

École Margaret Jenkins School
Parent Advisory Council General Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, September 24th, 2024 (7pm, In-person and Zoom)

Attendees:

Stephie Hellard (Chair), Sam Goldman (Co-Treasurer), Megan Harvey (Secretary & Communications), Andy Moll (Member at Large), Marlow Sturgeon, James Hansen (Principal), Jodie Phillips (Teacher), Crystal Loreth, Brie Cormier, Lee Henschke, Marlise Hofer, Emily Price, Jen Ward.

Attending by Zoom: Matt Jackson (Co-Treasurer), Cheryl Rolston (VP), Maggie Black, Heather Sanche (Member at Large), Jessica, Yi.

GENERAL MEETING AGENDA:

1) Welcome / Introductions - Stephie

- Land acknowledgment
- Declared quorum

2) Approval of Agenda

- Approved with no additions

3) Minutes of last meeting - Stephie

- Approved

4) Quick update on start of year - Stephie

- We are about halfway through our search for classroom reps
- Hot lunch is up and running; suppliers are confirmed; strong orders already with about 180.
- We'll look into more cost-effective options and healthier options going forward.
- Andy Moll update: Go by bike week is in process and going well.
- It's been noticed that there is an extra facebook page that needs to be deleted.
- Stephie has created a new website to replace the old PAC site which was via hotlunch.
New site found here: <https://emjspac.ca/>

5) Principle Update - James Hansen

- James gives thanks to PAC participation and reiterated the importance of the relationship between the school and parents.
- It's been an extra-busy startup. Some teachers are out of their class at the moment and English classes were not finalized until very late. But on the upside, a new division was created in English and so there are smaller class sizes. We now have 462 students, up from approximately 455 last year.

- Cheryl Rolston (Vice Principal): Cheryl introduced herself as she's new to ÉMJS this year. She is a Métis person and is from the prairies, and her children are now in their 20s. Cheryl is a runner and loves the outdoors: gardening, wild harvesting, and loves children. She loves to take part in activities at school, particularly Indigenous learning and gardening. She has been setting up the grade 5 lunch monitor program and building relationships within the school. She's hoping to find helpers to be in the garden – particularly weeding. She is very keen to meet parents and invites all parents to introduce themselves to her if they spot her around the school.

6) Staff Wishlist Changes

- Changes to Garden- Proposal by Jodi Phillips :
 - The garden was started pre-covid with city grants but the grass beneath the original lasagne gardens is constantly coming through. They would like to install raised garden beds. Cost would be around 5000 dollars for 18 galvanized steel raised beds. Jodi is working on getting pricing as low as possible.
 - Secondly, the weeds and invasive blackberries from the neighbouring garden are seeping through – a concrete block that would double as an outdoor classroom would be ideal.
 - Stephie mentioned that ÉMJS has one of the least amounts of natural play space in the district.
 - Heather mentioned that the outdoor play space ideas are completely open to suggestions. Perhaps Jodi's ideas can be incorporated into the outdoor space plans. Heather and Jodi will get together to compare ideas
 - As far as a timeline, there isn't really one planned but the first thing to achieve would be to lay down landscaping fabric.
 - Cheryl adds there could be additional grants.
- Teacher or rep for wishlist:
 - Stephie circulated a list of teacher funding requests. The list of requests was compiled last year by Jen Small and Tonya Winton, both of whom have now left Margaret Jenkins so it should be brought back to teachers to ensure it's still current.

7) Budget Presentation – Sam and Matt

- Matt presented the current budget. To view the budget presentation, please click here: <https://emjspac.ca/about>
- Summary:
 - We have a good amount of money for the outdoor classroom.
 - There's about \$27,000 in unrestricted funds.
 - Budget guidelines:
 - To maintain status quo PAC aims to replace money used in fiscal 2024-25, targeting a minimum profit of ~ \$34,500.

- Top PAC fundraisers: Monthly Hot Lunches program (Est. profit ~ \$9,000) and April Walk-A-Thon (Est. profit ~ \$15,000).
 - Must communicate where Walk-A-Thon proceeds will be used if we are shifting away from using it as a fundraiser for the Outdoor Classroom project until we are able to move to the next stage of consultation with the SD61 Facilities Department. It is such a successful fundraiser and requires a low amount of parent volunteers relative to many other fundraising activities. The PAC is proposing making this an annual fundraiser for general PAC funding, which would mean we could scale back on other, lower-financial yield/high volunteer fundraising activities.
 - Gaming grant, if received, adds ~ \$8,800 of restricted funds that can only be spent on certain identified priorities.
 - Familiar events such as Fall dance and Spring picnic have wide variability as fundraising activities.
 - Design will dictate how much is raised.
 - New community-building events/fundraisers hold promise (Winter movie night, adult musical chairs, etc.)
- Budget summary: Walkathon will add to the general funds and prevent the eating away of the general budget
 - Budget was presented for approval
 - Expenses – for curricular and extra-curricular programs
 - Visual arts fund will run out soon, currently at \$1200.
 - Class funds – it's up to the school how to divide the funds, but there are rules on how it can be spent as the money partially comes from the Gaming Grant.
 - Questions about budget:
 - Crystal asked about the Primary playground and whether it's up for replacement. James' said the current one isn't near expiration and a new one would be approximately 150k. Crystal is interested in looking into options based on some past experience she has with having playgrounds built in a cost-effective way.
 - There's also been feedback about a need for an additional bike rack. Stephie suggested putting out a survey to find out what parents would like to see happen at the school with PAC funds.
 - Proposed next steps from Budget presentation:
 - Budget Discussion & Approval subject to proposed changes.
 - Gaming Grant follow-up.
 - Discuss proposed uses for 2024-2025 Walk-A-Thon Funds.
 - For simplicity, should the Garden Fundraiser be absorbed into and funded by the PAC General Account going forward?
 - How to fund Art Supply Room since VAC Funds are nearly used up (construction paper cost \$400 this year already)?
 - What additional Events/Fundraisers should the PAC organize?
 - How much of the PAC General Fund should be allocated to a cashable

interest-bearing GIC?

- James added a fine point about the importance of having a collaborative relationship in evaluating and balancing the needs of the PAC and school.
- James Chromebook update:
 - Many old Chromebook have been removed from circulation because they are no longer meeting SD61 security standards.
 - There are now only about 120 Chromebook left at ÉMJS. The school is making it work as best they can. They are \$500 each. Over time we should stagger the purchase of new ones so that they do not ever go obsolete at once.
 - District now only provides devices for one in four students so we will not be getting more from the district. (Last year, needs were evaluated at a 2 to 1 ration of students per device).
 - We'll wait on purchasing more because we do not want any to be re-allocated across the district if that were to happen, which is a small possibility in the short term, as SD61 evaluated which schools have the highest need. The PAC has earmarked some funds for purchasing additional Chromebooks this year.
- The budget was approved.

8) Fall Dance update - Stephanie

- It's been challenging to find a date - 11 October is the only possible time for the gym to be used for a fall dance. It could be feasible to change it to another time of year when there's more availability in the gym such as a winter wonderland or Valentine's dance.
- Jessica's update: she is aware of a local 80's tribute band 'Freeze Frame'. They are very family friendly, would be wonderful to book them for a live music experience. Cost is \$800.
- James is happy for the change to be made – the only task is to find a date when the gym is open. Jessica and James will look into the gym schedule.
- The idea for a dance that's not a fall dance was well-received at the meeting as Hallowe'en on its own is enough excitement for October, and the fun of a dance would be wonderful at any time, it doesn't need to happen in the fall. Other times of year could also be seen as more inclusive for families that do not celebrate Hallowe'en.

9) Grade 5 Hoodie sales and event rep

- To discuss at next meeting.

10) Post Meeting to-do items: ADD AS NEEDED:

- Megan to delete the obsolete facebook page
- Heather and Jodi to meet to discuss garden/outdoor classroom ideas
- Need to ensure the teacher wish list is still current.
- Stephanie to announce the postponement of the Fall Dance in the next What's up

- Jessica and James to look into possible dates for a school dance to replace the fall dance

11) Date of next meeting

- Tuesday October 22, 7pm.

12) Agenda items to discuss at next general meeting

- Possible November silent auction
- Further discussion on dance
- Grade 5 hoodie sales and event rep search

13) Adjournment – Thank you

- Quick exec only meeting post general