

Manachaban School Council Feb 25, 2013

Present: Thomas Elbel	Colleen Munro
Krista Stronach	Sigi Sengl
Penny Beaudry	Vanessa Fischbuch
Stephen Price	Katt Hryciw
Dawn-Marie Cinnamon	Sara Busby

Meeting called to order at 6:33 pm.

Welcome and Intros

Agenda then adopted by consent.

Minutes from previous meeting presented and passed.

Staff Report

- Active Living Day was very successful - kids had fun and there were lots of parent volunteers
- Parent/Teacher interviews happened before the Family Day week break
 - parents who were unable to meet with teachers are still welcome to give the teachers a call and set up a brief meeting if they wish
- Feb 15 was a school-based PD (Professional Development) day
 - each teacher has a project for the year and this day allowed them to discuss and further their ideas
- convention was last week
 - some years are better than others depending on what sessions are offered and what a particular teacher is teaching
 - teachers were able to tour various city facilities to get a feel for possible field trips (eg Science Center, Glenbow, College of Art and Design)
- term 2 ends on March 15
 - report cards will come out/be available the following week

Treasurer Report

- current balance is \$12,235.92 (walkathon money is in)
- money earmarked to spend:
 - up to \$2000 for new jerseys - jerseys are still being sourced
 - ~ \$4500 for active living day (\$10 per student based on 448 students)
 - ~\$1000 for the grade 5 Frank Slide trip
- other possible expenses:
 - last year \$1000 went to the school compassion fund (to help fund students for school trips that might not otherwise be able to afford it (at administration's discretion)) - this request seems to come up every year, but has not yet been raised
 - replacement hoops for outdoor basketball courts
 - high jump mat - this was mentioned at the beginning of the year - could come out of the casino money as well

Admin Report

- Parent Focus Group
 - met Feb 12 to discuss going paperless for mid-year report cards
 - six parents showed up
 - general consensus was that there is no real reason not to do this

- next step is to come up with implementation plan (eg dates)
- last issue is about comments in powerschool
 - these appear in several locations - under term work, specific assignments, and overall
 - can be inconvenient to look at them all
 - having a section for running comments might work, but there could be character limits (2400?)
- how often should grades be updated? - general agreement seems to be every 4-6 weeks
 - this could be onerous for some subjects (eg music) where one teachers sees just about every student in the school
 - term end is a natural spot
 - parent/teacher nights is another
- parents indicated that they don't need curricular comments (eg. "This term we studied x and worked on y...") - perhaps these could be put in at the beginning of the year and deleted for space as the year progresses
- facilities
 - Rockyview has approved \$100,000 for Manachaban out of its Infrastructure, Maintenance, and Renewal Budget (IMR Budget)
 - school is currently space challenged in a number of areas - ideas will focus on best use of available space
 - Manachaban teachers have been brainstorming about how to make changes and ideas have been collected
 - planner is coming to the school to look at the ideas to determine what is doable
 - eg. looking at team teaching for the grade fives
 - this is where teachers would share the teaching of a subject and re-divide classes to better focus on strengths of teachers and students and gives students two teachers to approach for help
 - this would involved students moving between classrooms
 - to facilitate this - would like to see doors put in between classrooms and small breakout rooms created
 - meeting with planner will determine how feasible this is
- School is partnering with the Boys and Girls Club
 - Build-It Club will meet once a week at lunch
 - would be a place for boys to meet and build stuff
 - will start with 2-3 students by invitation only (several have been identified as benefitting from such a program)
- Evening of Excellence
 - planned for June 25 to recognize top grade 7 & 8 students in many areas - academic, athletic, music, leadership, etc
 - hoping this leads to a culture shift favoring excellence (another Rockyview school known for its excellence does this)
 - still working on details:
 - how many students?
 - when do invites get sent?
 - what criteria for invitation?

Trustee Report

- Board has approved IMR Budget - this includes borrowing \$200,000 against next years IMR Budget for all the work it wants to see done across the division
- no word yet on portables - should know more by the time the provincial budget is released (Mar 7)
- Trustee Ward Boundaries
 - next election is coming in October - any request for ward boundary changes must be submitted by Mar 1
 - have been looking at all the population changes in Rockyview
 - looking at representation by population - two wards are quite busy (Airdrie and Chestermere)
 - board decided that they had left it too late and any decisions would be too rushed - would prefer to consult with communities
 - put a motion on the books that the next board re-examine this issue early in their mandate
- Accommodation plan for Glenbow and Mitford will be discussed by board on March 7 (have already had three meetings with the community) - schools will be short 4 classrooms in the fall
- A new teacher agreement has been proposed to the ATA and the School Boards

- must wait until Feb 27 to hear if there is an agreement in principle (would still need local ratification)
- question was asked about transportation costs to parents (\$135 for a student seems like a bargain)
 - Rockyview receives a transportation grant of \$25 million to offset costs
 - Rockyview transports the most students of any board ~30,000 a day

Future Item:

- Links for Learning Golf Tournament - will have a presenter at next meeting
- a discussion ensued about differing attitudes toward competition
 - Alfie Kohn was a speaker last week who believes competition can be harmful to students (can lead to imbalance of power which can lead to bullying) <http://www.alfiekohn.org> for more info.
 - contrasted with Peter Jenson (sports psychologist) who encourages competition in athletics (and has worked with numerous olympic athletes) <http://www.drpeterjensen.com>
 - [this information presented in this report as a point of interest to any parents who actually read this far and are interested in learning more about some of the current trends influencing our education system]

Next meeting is scheduled for Mar 25, 2013 at 6:30 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 7:43.