

APA General Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, March 28, 2018
Allenby Library, 7-9 pm

1. Welcome, Adoption of March 2018 Agenda and January 2018 Minutes – Lisa Parker

- Motion to adopt March 2018 agenda: Lisa Parker
- Seconded by: Gillian Uy
- Motion passed.
- Motion to adopt Jan 2018 minutes: Lisa Parker
- Seconded by: Sarosh Nanavati
- Motion passed.

2. Treasurer's Report – Sarosh Nanavati

- Doing well in terms of fundraising revenues this year
 - Parent contributions are 10% above budget
 - Family night out 10% above budget
 - Lip Sync was a success
- Expenses – teachers are tapping into classroom grants/expert funds but slow to claim expenses thus looking underspent
- Forecasting a surplus of \$80K at year end but would like to draw this down - would like to land on a \$50K surplus at year end
- Motion to accept financials: Valerie Midmer
- Seconded: Gillian Uy

3. Committee Updates

- Fundraising (Meredith Palmer)
 - Fun Fair is coming (June 2) – always looking for volunteers to join the committee!
- Safety (Tracey O'Toole)
 - Allenby received \$1000 grant from Ministry of Transportation in support of school safety – Allenby focus for this funding will be to increase walking to school as it would reduce # of vehicles in proximity to school.
 - Allenby proposal to kick-off this spring - students will receive a "walking passport" (\$1000 supports printing costs etc for the passport program). Students get a stamp for walking to school, leveraging a walking school bus concept with different checkpoints in the community. Checkpoints might be a sandwich board that parents/community members put out – older students there to help / give stamps. As students collect stamps, students can redeem for safety-related prizes (e.g. blinking light to go on backpack, pedometer for shoelace).
 - Bike to Work week – host a bike rodeo – students bring bike to school and taught hand signals and how to ride safely
 - Live Green Grant – currently sourcing out scooter racks for school yard
 - Talk to Gillian Uy, Lisa Parker, Deborah Zamin or Tracey O'Toole if you'd like to get involved in these initiatives

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- Health & Wellness (Amber Christie)
 - Final lice check next week, will be looking for volunteers
 - Mindful Mondays in May - already have a few parent volunteers but looking for additional volunteers. It's only 20 minutes on a Monday morning! (Mindfulness Mondays occur throughout the year but May is specifically looking for parent volunteers)
 - **Parent Question:** Any thoughts on rolling out daily mindfulness? Other schools are implementing this (e.g. meditations during day, time for quiet reflection together, lunch room chaos). Response: An Allenby parent will be facilitating a mindfulness lunch and learn for teachers in May and a teacher committee has been put together to focus on this. Amber to contact parent for further ideas.
- School Programs (Lisa Parker)
 - Hot Lunch survey to be sent out to parents shortly – looking for feedback on the program. The individually packed hot lunches offered by Rose Reisman are a key benefit as it helps to reduce the movement in the lunch room.
 - Spring Baseball – currently working through TDSB permits.
- Community Awareness
 - A review of French programs at TDSB will kick off – Tracey will include some information in an upcoming newsletter.
 - Parents as Partners conference on April 28 – also in this week's newsletter.

4. Think Big Allenby

- The APA typically operates with a budget surplus - surplus is a result of conservative budgeting and fabulous fundraising events!
- We like to maintain a surplus year over year, however, we should not be carrying as much surplus as we are today. \$35,000 of our surplus to be spent.
- Interactive brainstorming exercise to be conducted tonight – all ideas are welcome and many ideas were submitted in advance.
- APA Exec will review all ideas and consult with school administration to see what is feasible, what aligns with school priorities, as well as assess potential spend.
- Once ideas are narrowed down, a survey will be sent to parent body to vote on ideas and determine final items.
- Surplus spending plan will be presented at the May APA meeting.
- The notes that follow are meant to supplement the list of ideas reviewed at the meeting – they capture the discussion surrounding some items that were discussed.

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Idea Discussion by Category

1. Technology

- Idea re. Robotics– this already exists in Innovation Lab but expanding resources is a great idea. Note that space is a concern if wanting to expand the Innovation lab.
- Parent feedback that we have too many iPads and technology items in the school.
- Want to ensure any Technology spend has a long shelf life – not out of date in 2 years' time.

2. Recess/Play/Phys Ed Equipment

- School has ordered \$5000 in equipment for kindergarten yard – coming this spring!!
- Lion's Den – waiting for spring to launch new equipment for main school yard (storage organization underway)

3. Arts

- Idea re. Risers for school performances – muchparent support for this idea

4. Curriculum Enhancement

- Idea re. Math support: APA should consider running After 4 programs for math support – supplemented by APA budget, as opposed to parents spending \$400/month to send kids to Mathnasium. Additional idea to run a Math Night
- Additional clubs a great idea however it often depends on teacher interest/availability, not necessarily funding, and not within the mandate of the APA

5. Outdoor/Schoolyard Improvements

- Idea re. getting rid of wood chips –as part of schoolyard enhancement project, TDSB advised they would not install rubber on ground as it would not hold up with # of students
- Idea re. planting/naturalization of hill – was part of Allenby's original proposal for the Live Green grant – one of the recommendations was to put gardens there however consultation revealed that soil type/structure of hill would not support/sustain plans
- Idea re. hill play structure – Allenby applied to be part of a pilot school program through Earth Day Canada and TDSB (Outdoor Play and Learning – OPAL). Concept is to build slides, ropes,etc... right into hill and have logs/platforms/tiered plantings. Also need to rethink when students go outside – students should go outside all the time even in bad weather - could have outdoor gear for kids to borrow. No funding is attached to this program. Allenby will find out in May if they have been accepted.
- New idea – picnic tables or plastic Adirondack chairs on the top of the addition.

6. Indoor Play

- Idea re. additional items for kindergarten play - Kindergarten team spent \$5000 on wooden blocks 2 years ago – other types of things welcome. Kindergarten rooms have large storage in the back – would like to purge and rethink what should be there. Kindergarten day care has different program requirements than FDK - very different ministry guidelines dictate what the programs require thus storage is challenging.

7. Charitable Giving

- Idea re. further supplementing Allenby families – currently, any Allenby family can access

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APA programs for free

- Idea re. partner school – this is possible however needs to be done with future fundraising, not existing surplus. APA is forming a Giving Committee to discuss this idea further.

8. Safety

- Idea re. drive thru drop-off lane for Drop Zone – previously contacted the City to see if a "lay-by" could be built – City said this was a City funding, not to be funded by APA and the city would not establish a lay by at Allenby
- Idea re. Drop Zone staffing – can we hire a permanent helpers?
- Parent comment - 15 minutes of total chaos in the mornings, serious safety concern with volume of cars and pedestrians.
- Parent comment - Staggered times for Kindergarten / School Grade – could be causing additional congestion for parking around the school.
- Reminder to send email to Toronto Police Services with photo of cars parked illegally.
- Reminder that Drop Zone is not intended for Kindergarten students – usage needs to be communicated to parents.

9. Special Experiences/Field Trips/Experts

- Idea re. additional experts in classroom - Every classroom is getting 2-3 experts with existing APA budget. Suggestion has been made to create a resource of ideas and expert options to encourage/support teacher spending. We are new in to "experts" vs. "scientists/artists" in the classroom – shift still underway to explore new options.

10. Other

- Idea re. lunchroom – Lunch is a stressful time for kids. Understand space constraint but need to look at ideas for creating a calm environment through the lunch period.
- Per Mrs. O'Toole – APA can't hire staff to oversee classroom lunches. Scheduling challenge as need to give teachers 40 minutes of uninterrupted lunch; logistics challenge for school timetable. Need to park this for further discussion. Consider a lunch committee including parents.
- Idea re. "The Learning Commons" (library) – one of the busiest areas of the school and used by everyone. Parent feedback that it is cluttered, dated, with poor furniture, organization challenges. Mrs. O'Toole agreed – Allenby's focus is 21st century learning – when you walk into the school you should know that is the focus. Space you are in every day has an impact on learning, health, wellbeing. Tracey shared some images from Pinterest of her vision for the Learning Commons – flexible seating, storage options, tables that fit together or break apart easily, modern design suitable for elementary/junior aged students. Desire is to transform the library first, and then the classrooms in the school.
- Idea re. Lost and Found – small annual budget to improve/ expand is required.

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Think Big Idea	Comments/Follow Up
Jo Boaler as a guest speaker for parents and teachers. Jo Boaler leads the inspirational math programme to improve student engagement and learning in math.	Could partner with other schools. Deborah already working on this.
Transforming the Physical Space of Allenby to Reflect School Vision of 21 st Century Learning (Classroom and Library). Creating clean, uncluttered organized learning spaces. Flexible seating options. Vertical storage for devices. IDEA paint – creates whiteboard surface. Replacing all chalkboards with whiteboard. Clean surfaces for furniture and seating and replace old computers with tech tables and make that space more usable	Is there a design expert we can work with in coming up with solutions for our school? Start with learning commons (cost?) Other areas?
Transform areas of the schoolyard to enhance outdoor play and learning (e.g. slides built into the hills, more painting on asphalt surfaces in both main yard and kindergarten yard, look into a solution for woodchips under playscape). Focus would be on creative play (loose parts and play equipment). “Outdoors everyday” philosophy, regardless of the weather. Some funds would support the purchase of “loaner” outdoor clothing for students that need for the day; including a system to store the items.	Tracey to investigate solution to woodchips with the TDSB (during phase 1 of schoolyard, the TDSB were not supportive of replacing woodchips with anything else).
New playground structure as per Phase III of the schoolyard plan	Recent report from Facilities states that existing structure meets safety requirements of the TDSB. Perhaps not a priority currently? Depending on structure, could be more than \$30K.
Outdoor Communication Board for APA Announcements	Could be included as part of other outdoor work
Crossing flags like those used in Leaside for intersections with no crossing guards	Can be part of the walking program. Deborah Zamin following up with the city to see if they would pay for these.

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Lost and Found Budget	A one-time line items to revamp Allenby Lost and Found
Kindergarten Special Guest Budget	All classrooms have funding for 2 experts which the teachers feel is adequate. The APA and the school are considering how we can fund/create school wide special experiences for the students.
More Experts	All classrooms have funding for 2 experts which the teachers feel is adequate. The APA and the school are considering how we can fund/create school wide special experiences for the students.
Sports Experts – bring in a weekly professional coach in a given sport, or a unique sport to provide specialized instruction within the existing gym class	The APA is investigating a shared expense with the school to create an annual special experience for our students
Picnic Tables and Muskoka Chairs	Seating could be purchased as part of the \$1000 outdoor education budget.
Purchase soil for the planting tubs and the planters on the rooftop terrace	Part of the new Outdoor Education line item
Allenby’s own Mathnasium/Spirit of Math, after school math help. Run it like Mathnasium, have it 100% funded by the APA and any students is eligible to participate.	The school is working towards a stronger math program as we've seen with literacy teaching and learning recently. All teachers have voluntarily participated in an online math course (Jo Boaler out of Stanford University). The school has agreed to host a math night in 2018/19 schoolyear. The APA can look at a Math program to be offered as part of After 4.
Experts or special guests in the following areas: a) Environmental (practical application, books to read etc.) - all grades b) Financial Literacy - grades 4-6 c) STEM - coding (HATCH), programming/robotics - grade 2-6 d) Canadian Politics – grade 4-6 e) Entrepreneur Clubs – grade 4-6 f) Partnerships with Junior HS – grade 5-6	These are great ideas for experts and perhaps its as simple as creating an “experts resource” to make it easier for teachers to source and book creative/different experts.
Piano to be used on the mainfloor and for classrooms and school performances	Teachers on the main floor of the school were consulted on this and have said they do not want/need a piano

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<p>Replace the wood chips with turf (under play structure) and consider the hills as well</p>	<p>TDSB will not use rubber surface under the play structure as it will not hold up over time. Tracey will investigate other options with Facilities. Area was supposed to be designed to keep the wood chips in. Turf is an option, however if we go that route that we are stuck with the current structure for 10+ years. Perhaps this project is one we leave for 3-5 years and do a new structure and solution to wood chips at the same time.</p>
<p>Police Presence at Kiss and Ride during key times of the year</p>	<p>Given the TDSB's focus on equity, the publicity from spending fundraising \$ in this way may be negative. A minimum of 3 hours is required, making this expensive for a long term spend. The APA/School will continue to advocate with the City and Toronto Police for a greater police presence during drop off and pick up</p>
<p>Dome for field sports during the winter (on part of the field)</p>	<p>This would cost much more than \$35k (\$500k-ish). TDSB has typically only considered domes for high school fields and would not entertain this proposal from Allenby, a K-6 school. The field is also limited in size for rental purposes for the TDSB to re-coup expenses.</p>
<p>Plants on the hill</p>	<p>This option was investigated as part of the Live Green Grant and the planting that happened on the upper level of the main yard. Experts determined that the soil type and the structure of the space would not sustain plants.</p>
<p>Donate the Surplus</p>	<p>We can not donate our surplus as that was not the stated purpose for which it was raised. The APA is creating a committee to address Charitable Giving.</p>
<p>Drive through drop off/pick up lane</p>	<p>City has already said "no" to this idea</p>

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Chromebooks for all grade 5/6 students (BYOD is then not required)	Not feasible as our experience is that the maintenance and longevity of the technology makes purchasing unsustainable. Allenby is not set up/funded to provide adequate tech support.
Quiet, separate time for JK/SK students in small learning groups of 10.	APA cannot fund human resources, so this would be a school level resourcing decision
Garden Shed for Equipment Storage	APA will create an Outdoor Education line item that can be used for these types of items
Risers for School Performances	For safety reasons, we would need to get TDSB Facilities in install etc each time we needed them. School would not support purchase/rental of risers. Tracey has agreed to investigate the feasibility of moving our performances to a local highschool auditorium
Once per week schoolwide nutrition break with the APA to fund fruit/veggies etc.	Not particularly necessary in our school and comes with a huge amount of work to maintain in relation to food preparation standards, allergies, and staffing.
Spring/Fall Outdoor musicians at lunch	Deemed not feasible by the school as they would be difficult to hear by all students.
Funding for outside professional resources to provide regular (weekly? Monthly?) in Drawing, Painting, Dance, Music and Theatre Performance	The APA cannot hire "regular" resources.
Fund Hot Lunch for students in need	APA does this already
Outdoor sporting equipment for kindergarten kids (balls, ropes, chalk etc)	School has ordered \$5000 of outdoor play equipment and it will be arriving soon. Asphalt painting and kindness bench are also coming in the spring
Equipment storage, and a system for distributing and encouraging use of outdoor toys and activities, including those that have collaborative elements (eg. parachutes, long skipping ropes, hacky sacks, sidewalk chalk, jacks, soft balls for dodge ball, etc.).	Lion's Den has toys that will be rolled out in the spring. Organizational piece is still required and more items can be added as the logistics are worked out

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<p>Equipment storage, and a system for distributing and encouraging use of outdoor toys and activities, including those that have collaborative elements (eg. parachutes, long skipping ropes, hacky sacks, sidewalk chalk, jacks, soft balls for dodge ball, etc.). Could be combined with the roles of peer helpers, buddy bench, possibly intra mural teams, etc. to invite children into the play in an inclusive and welcoming manner.</p>	<p>Lion's Den has toys that will be rolled out in the spring. Organizational piece is still required and more items can be added as the logistics are worked out</p>
<p>Additional iPads – 2 per class that remain in the class and additional iPads for digital time so that each student has one and sharing/waiting is not necessary</p>	<p>JK/SK has 3 per class and 1/2 has 5 per class that stay in the classroom. The way in which technology is used and taught in the school is shifting so that tech is used to augment learning rather than drive it. Teachers will have access to class sets of ipads that they can borrow from the library when required in their classroom.</p>
<p>Robotics Lab</p>	<p>A lot of robotics is already happening in the Innovation Lab. We have Dash and Dots, Mindstorms, Bee Bots and Little Bits. The APA does allocate a significant portion of is budget to tech and STEM (\$15,000 per year) and should additional resources be required, the school will purchase them.</p>
<p>Tech for all classes including whiteboards and laptops</p>	<p>Each classroom has an interactive whiteboard and all teachers have at least one laptop in their classroom.</p>
<p>Sustainability education for students with a waste reduction/waste elimination program</p>	<p>Allenby has been awarded Platinum Eco School status due in large part to the teaching and learning around sustainability, waste reduction etc. This will continue to be a focus of our school in involving the children in learning about and leading ecofriendly ideas at the school.</p>
<p>Lunchroom</p>	<p>APA to form a working group to attempt to address lunchroom issues</p>
<p>Host a Math Night sponsored by Mathnasium</p>	<p>School will host a math night next year, and we are trying to get Jo Boaler in as part of our speaker series.</p>

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Yoga Instruction by third party on a regular basis, ideally by class and not school wide	Add to experts list? After 4? We have it in After 4? Would the school want this as part of Mindfulness?
Social Skills Facilitator/Experts for the students. Pro Social Consultant in the classroom, on the playground to address children who have challenges initiating/maintaining relationships (the bold ones and the reluctant ones)	We could do this as part of mindfulness and have a combined budget of \$2000 to do so. School currently has a social worker, and 2 play therapists that are working with students during the school day.
Hire someone to supervise and assist kindergarten students at Drop Zone and walking to teacher	The APA cannot fund staffing.
Something to replace the lunch bins	Find a solution and the school will purchase them. Tracey would like something that stacks and potentially has wheels. Could fit at least 10 lunch bags in them. Parents are encouraged to share any ideas they see with the school.
Replace garbage bin at the main playground or add additional bins (they are always overflowing) and find a solution for the wasps	Solution to wasps - use closeable green bins from the city for compostable food scraps and get lids for the existing garbage cans. School is following up with facilities on options and can fund.
Fix the chime that is part of the playground equipment	Facilities request has been submitted.
Barricade on Kindergarten sidewalk. Due to the congestion of drop off, many pedestrians are having to walk on the road and it is unsafe.	Best option is to have classes using other entrances to the yard. Following up with Kindergarten teachers.
Experiential Field Trips that can be educational and fun. More creativity in choosing outings	This is a school issue as APA will not fund field trips
Overnight/Cultural Trip for the Grade 6's	Pay by parents if school thought feasible

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<p>A one week art festival to foster creativity, innovation and soft skills</p>	<p>This would have to be school led and would have to have significant teacher interest to be move forward and be successful. Allenby has an Arts Committee of teachers that consider the programs that are offered and available to students. With Ms. Bannerman leaving, the school will be delivering an integrated arts program where all students will be receiving Dance, Drama and Music with a specialty teacher.</p>
<p>Allenby Musical: An opportunity to provide students with an interest in theatre to perform in a school show. The money could be used for props/costumes, set pieces/design and possibly director, choreographer etc. This could be a full year opportunity for students (likely grades 1-6) to participate/rehearse and be part of a larger artistic opportunity in the spring. Some money could be made from ticket sales and used for the next year.</p>	<p>This would have to be school led and would have to have significant teacher interest to be move forward and be successful. Allenby has an Arts Committee of teachers that consider the programs that are offered and available to students. With Ms. Bannerman leaving, the school will be delivering an integrated arts program where all students will be receiving Dance, Drama and Music with a specialty teacher.</p>