

Merton Home and School Meeting
5554 Robinson Avenue
September 24, 2009

The meeting began at 7:40 PM in the teacher's staff room.

Present at the meeting were:

- Joanne Whitty – President
- Ida Di Stefano – Vice President
- Franco Sauro – Treasurer
- Harvey Caron – Assistant Treasurer
- Fernanda Di Nezza – Pre-K Chair
- Debra Friedlansky – Activities Chair
- Tracy Cartwright-Wani – Secretary

Also present at the meeting were:

Raizel Candib, Karen Rohgn-Paduhn, Nancy Abergel, Andrea Dector, Anna Buono, Cindy Itovitch, Richard Kirsch, Rose Di Mambro, Sandra Gianfelice and Barbara Holman.

Joanne Whitty chaired the meeting and Tracy Cartwright-Wani took the minutes.

1. Approval of the agenda

Motion made by Ida Di Stefano, seconded by Tracy Cartwright-Wani.

2. Approval of the past minutes of May 13, 2009 (with amendments)

Motion made by Debra Friedlansky, seconded by Harvey Caron.

3. New business

- a) Approve this year's budget: approved by all 16 people present.
- b) Treasurer's report: revenue might increase this year due to increase of children in ASA but still too early to know for sure. Joanne Whitty explained the added expense in the budget pertaining to the potential legal fight with CSN.

4. Reports

- a) ASA

The children are getting settled in their various class rooms. Harriette and Nickey are with grades pre-K to grade 2. Donna A. takes care of grade 3 and sometimes grade 2 if there are too many children. Antoinette takes care of grade 4, 5 and 6. There are 99 regular users who have signed up for this service. Donna A. will be submitting a report next week after the first week of Enrichment to see what our numbers are like per group while Enrichment takes place and what the numbers are like after Enrichment. If there are too many children in ASA, a new educator will be hired to help out.

b) Enrichment

There are still some spots left in scrapbooking, Mad Science, hip hop and senior sports. This fall was a big success with 2 newcomers running the program with Joanne's guidance. The only courses that were cancelled were Sheltoons, Latin grooves and Reptiles. There will be a survey for parents to fill out mid way through. Also we have a new idea for winter whereby we hold an "Enrichment sign up night" in December. Parents would come to the gym where there would be a table set up for each course. There will be no enrichment on Monday, September 28th due to the Jewish holidays. There was a mistake on the calendar but a new one is up on the web.

c) Pre-K

Fernanda is looking into getting pinnies from Jadon for the pre-k kids to wear on their fieldtrips. She is waiting to hear back with a price. New testimonials are available on our Website gathered from Pre-K parents 2008-2009. The parents have been offered the option of having a DVD for all pre-k activities. The majority have accepted and will pay a portion of the DVD and Home and School will also pay a portion. The Pre-K's visited the Cote St-Luc Library on September 22nd. A fieldtrip is planned for October 1st; the Pre-K's will be joining the kindergarten classes to go apple picking. Fernanda has asked Harriette to ask for class parents to help out with various pre-k activities throughout the year, nearly half the class offered to volunteer their time. The families are very eager to help.

d) Uniform

Rosa Di Mambro sent out a survey to all parents asking about satisfaction with service from Jadon, quality of clothing, prices, turn-around time on receiving merchandise, etc. Many people responded it is too early to determine if the quality is good because the school year just started. She recommends that a second survey be sent out in early winter. She is still looking for volunteers to join the uniform committee and is asking that all comments be sent to the Home and School so she can pass them on to Pam Rudie. A suggestion was made to ask parents to donate their children's uniforms to the school if they have outgrown them and they are still in good condition so that the school can sell them for a nominal price to families without means.

e) Grad

Sandra Gianfelice is the Chairperson of the grad committee this year. The participation of all grade 6 students and their parents is required. Ida Di Stefano and Louise Dandurand are also on the committee. The chocolate bar sale will start soon. The goal is to raise enough money to bring down the cost of the grad ceremony and party, the class trip, yearbook and photos. The next grad committee meeting is scheduled for October 26th.

5. Question period

- Why is there broken cement in the playground and who is responsible to fix it?

Work on the roof has started and during the process one of the contractor's trucks damaged the concrete. Once the repairs to the roof are finished they will fix the concrete.

- Why are there mountains of grass left when the grass has been cut? Why isn't it raked up?

The school board is responsible for cutting the grass; they hire a contractor to do this. The contractor is not obligated to rake the grass and remove it.

6. Governing Board report

Elections were held. The new board consists of Franco Sauro, Joe Di Pasquale, Marco Petroni and Brian van Frank. The next meeting is scheduled for October 14th.

7. President's report

Two weeks before school started Home and School ordered and paid for 25 hand sanitizers for the school as a precaution against the H1N1 virus.

The Home and School donated \$5,000 at the end of last year to match the school board's contribution of \$5,000 for the purchase of the new Mac computers.

The first pizza lunch is on September 25th, Ida and her team have everything set up. More than ½ of the Merton families have taken the option for either ordering ½ the year or the full year. Any parent who only ordered for September will receive a form for October and so on.

The Terry Fox run will be held on September 25th.

An emergency phone chain will be set up in case we ever have to close the school at the last minute. Joanne and a group of parents will be starting to work on this. Some of the ideas discussed are opening a Merton Twitter page where parents could receive a text message if we have to close.

Joanne thanked Fernanda and Rose for cleaning up the office. It looks great.

Joanne thanked all of the parents who have filled out volunteer forms but mentioned that some parents have taken a very aggressive tone when speaking with the Home and School.

Joanne has resigned as chairperson of Jewish Studies and is looking for a replacement.

8. Principal's report

There was a high enrolment this year with three kindergarten classes compared to two classes last year.

The cycle 3 students will be visiting the Jewish Public Library in October to meet author Joanne Hurwitz. The cycle 1 students will be going to the Science Center and IMAX in November.

The milk program will start the week of October 5th. The students will get milk Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

The school board has given the school a moveable Smart Board, projector and laptop. They will be kept in the computer room which is equipped with its own alarm system.

Cameras have been installed at all doors and an intercom has been installed at the main entrance and the pre-K door.

The school board has launched a three-year plan and a 1.3 M investment in a new literacy initiative. Sara Abudarham is the literacy facilitator for Merton. She is released one day a week to work with the other teachers to implement the new literacy approach to teaching reading and writing.

9. Next meeting scheduled for October 21, 2009 at 7:30 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Submitted by Tracy Cartwright-Wani
Secretary