

Ralston School Parent Council meeting minutes
18 January 2023
0900

Attendees:

Ralston School: MrsN, MrC

Parent Council Chair: JWS

Parents: DW, SF, LF, RD, PF, DM, MW, CO.

Item 1 – Introduction of attendees

- MRSN welcomed all attendees.

Item 2 – Review of previous minutes

- The minutes of the meeting taking place on 16 Nov 22 were reviewed and found to be correct.

Item 3 – Class reps

- Mrs N outlined the duties of the class reps and thanked those who had volunteered. It was explained that the aim of having the class reps was to ensure that the views of other parents had been considered and that sufficient representation from all classes was present during the parent council meetings. Not volunteering to be a class rep does not stop anyone from attending the meetings though.

Item 4 – Hot lunches/school cash.

- Mrs N advised that the school had 51 replies (out of 206 families) from the hot lunch survey. Of these, 41% would like to see hot lunches take place monthly, 29% would like twice a month and 23% once a week. Since the majority of respondents wanted hot lunches more often than monthly, it was decided to stick to the twice a month option. It was also agreed that a 25% response rate was not sufficient to base large scale change on.
- The school cash survey was overwhelmingly positive towards its use. Going forward, payments for additional items will be accepted both online and with cash through the office.
- It was asked whether 1 class at a time could take the hot lunches. Due to delivery times and costs, this was deemed not a feasible option.

Item 5 – One school one book project

- Mrs N introduced the '1 school, 1 book project' to the parents for World Book Day. The book, 'The Lemonade War' had been chosen to best take into account the variety of reading ages across the school.
- The whole school will read the same book over the same period with age-appropriate activities taking place alongside it in each class. This will culminate in a whole school celebration on World Book Day – 3 Mar 23.

Item 6 – AOB

- DM asked whether it was possible for the school to disclose how much money was made by the hot lunches. Mrs N agreed to provide this.
- It was noted that the agenda for the parent council meetings always seemed to be proscribed by the school rather than the parents. JWS commented that the proposed agenda is circulated amongst the class reps before the meeting. Parents were free to make any agenda suggestions to the parent council chair in advance of the meetings.
- PRSD policy states that parent council meeting minutes should be archived and available for 7 years after the meetings. It was asked whether these archives were available. As a result of the transient nature of the school, changeover of

principals and Covid, it was advised that these were likely not available. It was presumed by all present that the minutes starting in Sep 22 were probably the first meetings to have been minuted. A record of all the available copies of parent council meeting minutes is therefore available online and will be maintained in the future.

- DM asked whether it would be possible to get breakdowns of the accident and incident statistics on a month-by-month basis? This was seconded by several other attendees.
- DM asked whether the parent council chair could have access to the school Facebook site? Mrs N explained that this had been explored in the past and that PRSD policy stated this was not possible. Future meeting dates could be advertised on the Ralston and Families Facebook group by the Parent Council chair instead.
- DM stated that school report cards seemed to be purely based on the subjective opinion of the teacher. It was asked whether test scores, if available, could be included? Mr C explained that the teacher's opinion was more often based around a longer term look at the child's ability and not just on the snapshot of a test. In this case, the teacher's opinion was often a better reflection of a child's ability. Test scores where available could be included on the report cards in the future though. In the first instance, these should be discussed at parent teacher conferences though.
- It was advised that the next casino charity event would likely be 2-4 June. Any volunteers should make themselves known to the school. This event normally generates a significant amount of income and parental support was encouraged.
- Testing. Deeper explanations of the school (and district/province) testing regime were asked for. It was explained that reading and phonics assessments are done on new starters mid-term if they have missed formal tests so that teachers can gauge ability levels and plan accordingly. Furthermore, the Alberta government SLAs were being conducted for Gr 1 in Jan 23, Gr 2-4 in Sep 22 and Gr 6-9 towards the end of the year. Results would be published when available.
- Additional homework/focused learning. Several parents brought up the subject of extra homework or specific 'work-on' points for home reading. Mrs N advised that parents should speak initially with the class teacher if they wanted to see extra homework being assigned. Mrs N advised that teachers would comment in home reading books, especially for Gr 1, where additional focus could be made at home to improve reading.

Item 7 – Date of next meeting

-The next Parent Council meeting will be on 15 Feb 23 at 1400. AR will take notes and write up the minutes.