classroom, assessing how we're doing
- The team coming in will be administrators from outside our family of schools – they are evaluating everything (notebooks, tests, posters on walls, teacher's daybook, etc)
- In the end we receive a report card regarding how we did
- This is mandated, not voluntary, scheduled in September
- There will be a debrief with the teachers regarding how we are ranked and where we need to improve
- The visitors from the Netherlands helped with the process (it was a group of educators)
- It is about improving student achievement, literacy and numeracy, aligning assessment and evaluation practices
- New School improvement plan was handed out (four areas of focus being Literacy, Numeracy, Pathways and Community, Culture & Caring)
- Schools set goals and targets – this year all schools are doing the same 4 targets, same timelines and are constructed at school level
- Literacy – students do well compared to board, but we're striving for better scores – 3-5% increase by end of school year
- Different diagnostics being used for English/French
- Looking to personalize the data to the student level, to help all students, and not leave anyone behind
- All teachers are giving Kathy tracking cards, for each reporting cycle. Teachers have a full grade plan with lessons to target those skills. They need a plan by individual students as well
- We can put in accomodations for students with needs – within different grades and classes
- The staff will put this on the data wall to track student improvement
- It's about explicit teaching of specific skills
- SIP is a living breathing document that we update collectively with the staff throughout the year
- Each SIP area has been summarized, with a high yield strategy (handout given in the meeting)
- At end of last year, to help teachers with critical thinking questions, we gave them question starters
- Numeracy – set target and focus interventions
- PD session next week for four families of schools - another in York Mills in January.

- Pathways – preparing Intermediates to be successful in high school – we've put a number of things in place this year (much done by our guidance counsellor, Arpi Kurkjan)
- There are many great things happening to prepare our students
- Community, Culture and Sharing – we have a strong supportive partnership and will continue to nurture it and enhance it; i.e. PSP, which has been a huge success story
- We will have an EQAO presentation from the leadership team (board recognized leadership position) – 4 chairs are in place – Taggett Cornish as primary chair, Harshini Fazl as junior chair, Lindsay Borden for Special education and a new chair, Shawn Smith as technology chair – they will come to our January meeting to do the presentation
- Handout given on EQAO grade 3 and grade 6 results – comparing the school, the board and the province – goes back to 2007/8.
- Northlea is above the board average in reading, below in writing and above in math (for grade 3)
- In Grade 6, we are above the board average in reading, writing and math
- Some years will be stronger than others and we align our support as such
- Last year's SIP goals were 3-5% and we didn't meet them – these are goals we strive for, but we don't always achieve these goals
- Question was asked if the goal is to exceed the board and province or to achieve our own targets – we are looking to achieve our targets
- Some schools purchase homework practice – additional questions that use the EQAO language – children work their way through these books to prepare them for these standardized tests
- Question was posed regarding what we are doing differently this year. Different grade teams are planning programs, who work really well together. It is worked into the timetable and we are building in blocks of literacy and numeracy, that we try to protect (having these blocks makes a difference). We started diagnostics right away and are doing moderated marking, ensuring teachers are on the same page with marking and assessment. We applied for a tutor in the classroom and got it – last year we had a university student come in May. This year, we've hired a Full-time university student to come in every week, and believe that will make a difference. Four or five schools got this and we are putting this program in place. it doesn't take away from instruction in the classroom - this is an option – they are specific for EQAO. We have purchased professional books for our library – eg a book with CD that you can use to make overheads. When a student reads a book, we want them to start with retelling, relating and reflecting, helping them to develop skills for higher level thinking
- Comment made that students were having trouble with multiple choice two years ago – at that time, action planned was to increase focus on multiple choice and getting the students more accustomed to that format of testing. Also, there were strategies in creative writing, so it is disheartening to see writing skills going down. We find that when we target a skill, and create actions, you see improvement, but then there are decreases in other areas.
- When we unpack EQAO, you can see exactly what we need to target
- Each division has different things to target with different grade levels – we were hoping to have teacher chairs come and talk to this tonight but will cover it in January
- Comment was made regarding the time on this task in class - in May last year, with choir and sports commitments, there were many kids out of class
- We will continue to have targets and do our best to achieve targets
- Point made that field trips could be changed to other months if they are not directly supporting EQAO (specifically in May and June) - these events are part of curriculum and tradition
- Point made that it is tougher to get into universities and colleges – we want our students to be really strong
- Question asked regarding what the feedback was from teachers on the book? It is a take-home book, that has answers in the back of the book. If teachers collectively want to try it this year, there would be a letter that will come home, and give parents a choice regarding whether they want to participate.
- Question was posed regarding why we don't have absolute targets and benchmarks from relevant schools? ie) x% hitting this target against a school benchmark of y. it would be good to look at similar schools regarding demographics.

- We are trying to support teachers, helping them to figure out what to target and help them with their long range plans
- These are high stakes tests – we want teachers who are more experienced in teaching and helping the children perform to their best abilities
- We have staff, divisional and classroom meetings – Kathy will discuss it with their grade teams
- In January, we can look at it with specific grades
- Question posed regarding descriptive feedback – it's about giving richer feedback to child and parent (ie) in intermediate essays, rubrics help students understand what their performance is and how they get to level 4
- Suggestion was made to use exemplars with the rubrics, so children and parents know what the level 4 performance looks like and descriptive feedback is more robust
- In diagnostics, we have samples for less experienced teachers, as an example
- This is the type of discussion that should be had with the parent advisory team

8. CORRESPONDENCE FILE – WILMAR KORTLEEVER

- Letter to Toronto Police Services, asking for more crossing guards
- School Statement of Needs – we are asked every year, to provide input on Principal needs
- Letter about TDSB insurance – all members of council are covered by TDSB as well as by the Home and School Association
- Update from Gerri Gershon
- Elementary Teachers Federation union letter
- Campaigns for Public Opinion
- Letter from Parents for Education

9. Q&A

- Survey was sent out regarding spending of funds – Julie Brown provided an update - we closed the survey two weeks ago and data is straight-forward. Will meet with fundraising and determine how to convey to the community. We had approx 30% response (was hoping for 40%)

MOTION Linda Debono, Nancy Baillie
TO ADJOURN THE MEETING

CARRIED

Meeting was adjourned at 8:49pm.

- How do we continue to send these messages out? Offers are specific to us at Northlea, and the Home and School benefits from the money. Feedback is that it may not be obvious to everyone that this is part of our fundraising efforts.
- Suggestion that Wilmar could cover fundraising as part of our Kindergarten information night
- In January, at the French immersion info night, we could also feature it
- What package do newcomers get to the school? Will be included in September packages. Whenever we have a captive audience of parents, we should continue to share information on it
- Tomorrow, we are officially an affiliate for Indigo Books. For all purchases, you will get a 2-10% discount (online books, toys, gift cards). Would be great if people buy an Indigo card through Fundscrip and then use it to buy on the Affiliate program
- Family Fun Night is happening Thursday, Feb 28 – Rachel Chernos-Lin and Kara Pearson-Kane are co-chairs
- Nancy Baillie and Lynda Debono are doing the Social Series
- Rachel – we have our first FFN exec meeting next week – team is set. We will have things geared to adults and kids, but mostly focused on the children. There will be a silent auction, geared towards the children. Pawsitively Pets is on board – working on some other new unveilings.
- Two people very interested in hosting a spring fundraiser for adults – raffle prizes included. – Val Cooke and Alexis de Castro. This could become significant fundraiser as well, for the school.
- We'll have more defined info at the next H&S meeting.

6. NEW BUSINESS – WILMAR KORTLEEVER

- Sarah – we won a grant to identify parent involvement in the school – we got the grant and bought Karyn Gordon literature, that parents can sign out of the library. She spoke at the school Info evening last year. This should be available next week.
- Amy - Question re the climbing wall – when will the kids use it? Needed a rock climbing wall inspection and trained teachers in safe use of the rock-climbing wall. We received the certificates yesterday. They have also defined how to orchestrate use of the wall, during a class. All Phys Ed staff and some others have been trained. Good for Kindergarten through Grade 8. Will be part of some gym classes, as a station or warm-up situation.
- Lynda – are all teachers trained in how to use the SmartBoards? Some are portable and some permanently fixed. We have had thefts which render some useless. Staff have all been offered training and constantly provided through TDSB. There are more specific and in-depth training offered when asked for, but the use is not mandated.

7. NEXT MEETING – WILMAR KORTLEEVER

- The next meeting will be in January – stay tuned for the actual date.

MOTION Julie Brown, Rachel Chernos-Lin
TO ADJOURN THE MEETING

CARRIED

Meeting was adjourned at 9:29 pm.