

APA Meeting Minutes-Wednesday January 25, 2017 7-9 pm

1. Welcome & Introductions – Lisa Parker
2. Adoption of the January Agenda and November Minutes – Lisa Parker
3. Principal’s Report – Tracey O’Toole
4. STEM Initiatives at Allenby
5. Treasurer’s Report – Sarosh Nanavati
6. Vote on Motion to Allocate \$10,000 to the Kindergarten Playground Enhancement Project – Gillian Uy
7. Committee Updates
 - a. Fundraising
 - b. Communications
 - c. Community Awareness
 - d. Safety
 - e. Health and Wellbeing
 - f. School Programs
 - g. Grad
8. Open Question Session

1. Welcome & Introductions – Lisa Parker

2. Adoption of the January Agenda and November Minutes–Lisa Parker

Motion: Lisa put forth the motion to adopt the January 2017 Agenda and November 2016 Minutes as presented.

Gillian Uy seconded the motion.

Motion carried (unanimously passed).

3. Principal’s Report – Tracey O’Toole

Beginning in February, the school starts to plan for the 2017/2018 school year. The school and the Board project number of students to determine staffing. This week, a

form will go home asking parents with students in JK to grade 5 to let us know if children will be returning to Allenby in the fall.

We also need the current parent community to ask to parents with students starting kindergarten in 2018 to register on February 9 and 10. Last year, many kindergarten families registering in April, May, June – as a result our student body is much bigger than anticipated.

Accurate information now helps Tracey advocate on behalf of student body; last year, board projected 779; Tracey projected 800 (key cut off for additional staff); student body this year is 820 but staffed for 784.

Parent recommendations: can we approach the preschools in the area to share registration dates? We may also date stamp kindergarten registrations.

4. STEM Initiatives at Allenby

Tracey shared a video on real world problem solving – a TED talk by a student from Africa who used his science knowledge to help keep his goat herd safe from predators by creating blinking lights; soon other communities adopted his approach. (insert link to video?)

Focus is on a creating a cross curricular approach that involves real-life problem solving, making things relevant for students. Project-based and hands on, the Ministry curriculum is now focusing on skills over content (this is a shift in the last 10 years). It's important to know that the focus is on learning, not on the technology. The technology is to augment the learning.

Why STEM?

- 21st century learning for 21st century world
- We want students to be creators of content, not just consumers
- We need to build resilience in our children; students aren't as resilient as they once were
- Today, when we teach children about problem solving – we see that they want to know “the” answer, when the process of learning is what's important

The goal at Allenby is to create an environment that produces scientists, engineers, entrepreneurs.

In Canada, today, there is a decline in number of candidates in STEM related fields; even more so a decline in the number of girls in these areas. The whole school is engaging in a STEM unit of study.

How is staff doing this?

PLCs – professional learning communities, where staff in divisions meet with Tracey once a month (8:45 to 9:30); all year these sessions are on STEM.

Example – teachers learn how to use scratch junior on iPads; scratch on computers (coding); Lego with movable parts (a motion sensor in alligator’s mouth)

There is now an innovation lab in the library, where all students, kindergarten to grade 6, participate in technological problem solving.

STEM examples at Allenby:

- Coding for kindergarten – Bee bot
- “Tech 10” at staff meetings – every staff meeting, teach something new using technology
- Teacher collaborative inquiry – six groups, teachers create their own annual learning plan tied to their groups’ goal as it relates to STEM
- Osmo - \$79 – base for the iPad with a camera, where children can manipulate items on a table and the osmo takes digital platform and make it integrative – can draw on it, interacts with what you do on the table
- WEdo kits - \$150-170
- Expert board in staff room, so teachers can bring in different types of experts using their APA grants
- STEM and technology committees to determine what support we need (e.g., 5 iPads for every grades 1 & 2 class; smart boards for all classrooms; chromebook carts for gr 3 & 4, bring your own device for 5 & 6,
- Created partnership with StopGap focusing on accessibility
 - Luke Anderson – created videos about the daily challenges he faces; shares videos with classes and gives them a challenge – what can they do to solve the challenges?
 - Grade 3 – designed and built an accessible playground, partnered with grade 5&6 class to bring design to next level
 - Teacher brought in wheelchairs and walkers for the children to experience.
- Picture books as starting point for STEM (The Napping House – class created a bed big enough for all the characters; for older grade, class had to problem solve for how to build the wall around Casa Loma – how to get stone up the hill, etc)
- Digital literacy program in kindergarten to grade 3; goal is to develop proficiency with technology in primary so in junior levels, can use technology
- Real World Math example
 - Grade 2 teacher gave students ingredients to make rice krispie squares. Students had to use non-linear measurement to figure out how much rice krispies they needed to make their squares
 - They also baked chocolate chip muffins – without a recipe, and then used mindful eating to described what they smell, touch, etc
 - Stem is about the different iterations – students were asked the next day to change the recipe based on what they observed they day before – what did they add and what did they subtract from their recipe.

Earlier in January, staff, administration and parents attended a Real World Math Workshop – Tracey will share more at next APA meeting.

Across province, students are not doing well at application; we need to give them opportunities to apply the learning in new context.

Parent questions:

How are we testing real world math?

Through ongoing assessment and it plays out when students do EQAO (standardized provincial testing). We need to think about the kinds of questions we're giving students. Level 1 questions are basic recall, and don't give students an opportunity to apply what they know. We need to think about how to get to higher levels where students apply their knowledge to solve real problems. Adults need to take a step back and not feel that they need to know everything before kids try it; it's better if we don't.

How do we know teachers are taking this into the classroom?

Tracey & Sandra talked about accountability teachers must engage in STEM. Teachers' requests for materials show they are engaging in STEM activities. Teachers are tweeting about STEM and real world math activities through the Allenby account (follow @AllenbyPS on Twitter).

How does STEM at Allenby prepare you for STEM in high school and what comes next?

Tracey – in Toronto, we have a lot of specialty schools – local school, or local business school, arts school, math & science schools, inquiry and technology, etc. North Toronto is known for technology; in high school, there is much greater focus on cross curricular activities, more integrative thinking.

Does Allenby showcase careers in STEM-related areas?

Tracey – last year several classes went to google classes. Students also participate in VERO – virtual expert on call. For example, a grade 5 class connected with professor at Guelph on food waste. Sometimes the expert will pose a challenge to the students and the class then goes back to design something that would address the challenge.

Parent suggestion: Can we share apps that the students are using in class, so we can give students opportunity to play at home

5. Treasurer's Report – Sarosh Nanavati

Sarsosh reported that four months into the year,

- Parent contributions have done well- \$15k (projected amount was \$12k)
- Big Night out- raised \$18k, in line with expectations

- Pizza lunch exceeding expectations - \$10k
- After 4 – expected to raise \$5k
- Next events – Lip Synch, Fun Fair and Spirit Wear

Parent question - Has Amilia impacted donations?

- Helped After 4 registrations
- Helped donation drive
- Helped Pizza lunch
- Challenge is transaction fees

Our goal to make it a higher spending year to bring down our surplus

Motion to pass the actuals as presented.

Gillian Uy seconded the motion.

Motion carried (unanimously passed).

6. Vote on Motion to Allocate \$10,000 to the Kindergarten Playground Enhancement Project – Gillian Uy

Gillian Uy brought forward a motion to allocate \$10,000 to the Kindergarten Playground Enhancement Project.

See the attached presentation for more detail about the project.

Estimated cost is \$65k including contingency. Money will come from the following sources:

- Section 37 money; \$50k by end of January
- Allenby Daycare agrees to contribute (amount TBD)
- Money left over from Phase 1 (\$8k)

TDSB needs to see the full amount before allowing construction to start. Therefore, the APA is asking to put forward \$10k, so we have the full amount and can start construction in spring 2017.

If any of the APA money not used, it will go back to the APA. This allows us not to run a second funding campaign while a number of other campaigns are running (Lip Synch, Fun Fair and other end of school expenses).

Construction to start this spring to be completed by September 2018. Plan is to do one area of the fenced area at a time, so we can use the main area in spring and start with new fenced area, then move to main area in summer.

Parent question

Will there be another bike rack installed on the Castlefield side?

The kindergarten yard was expanded, so another area on Castlefield can be considered for a bike rack. We are also looking at a way of making the drop off area on the Castlefield side safer.

Will we create an enclosure around the garbage bin on St. Clements?

TBD. There is still a Phase 3 of the school yard enhancement project coming, as well as the Live Green Grant to fix up area in front of school (promenade).

Meredith Palmer seconded the motion.

Motion carried (unanimously passed).

7. Committee Updates

a. Fundraising

Lip synch – coming up next month
Ticket sales through Amilia
Need a lot of volunteers
Come out even if your kid is not performing

b. Communications

Looking for a co-director of communication for rest of the year, to oversee website, APA reps program, newsletter and spirit events
Looking for two new newsletter editors (alternate week to week)

c. Safety

A lot more to present at the next meeting; fall included a lot of meetings with by-law officers, police, city transportation services

d. Health and Wellbeing

Buddy seat in grade 1-6 playground will be installed shortly.
Speaker coming in on anxiety and how to cope with stress in Feb or March
Can we include a session on growth mindset? Add to next APA meeting in section on math

e. School Programs

Swag campaign closed for the year – whole school order gets placed at one time; expect to hand out by mid to late February

Baseball – is anyone interested in helping convene?

f. Grad

Starting planning now, if interested, contact Lisa Parker.

8. Open Question Session

There were no additional questions.