

**Sussex Elementary School
Parent School Support Committee (PSSC) Meeting
Meeting – November 13th, 2012**

Present:

Lenora Murray, Louize Malone, Anne Webb Thorne, Stephen Campbell (DEC), Mary McNair, Melanie Patterson, Doug Bobbitt, Julie Corbett, Kelly Kyle, April MacDonald and Carol Green

Regrets:

Tammy Scott Wallace, Jodi Ravn, Lory-Ann MacAskill and Natasha Munford

The PSSC meeting once again began with quick introductions around the table as well it was noted we still have an opening for Vice Chair of the Committee. Jodi Ravn (absent) was nominated with unanimous support. Her input is required before a decision is made therefore the item of Vice Chair was tabled for this evening for members to think if they are able to commit to the role.

Mary McNair was thanked for volunteering to keep the minutes for this evening meeting. The approval of the minutes from the October 22, 2012 meeting was moved by Louize Malone and seconded by Anne Webb -Thorne.

The **budget** figures for PSSC have not been finalized to date. Based on 455 students, Stephen Campbell was able to provide a figure of \$1,052.22. In the past, the bulk of this money is earmarked for the Synervoice system. The rate has been reduced for this service due to the increased participation of schools in the province. The Anglophone South School District has \$212M budget- 87% of which is for fixed costs like salaries and noted \$30,000 to SES.

Doug Bobbitt encouraged us to pursue any endeavors we deemed worthy as the funds are available. The "Use of Premises" income the school receives has left money for "extras". The main restriction is the timelines – ideally spending needs to take place 6 weeks prior to the province's accounting year end of March 31, 2012.

Marc Godin, Supervisor of Data and Accountability with the Anglophone South School District, created a slide show presentation for the **Provincial Assessment Results**. Doug presented this slideshow as well as provided a hard copy. It is important to note that a cross sample was used for the writing component as compared with each student completing in previous years. When reviewing these graphs, it is important to look at overall trend lines.

- Reading Comprehension and Literacy Writing - Grade 2 – upwards trend for SES/ district/ province (indicates strategies of teachers are working)
- Grade 4 Literacy Reading – SES is trending below the province. Doug noted that students needed to hit all the traits to get the mark – one missed trait resulted in not passing. Lenora Murray pointed out that perhaps in the beginning it was the teacher's learning curve as they were not sure what to expect.

- French Immersion results – led to a discussion the “Intensive French” program – very little flexibility in the teacher’s day in order to get all the requirements of instructional time. A few committee members are concerned that these kids are not prepared for middle school math. This is highly unlikely to change in the near future as it is a political decision area. Julie Corbett had Doug clarify that the children may choose either English or French for their testing.
- Numeracy results are down significantly for grade 5, however, increasing trend line for grade three students. Members of the committee thought this may be a result of the introduction of “Math Makes Sense” method of teaching which has been integrated into both French and English schools province wide. The grade three students have used this method since the kindergarten whereas the grade 5 students have not. (The method for learning about numbers has drastically changed – now it is more about focusing on what the numbers represent and the bigger picture. Lenora pointed out that the foundation for math is built on patterns, combination, groups as well as the concepts of before and after.)

Doug provided a handout titled “*Human Resource Support*” as research for our “**Volunteer Initiative**” idea. It was used by a school in the Saint John region. We agreed this was the simple format we were looking for.

It appears as though the teachers support the idea as they responded with a number of ideas for volunteering – cafeteria supervision, fundraisers, read aloud, homework club, enrichment projects, kindergarten support, clubs and noon hour activities – chess, art, knitting & games, help in the library, math practice, school musical, special events.

It is obvious there are gaps where the teachers and staff of SES could use an extra pair of hands. To fill these gaps, we may want to approach corporations (allowing company time for volunteering), the senior’s center and of course, other parents.

Before we approach potential volunteers, we need to have an outline of what is needed with specific times and dates. A clear role for the volunteers is mutually beneficial, the volunteer knows what to do and the teacher/staff member receives the help they need.

We want to make the process as seamless and easy as possible. If the process is difficult, we will not have many volunteers and the initiative will not succeed. There is a form from the school that every volunteer must complete and a criminal record check is only required if a volunteer will be one on one with a student in a separate space. Lenora suggested perhaps an orientation or training on current learning methods might be helpful.

Doug will be emailing the teachers once again asking for specific items they need help as well as days and times. Once this information is collected, Mary will organize before the next meeting.

Our next meeting dates are Wednesday, December 12th, 2012, Tuesday, January 29th, 2013 and Tuesday, February 26th, 2012. Meetings are at 6:30 in the SES Library.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.