

Parent Advisory Council: Meeting Minutes

Monday, November 1, 2021

Via Google Meet

Members in Attendance:

Lane Moore, Ashley Bajema, Bobbi Talsma, Darci Cole, Marsha Lush, Stephen Lush, Leslie Anderson, Dale Grimsdale, Shannon Yurystowski, Trudy Bratland, Karen Jaffray, Karla Wyld, Stephanie Smith and Tammy McDiarmid

1. Call to Order: The *Chair*, Ashley Bajema, called the meeting to order at 8:02 pm

2. Approval of Minutes:

- The minutes from the previous meeting were approved as distributed, by the *Chair*.

3. Trustee Report:

- Trudy Bratland introduced herself as our newly elected Ward C, Wolf Creek Public Schools, Trustee
- Trudy attended the Terry Fox run in Bluffton on September 24, attended three council meetings on September 27th as well as the Annual Truth and Reconciliation walk in Maskwacis on September 30th.
- The Board met with Auditors on September 29 to discuss and set the guidelines for our annual audit, the results having to be reported to Alberta Education at the end of November.
- On October 4, Trudy was in Ponoka to virtually attend TEBA (Teacher's Employer Bargaining Association) as the Wolf Creek rep. All 61 School Boards have a representative and the group meets regularly with Government staff who work under the Public Education Bargaining Act in Collective Agreement negotiations with the ATA.
- The Thursday, October 14, Board meeting agenda included receiving the enrollment update, budget update and funding issues and requests. A vaccine mandate for staff was discussed. Feedback from Wolf Creek staff is being requested.
- A Governance Workshop was held on October 26 that was very informative for the new and returning Trustees. Luci Henry was elected as Board Chair and Kelly Lowry as Vice Chair. Today, six Trustees joined in a virtual, Annual General Meeting for the 8 Central Alberta School Divisions that make up the Alberta School Boards Association Zone 4. Elections were held to fill the various positions for the Zone which meets monthly.
- November will be a busy month for the Trustees, as they will attend a Board Retreat, ASBA and PSBAA Annual Fall General Meetings, as well as Wolf Creek's monthly Board, Audit Committee and Zone 4 meetings.

- Sincere congratulations to Mr. Lush on receiving the Alberta School Athletic Association's Lorne Wood Award.

4. Administration Updates:

Covid-19 Updates

- Bentley School's Covid-19 outbreak status has been removed
- There are noticeably less absences due to illness in the building
- Currently, AHS will notify Bentley School of any positive cases and inform the school of proper contact tracing protocol
- At this time, our school has not been notified of any current cases of Covid-19
- Lane is hopeful that in the New Year, volunteers may be allowed back in the building
- Alberta Education has changed the weighting of Diploma Exams from 30% down to 10% of their final grade. This was done to reduce stress and pressure on students.
- If our school were ever to reach outbreak status again (10+ cases), at-home testing kits may be made available to our school

Sports and Clubs

- The Junior High cross country team won the Wolf Creek championship at Deer Valley as well as the CWAJHAA banner from the race in Brownfield, AB.
- For Senior High, one student, Wacey Smith, qualified and finished in the middle of the pack at Cross Country Provincials.
- Easton Mckinlay and Brynn Von Kuster won the Wolf Creek golf championship. The boys' team brought home the Wolf Creek team banner.
- We currently have a total of 7 volleyball teams right now in Bentley School. Most of them are wrapping up now.
- Our Junior High A Girls' Team is currently undefeated. They play their first-round matches on November 2 and the final matches on Thursday. League finals are on November 9 and 10.
- Our Junior A boys' team will be going to CWAJHAAs on November 20 in Eckville.
- Basketball will be starting up on November 22
- Mr. Brown has started a Robotics' club
- Kelsey Thera has started up the School Reach program

School Events/Field Trips/Volunteers

- At this time we are trying to limit class field trips primarily due to Covid-19 precautions (limiting cohort sizes) and budgeting reasons (busing is very expensive). Teachers are encouraged to look into virtual field trip options as much as possible.
- We were hoping to be able to participate in swimming lessons this year, however, the Sylvan Lake pool has experienced staffing shortages and are unable to accommodate our lessons this school year.

Educational Testing/Curriculum

- The current plan is for Diplomas to be written at the end of January, with the weighting of Diploma exams changing from 30% to 10% of a student's final grade
- Provincial Achievement Test writing is currently being discussed at the division level. Grade 6 and 9 PATs are tentatively slated to be written in June.
- During staff CRM days, various student needs and interventions are discussed and Response to Intervention plans are created using a team approach.
- Bentley School has the second highest number of students with special needs in the division, as well as the second highest number of EAs.
- Alberta Education is proposing to move forward with the new, draft curriculum next school year. Despite the lack of school division support throughout the province, in regards to piloting the new curriculum, it is their intent to release the new curriculum, likely after some changes have been made.

Gideon Bible Distribution

- The Parent Council voted to allow the distribution of Gideon Bibles to grade 5 students on an opt-in/opt-out basis. Parents will be given the option to have their child opt-in or opt-out of the bible distribution. This year, due to restricted access in the school building, school staff will be passing out the bibles to those requesting one.

Trickster Theatre

- Bentley School is fortunate enough to bring Trickster Theatre back this year. The theme of this year's performances will be "Giving."
- Trickster Theatre is an artists-in-residency program. They will come to our school from December 13-17 and will work with each cohort group to produce a theatrical presentation.
- This year's plan is to live stream the performance, as well as link the video to the Bentley School website for viewing.
- The total cost of having Trickster Theatre come to our school is \$17,200. We were lucky enough to receive an Alberta Foundation of the Arts' grant which covers 75% of the cost. And another \$2000 was paid for by the Town of Bentley, which we are very grateful for.
- Tammy McDiarmid, on behalf of Bentley School, approached the Parent Council about potentially donating \$1000 to help offset the remaining costs of Trickster Theatre. This motion was approved by Karla Wyld and seconded by Darci Cole. All in favour.

Panther Poll

- Last month's Panther Poll was used in an attempt to increase parental involvement and feedback.
- With the recent survey, 59 parents, 143 students and 26 staff members responded.
- Key areas discussed/determined through the survey:

- Consensus was to continue the Terry Fox Run, but making it less competitive, focusing on the true meaning behind the event.
 - The consensus was to continue to offer swimming lessons to students. We will hopefully be going ahead with swimming lessons in the 2022/23 school year (this year's lessons were cancelled due to staffing shortages at the pool).
 - Majority of the respondents want to see the *Bentley School Gives Back* programs continue.
 - It was determined through the poll that theme days and Halloween activities are important for younger students, but become less important to students as they reach Junior/Senior High. Some suggestions for older student alternatives included Wellness Days, school dances, etc.
 - Hockey and Golf Academy were ranked the lowest in terms of program continuance. These programs also take the greatest amount of money, time and staff involvement to operate. The other downside to these programs is that teachers felt that Academy students were out of the classroom more than they'd like. We will re-evaluate the potential for these programs in the new year.
- This month's Panther Poll will allow parents and staff to provide feedback for our Parent Council in hopes of increasing engagement within our council.

Other News

- Congratulations to Mr. Lush for being selected as the recipient of the Alberta Schools' Athletic Association's Lorne Wood Award this year. This award is presented annually to a school administrator who actively promotes school sport and models and supports sportsmanship by their involvement in their school's athletic program. We are very proud of to have Mr. Lush supporting our athletic programs at Bentley School.

5. Parent Council Updates:

- We are in the process of developing a Bentley School Parent Council Constitution.
- We discussed, as a council, the possibility of bringing in more specific roles for our directors. Some ideas we brainstormed are as follows:
- Staff appreciation director
 - Education director
 - Parent engagement director
 - Communications' director
 - Fundraising Liaison

Alberta School Engagement Grant

- Our Parent Council will be provided with a \$500 engagement grant
- Our plan is to use these funds as follows:
- For every parent who attends a Parent Council meeting this school year, their name will be entered into one of two draws:

Draw #1) For Elementary parents (K-6) - the winning parent will choose one of their child(ren)'s teachers. This teacher will receive \$50 towards a classroom purchase of their choice.

Draw #2) For Jr/Sr High parents (7-12) - the winning parent will win a \$50 gift card for their Jr. or Sr. High child.

* If you have children in both Elementary & Jr/Sr High, you can decide which draw you want to put your name into.

- The Alberta School Engagement Grant fund allocation motion was approved by Ashley Bajema and seconded by Karen Jaffray.

6. Town Council Report – Introduction and Welcome

- Welcome to one of our newly elected Town Council members, Dale Grimsdale, who was sworn into office on Tuesday, October 26th
- Dale will have a report for us at our next council meeting
- Please forward any questions you may have to Dale at the following email: dgrimsdale@bentleycouncil.ca

7. Round Table Reports:

- President: encouraged directors to think about and identify which of the director roles they would like to fill.
- Vice President: Commented on the meeting running very smoothly, and about how nice it was to meet as a Parent Council board in person the previous week.
- Secretary: Congratulations to Steve on being chosen for the Lorne Wood Award. And a warm welcome was given to both Trudy and Dale for joining us.
- Directors: Nothing to report at this time.
- Fundraising Liaison: Janis Bickford was unable to attend tonight's meeting but wanted to pass along the message that the Bentley School Chest Society will be supplying all staff with "The Drop" gift cards, as a show of our appreciation.

8. Next Scheduled Meetings:

- January 10, 2022 at 8:00 PM
- March 7, 2022 at 8:00 PM
- May 2, 2022 at 8:00 PM
- June 13, 2022 at 8:00 PM

9. Adjourned:

- Meeting adjourned at 9:55 pm
- Minutes submitted by Secretary, Darci Cole