

Edmonton Northeast Christian School Council Minutes – November 30, 2023

Chair: Binoy P Vice Chair: Jenn B Secretary: Raegan S

Members present: Meseret B, Fola O, Amy D, Jessica K, Glen B, Angel S, Laura M, Leesa O, Todd L, Kara F, Lisa B, Wonhye S, Jeremy V, Denise G, Grace P

School Administration: Karla LW, Sibin A

Society Liaison Christina P

Special Guest: Wendy Keiver - Alberta School Council Association (ASCA)

1. Meeting was called to order by the chair at 7:05pm, followed by an opening prayer by Jenn B.
2. Acknowledge members present
 - A sign-in sheet was passed around to attendees which everyone at the meeting was requested to sign.
3. Approval of previous minutes of school council meetings held on:
 - June 5, 2023 - motioned by Fola O, seconded by Jenn B
 - September 25, 2023 - motioned by Fola O, seconded by Leesa O
 - October 23, 2023 - motioned by Amy D, seconded by Lisa B
4. Approval of Agenda
 - Motioned by Amy D, seconded by Grace P
5. Breakdown of what school council is
 - The vice chair shared that school councils are legislated under the *Education Act* and that school councils are structured groups of parents, principals, teachers and community representatives who work together to effectively support and enhance student learning. They provide a means for members of the school community to consult with and provide advice to the principal and the school board. The primary role of the school council is advisory; and therefore, the primary role is not to fundraise or lobby. (*see Alberta School Council Association's School Council Resource Guide, p. 3-4*)
 - The chair shared that the Alberta School Council Association Resource Guide was previously posted on SchoolZone.
6. School Admin Debrief
 - Karla LW provided her admin report in advance of the meeting via SchoolZone.
 - Jenn B asked:
 - if the school had a new librarian and was informed by Karla LW that there was someone temporarily in that role.
 - when the Christmas assembly would be and Sibin A provided the dates:
 - Christmas Assembly Dec 22 for whole school
 - Christmas Concert Dec 13 for Grades 1-3
 - Binoy P asked if the model of posting the admin report prior to the meeting and then asking questions at the meeting worked for the principal and she responded that it did.
7. Society debrief and time of questioning
 - Christina P provided the Society report prior to the meeting and was still determining the feasibility of doing so for future meetings. She gave an overview of the report including the three priorities of the Board and the Society (1. Support and Develop Christian Programming, 2. Priority

2. Build Community and Culture, 3. Excellent Resource Stewardship). She noted that the majority of fees collected by the Society go to the school facilities.

- Binoy P mentioned that the school council email address (ecns.schoolcouncil@gmail.com) will be used to pass questions on to the Society.
 - Karla LW raised the question of why the school council executive was using a gmail account instead of the EPSB partner account indicating that there are existing relationships with school and partners that continue to successfully use a partner account email (ie: mental health therapist) and she wants to provide a consistent contact for families to connect with School Council from year to year.
 - Binoy P responded that the former EPSB school council email address had access issues and the volume of emails received by the account appeared to be very minimal. The new account also provides easy access and storage capacity. As a result, the gmail address will now be used.
 - Christina appreciated the use of 'ECNS' in the account name as this is consistent with how the Society refers to the school.
 - Karla LW will give EPSB feedback about the access issues experienced with the old EPSB partner account.
- An additional handout regarding where funds go was provided after the meeting:
<https://www.edmchristian.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Program-Fee-Schedule-2023-2024-1.pdf>

8. Parent Engagement Survey

- Raegan S explained that a parent engagement survey is being drafted by the council executive in order to better understand parent/guardian hopes and concerns as well as how parents/guardians would like to contribute to the school. The intent is to gather information from the whole body of parents/guardians, not just those who are able to attend the school council meetings.
- The hope is for the survey and its responses to be translated to/from several languages to reduce barriers to participation: Filipino, Oromo (spoken in Ethiopia) and Tigrinya (spoken in Eritrea).
- Lisa B asked if the translator had to be part of the school as she knows someone who might be able to assist with translation into Filipino.
- Sibin A noted issues that should be considered - actionable and objective questions, anonymous vs non-anonymous, data cleaning, storage of information, objectivity in data analysis and who will see responses. She noted that she had worked in Research for the EPSB Central office and offered her knowledge and experience. She recommended hiring a third party to clean and analyze survey responses.
- Raegan S mentioned that we don't have a budget to outsource work related to the survey.
- Christina P added that these issues should be alleviated by upfront, clear communication.
- Binoy P reinforced the purpose of the survey.

9. Lunchtime Supervision

- Lunchtime supervision falls within Sibin A's portfolio.
- Staff are responsible for supervision and go between two classrooms.
- Two student leaders are present per classroom as extra sets of hands, to develop leadership skills, and to support healthy interactions within the school.
- Christina P observed favourable interactions between a teacher, students and grade 8 helpers one lunch hour.

10. Any Other Business

Lunchtime shows

- Laura M asked if there are any guidelines or boundaries regarding shows watched at lunchtime and that some children are being shown programs that they are not allowed to watch at home (e.g., Sponge Bob).
- Karla LW said concerns should be raised directly with the teacher and are being addressed by the teachers. Karla felt that this practice has been effective as no concerns had been escalated to her attention.
- Fola O asked if the school could be proactive about the concerns and Todd L. said the current model is reactionary rather than proactive. A reactive approach can only occur if a child reports a concern at home.
- Glen B had raised an issue with a teacher and he felt it was addressed appropriately in a timely way.
- Suggested possibilities for purchased streaming services were: PureFlix, RightNow Media, Yippee.
- Christina P mentioned that the Society will be taking a role in helping people understand how to have successful communication with the school and how to go to the next level when raising issues, if needed, as well as coaching on how to navigate the process. There will inevitably be some accidents but with more oversight things would improve. The Society will assist in improving the orientation of new teachers since context and target audience matters. Staff will be assisted to know who our community is.
- Amy D mentioned that one of her children's teachers sent a note home prior to a particular movie being shown and, if there were any concerns, for the parents to let the teacher know before the movie was shown. Christina P encouraged members to reinforce such actions by teachers by letting them know they are helpful.
- Karla LW asked who would pay for a streaming service. Karla mentioned that teachers would be made aware of what are considered appropriate resources and if there is a grey area, to leave that for the home.
- Christina P said the Society would likely partner with the school regarding the streaming services and would do the same for the other campuses. This would be done in consultation with teachers and families.
- Sibin A said she would give a reminder to staff that teachers need to be aware of the content of the shows being shared during lunchtime.

In-class Prizes

- Christina P added that many supplies are out-of-pocket expenses for teachers, so parents/guardians could consider collecting prizes kids are done with and send them back to the teacher to be reused.

School Council Bylaws

- Binoy P mentioned that ASCA removed bylaw templates from their website so the school council executive may use the ASCA grant to pay for a workshop or support services in order to present bylaws in 2024.

Student Experiences

- Jess K mentioned she asked for more interesting experiences for students and thanked the school for offering rollerblading.
- Karla LW mentioned that Sibin A is looking into adding parent-child rollerblading sessions.

11. Communication of next meeting

- There will be no council meeting in December.
- The January 2024 meeting will be communicated on Schoolzone.

12. Closing in prayer

- Raegan S closed in prayer and the meeting was adjourned at 8pm.