

**ECNS School Council Minutes**  
**of the meeting on February 10, 2025 at 7pm**  
*Julie D., Chair; Tim D., Vice Chair; Christy H., Secretary*  
*To be approved/reviewed at the next School Council meeting on Monday, March 10th*

Members Present: Rossy S., Jesús S., Kim S., Michael W., Erin H., Tasha T., Shanna S., Melodie V., Edwin L., Christina P., Candice K.

Teachers: Dominique D., Megan L.

Administration: Karla L.W., Rebekah E.

ESCE Board and Society Representatives: Fola O., Darlene E.

**1. Call to Order, Scripture Reading, and Prayer**

- The chair called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.
- Jesús and Rossy S. led in a devotion from Mark 9:33-37 and offered prayer.

**2. Acknowledge of Members Present**

- The chair acknowledged members, teachers, admin, and community members present.

**3. Code of Conduct Reviewed**

- Erin H. read through the Code of Conduct for members.

**4. Approval of Meeting Agenda**

- The chair asked for a motion to approve the meeting agenda; Christina P. motioned to approve, Kim S. seconded. [Agenda approved.](#)

**5. Approval of Previous Minutes**

- The chair asked for a motion to approve the January minutes; Melodie V. motioned to approve, Michael W. seconded. [Minutes approved.](#)

**6. School Admin Report**

- The principal gave thanks for the opening devotion and prayer, and also thanked Darlene E. for her gift of leadership in the ESCE.
- Options Day was a great success, with between 20-30 parents and volunteers offering their time and talents to invest in our students. The principal highlighted the importance of growing resilience in students—two factors that impact resiliency in children are 1) another adult (non-parent) offering a meaningful, mentoring relationship and 2) having a community to support and encourage them. As members of our school community, we are encouraged to continue supporting and encouraging each other in love.

- The principal reported on the budget for our school regarding the funds that do not come from the Society fees, but from the school division. ECNS' budget is \$5 million, with up to 97% of it eligible for staffing. Part of this large amount is because we have many students with increasing complexities and needs that require more dedicated attention. Staff unit costs, which include wages and costs for benefits and pensions are as follows:
  - Each school is charged \$110, 000 per full time teacher
  - EAs between \$55,000 - \$63,000;
- \$304, 000 is paid to the Society for use of the building;
- A large portion of the SES budget (supplies and equipment) goes towards office supplies (paper, photo copying, etc.)
- The principal asked for any questions on the report and/or budget.
- Regarding the ongoing support staff strike, a parent asked where to direct any concerns parents might have on matters that affect education at the provincial level. Action Item: the principal responded that if parents have concerns, they should reach out to their MLAs and Minister of Education. The principal also added a few points of consideration regarding the support staff strike: Alberta's education funding rate is the lowest in North America as reported in the Alberta Teachers' Association research; at ECNS, we are able to have five extra EAs funded by Jordan's Principle (Jordan's Principle ensures that First Nations children do not face gaps, delays, or denials in accessing government services because of their identity).
- A parent asked if teachers are primarily responsible for classroom items such as prize buckets, bulletin board décor, etc.—the principal responded that teachers have \$200/year to use for their classroom resources, and anything above that teachers pay for out of pocket. The principal reiterated that the Wish Wall blesses our teachers greatly with items that they can use in their classrooms.

## **7. ESCE Board Update**

- The board representative gave an update on changes to the Society's membership bylaws, based on the responses from feedback from members that was surveyed last fall. The board is taking into account the different concerns that members have voiced. Currently the board needs to put the membership bylaw changes through legal reviews before bringing it to the Society members to consider and vote on.
- A parent asked if the membership bylaws would be ready before the AGM or presented at the AGM; the board rep responded that they hope to finetune these membership bylaws before the AGM.

## **8. Unfinished business—2024-2025 School Council Funds**

- The vice-chair stated that the purchases approved from the previous school council were completed as of January (Division 1 purchased Bee-Bots; Division 2 purchased coding bots; and Division 3 purchased a ping pong table). To fulfill those requests, an overage of \$200 was spent, with funds coming from concessions to help cover the cost.
- The current budget total for school council is \$2570, plus \$500 from the Alberta School Council Grant

- The principal clarified why our school council does not fundraise. In other schools, the councils cannot fundraise but can have a separate fundraising association; members of school council can also be members of the fundraising association. Within our school, the Society handles all fundraising and must give approval for any additional efforts. Since each family must pay fees for children to attend, the school/Society recognizes this cost and does not wish to continually ask for more funds to be given.
- The vice chair gave an update on petty cash spent by school council—no expenses have been submitted yet. The principal asked if a jar could be put out at school council meetings for parents to donate money for school council petty cash (i.e., purchasing snacks for meetings, supplies, etc.). The chair asked the members to [vote](#) on putting out a jar for donations—10 voted yes, 2 abstained. [Motion passed](#).

## 9. New business

### A) PIPA Email List and SchoolZone Updates

- The chair noted that updates on SchoolZone can go unnoticed by parents and suggested that most updates be sent through the PIPA email list. A parent asked if minutes/agendas would always be posted on SchoolZone—the chair answered that they would. A parent mentioned that they personally prefer SchoolZone updates as opposed to more emails. The chair expressed that the executive decided to limit how much was posted SchoolZone to not take away from other school announcements, and that many people who are interested in school council updates have completed PIPA forms. After feedback from the members about which method of communication is preferred, the chair [moved](#) to review this topic next month after more feedback.

### B) School Budget Review

- Topic addressed under School Admin Report

### C) 2024-25 School Council Initiatives

- The chair suggested that school council meetings could discuss a different initiative each month: March could look at special events (i.e., Christmas concert, Grade 9 farewell, family gatherings, etc.); April could focus on lunchtime activities and library materials; May could focus on sports teams and clubs; June could focus on Assemblies
- A parent asked what types of options would be explored for older grades—the chair responded that some parents had asked for band, additional sports, drama, etc. The chair also noted that school council would gain feedback on activities that are already happening, share the impact of those areas, and provide feedback as parent voices when able.
- A parent asked that school council remember that our suggestions do not mean that administration have to implement what we come up with, but rather takes our suggestions for consideration

#### \*February Highlight: Junior High Options

- Tabled until next meeting.

#### \* Diversity and Inclusion

- The chair mentioned several ideas provided by school council members for pursuing diversity and inclusion as a school: 1) using the Throughline devotional booklet as a school council (idea brought forth by admin) 2) highlighting different diversities emphasized each month, perhaps with community members helping bring these to the forefront; 3) learning cultural sensitivities as a community; participating in training videos that address bias; 4) students creating their own safe space posters to put up in school
- A parent asked the principal if the Jr. High multicultural day could also be offered for the whole school—the principal agreed that this would be valuable, but that younger students are not always able to take initiative. A teacher also responded that Jr. High students take on much of the planning and is a huge undertaking for even just the older grades, especially as it takes up lots of space within the school. A teacher suggested that it could be done at the beginning of the year in place of the pizza night. Because this event is so valuable to student learning and growth, the principal suggested that parents could also reach out to their students' classes to suggest helping organize a multicultural celebration within their homerooms. Another parent agreed that this is valuable, but also asked for parents to remember that without EAs our teachers cannot handle extra work at the moment.

#### D) Community building

##### \* Appreciation for ECNS Staff, Society & Board

- The chair noted that no one has volunteered to lead this initiative, but some suggestions received for showing appreciation are 1) cards for teachers and 2) having parents bring a potluck meal for a staff to enjoy at one of their staff meetings.
- Parents often show appreciation to school staff, Society staff, ESCE board members, and teachers on their own initiative, but it can mean more coming from a larger body of parents, such as school council.

##### \* Sportnic Day Supplies

- Kim S. volunteered to price out the costs of supplying food for Sportnic Day and shared the results: supplying each student with a hot dog, juice box, and popsicle would be around \$915; supplying a doughnut "medal" for each student would be around \$975 (roughly \$1000 or \$1.40 - \$1.54 per student for either option). School council will revisit this idea as the date approaches.
- A parent shared that last year they switched to donuts since providing a hot dog lunch takes significantly more volunteers
- A parent asked if we could project how much money would come in for school council funds with the addition of hot lunch proceeds; the vice-chair responded that around \$400 could be projected to come in each month, which is lower than previous years.

##### \* Year End Collection of Supplies

- Shanna S. offered to lead an initiative to collect extra school supplies at the end of the year that could be given to families who need them or given to community organizations. Students would need to receive permission from parents to donate any additional school supplies.

- **Action Item: A parent reminded school council that teachers can always use extra items for classroom prize buckets and donating small toys for their classes is a great help.**

\* School Community Meal/Gathering Event

- In emails to school council, several parents gave feedback for having a multicultural potluck or a pancake meal for the school community. Because staff are already stretched, this would need to be a parent-led initiative.

E) Decisions on 2024-2025 School Council Budget—Additional Suggestions for Consideration

- The chair shared additional suggestions brought forth for using school council funds: 1) gifts for any staff retiring; 2) funds given to Creator's Classroom; 3) Purchasing art room supplies (approximately \$450); having an additional microphone for school council and other use (\$500); buying a subscription for a Christian Television App for teachers to use (\$70-\$100/year); paying for a student babysitting course (approximately \$800); funding extra-curricular activities (rollerblading course, Fitset Ninja, etc.); purchasing library books; purchasing extra Chromebooks for classroom use (\$307 per Chromebook)
- A teacher spoke to the need for additional Chromebooks in the K-9 classrooms which K-9 use. Anytime a Chromebook is sent away for repair, the cost is \$75, and the school currently have many that are aging and need to be repaired often. A parent asked where the \$75 comes from to fix them; the principal answered that it comes from the school's budget (EPSB division budget) that covers non-staff costs. A parent noted that the use of Chromebooks greatly aids student learning, which is one of school council's mandates to support.
- In addition to explaining the maintenance/cost of Chromebooks, the principal noted that division funds allowed our school to have smaller classes this year as opposed to the rest of the province—one primary example being that ECNS was able to have an additional Grade 6 teacher.
- A parent asked if staff could share what types of encouragement would mean the most from parents and members of school council; a teacher responded that a personal note means a great deal. **Action Item: A teacher encouraged parents to send a quick email or note when a teacher does something that they appreciate for their student.**
- A parent shared a quick story about volunteering in a classroom and watching how a teacher guided some students to share their different perspectives in solving a problem and working together. This is just one example of how our teachers do an amazing job at leading their students to think creatively and as a team.
- A parent asked if we would ask teachers for what they would like us to buy as school council, as was done last year. The chair responded that our school council did ask the school for feedback, with one of the responses being to provide art room supplies and Chromebooks.
- The chair asked school council members if they would like to continue showing appreciation on an individual level or have something come from school council; while we can do our own initiatives, there is strength in showing appreciation together, being creative, and not costing much. **The members agreed to table setting aside funds for appreciation**, but to continue discussing this initiative as a school council.

- A teacher spoke to the need of having additional art supplies, since many materials have not been updated in several years.
- The chair **motioned for a vote** for the school council to give \$2000 towards Chromebooks and \$500 towards art supplies with our current budget--9 said yes, 0 said no, and 2 abstained from the vote. **Motion passed.**
- At the next school council meeting, **members agreed** to watch a short video (less than five minutes) on diversity/bias.
- **Action Item: The chair put out a call for volunteers to help plan bigger events, such as a community meal. If any parents are interested, email school council.**

#### 10. Closing Prayer and Adjournment

- Darlene E. closed the meeting in prayer.
- The meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Next School Council Meeting Date: Monday, March 10th, at 7:00 p.m.