

**Nelson Waldorf School Parent Council Meeting
May 27, 2009, 7-9pm, Parent Room at the school**

In attendance:

Iain Pardoe (Parent Council Treasurer, meeting chair), Bronwyn Murray (Parent Council acting Co-Chair), Claire Leishman (School Beautification and Playgrounds), Pamela Loeppky (Class 4 Rep and meeting recorder), Martha Wilson (active member interested in co-coordinating School Events), Jennifer Arrowsmith (active member interested in Adult Education), Phil Fertey (Faculty - Parent Council Liaison), Beverley Barcham (Board/Administration - Parent Council Liaison), Bree Switzer (from Faculty).

Review of action items from this meeting:

ACTION: Iain to apply for PAC Gaming Grant by June 30.

ACTION: Phil to ask faculty what their priorities for grant \$ are (i.e. Class 5 Olympic) and to request faculty consider PAC \$ guidelines.

ACTION: Bree to bring to faculty ideas for parent handbook.

ACTION: Bronwyn, Iain, Martha to draw up parent expectations document, including volunteer plan connected to all-school celebration.

ACTION: Claire to look into school beautification, e.g., setting up planter boxes at stairs.

ACTION: Iain to decide on a time/date for the next meeting after consulting with others and to post an announcement in the first School Bulletin of 2009/10.

ACTION: Pam to write up a draft of the meeting minutes, Iain to edit and circulate to other attendees for approval; approved minutes to be posted on the Parent Council page of the school website as soon as possible.

1. Open meeting

Meeting began with casual visiting, candle lighting and recitation of Steiner's "Social Motto". Approved minutes of last meeting of April 16, 2009.

2. Grants

Bev informed Parent Council (PC) that they need to apply for PAC (Parent Advisory Council) Gaming Grant by June 30, which had been done previously by school, but application process was changed and it must now be PC. Can be saved for up to 3 years but applied for every year. \$20 per student per year. Money must be used for extra curricular activities i.e., scholarships, field trips, sports equipment. May not be given to school for operating costs. There is a time limit on use of money. Need a separate account for money, which is already established.

ACTION: Iain to apply for PAC Gaming Grant by June 30.

Martha notes faculty may have different vision for grant \$ than PC. Keep communication open. Bev informs that 2 scholarships a year for grade 12 Waldorf Alumni of \$500 each have come from this \$ and would like to see this continue. Report on \$ use must be filed 60 days after fiscal year end. This \$ was previously part of operating budget but this will no longer be the case.

Martha suggests conversation with mature PAC groups in other schools to get ideas on grant information. Possibly someone to call Fay Shaw (previous NWS parent with lots of PAC experience). Iain shares general information on 3 possible grants: Columbia Basin Trust, Osprey Foundation, Nelson & District Credit Union. Many possibilities for \$\$ from these grants with many different amounts of \$ given. Bev notes we used to get \$ from Osprey but no longer receive it. Bronwyn asks how do we decide how to spend \$. PC and faculty combined? Iain suggests Grant coordinator work with Bev. Bev requests information on grants be emailed to her. Phil suggests 'wish lists' by Parents and Faculty with collaboration on where it is most useful with most impact. Iain suggests through Class Reps to PC reps to PC. Martha asks if classes should be able to apply for PAC \$. Bronwyn asks if we need clear policy for PAC \$ or should it be organic every year? Martha suggests good to have clear process. Pam suggests a little of both. Phil suggests a task group for allocating grant \$ made up of PC members, faculty and admin. Bev suggests wish list should come through a filter system first for specific yearly commitments and then what is left be flexible funds. Possibility of putting some \$ away every year to save for something bigger. Martha suggests Paul Edney as a resource and Iain agrees as Paul has said he may be available.

ACTION: Phil to ask faculty what their priorities for grant \$ are (i.e. Class 5 Olympic) and to request faculty consider PAC \$ guidelines.

3. Report from Fundraising Committee

Jen reports the committee formed in March. Fundraising events review. 3 main areas: Survey (has been administered, nearly 50% returned, currently looking at results to give recommendations); Annual Giving Campaign (working with Bev on ideas); Fundraising methods at other schools (suggested by survey, most feasible and valued).

Phil will pass on Ilana Pengally's name on to Steve Fortey for fundraising ideas. Martha notes that fundraising overlaps with PC. Iain notes PC to help with 'welcoming committee' which is related to volunteering and we should watch how PC relates to fundraising as they seem slightly mixed up. No specific Fundraising Coordinator on PC Executive Membership. Should Event Coordinator, Volunteer Coordinator and Grant Coordinator make up the Fundraising Committee? Martha notes we don't want to spread people too thin with too many various meetings etc. Fundraising is now Board driven. Phil notes it is and has been but doesn't have to be.

4. Report from Playground Committee

Claire notes playground committee with Faculty approval hired Barrow (previous sub teacher with Anthroposophy background) has drawn up playground plans. Plans hanging in school hallway along with each area divided up with one person from playground committee heading specific area with sign up sheets attached encouraging families to help. Working on cost and time lines for each and most efficient ways (i.e. all concrete being poured at same time for different things). \$ must be spent by September. Construction to begin as soon as school is out.

Bev noted comments overheard on when volunteers are needed so they may plan their summer accordingly. Iain notes Erica is working on copy of playground plans to be posted in Kinderhouse. Martha grateful for time & thought into playground and notes that playground committee has lots of vision and energy to bring to PC. Phil notes to recognize playground committee in fall. Martha notes the Social Inclusion group is strong too and we need to integrate instead of being separate groups.

5. Information about all-school welcoming meeting in Sept. Role of PC in this.

Bree notes that still in beginning stages on Parent Orientation. Iain notes the word 'orientation' is not as friendly than welcoming or celebration. Bree notes that faculty is starting to give ideas on form through ideas from survey and many other places. Would like PC input and ideas on the form it could take:

- Info on structure of school, working groups in faculty, steering committees, social inclusion and what groups do.
- Social Inclusion 3 legged stool example and how it relates to school as well (faculty, admin, parents)
- Introduction of teachers and what they do
- Introduction of parents and their children
- Artistic section done together i.e. Singing
- Outline expectations of parents i.e. Meetings, conferences
- Volunteer needs
- Recognize playground committee
- Tour of school
- Curriculum of each class & teacher (sweep of Waldorf education)
- Communication protocol

Martha notes we need the parent handbook at the beginning of the year regardless of whether the phone list is done (leave place open for this to come out later if necessary). Martha would participate in reworking handbook to make more reader friendly. Also include Social Inclusion handbook and possibly volunteer plan. Calgary website has good expectations for volunteer parents, which we could work from. Information on PC to be included with parent handbook so parents are aware this is how they have a voice in the school and with faculty.

ACTION: Bree to bring to faculty ideas for parent handbook.

Bree requests help over summer for set up of all-school celebration possibly by initiating new playground and fire pit. To be held 2nd Saturday after school starts in September (19th), time to be determined. Still to determine if Hoedown is separate from this celebration or not. Need to look into childcare possibly alumni students or marigold subs. Follow up for those who don't come to celebration. Parents need advanced info and reminders. Big reminder of celebration on last day of school. Faculty to sing school song with all joining in. Possibly all learn Social Motto.

Working group for all-school celebration: 1) practical aspect – set up; 2) planning.

Pam: buddy system for new parents, hook them up at celebration. Martha to list everything for School Calendar including festivals and what needs to be done for them i.e. making strawberry shortcake for Mayfest and what class holds it. Also including school ground clean up, bulb planting, etc. Claire notes we should have upcoming events possibly in calendar form posted in an obvious place on an ongoing basis with the possibility of a monthly or weekly calendar reminder going to teachers as well i.e. 2 weeks from now class one is responsible for Spiral Walk and here is all the info and here is where to find everything needed etc.

ACTION: Bronwyn, Iain, Martha to draw up parent expectations document, including volunteer plan connected to all-school celebration.

ACTION: Claire to look into school beautification, e.g., setting up planter boxes at stairs.

Lisa Bramson offered to be Adult Education liaison with faculty and parents. Need PC liaison: Lisa McGeady and Julia Archambault suggested as possibilities. Liz Amaral running parent course at our school starting in Sept. Bronwyn would like next level of Liz's course at our school as well. Combination of mother and child presentation (i.e. Donna and Bree) with parent questions, possibly in Oct.

6. Parent Council Roles

Acting Co chair: Bronwyn Murray

Treasurer, Grant Coordinator: Iain Pardoe

Beautification & Playground: Claire Leishman

Social Inclusion & Hospitality: Georgia Argyle

Parent Council Rep for Class 4 moving to 5: Pamela Loepky

Active Member of PC, with interest in Adult Ed: Jen Arrowshmith

Active Member, with interest in Adult Ed: Claire Leishman

Active Member who co-coordinates Halloween Journey & Winter Faire: Martha Wilson

Faculty Reps: Phil Fertey & Donna Switzer

Admin Rep: Bev Barcham

Faculty Liaison for Adult Education: Lisa Bramson

Jen suggests coordinators document all steps and processes of their role in a binder.

7. Any other business

The next meeting will be in September, time and date to be announced.

ACTION: Iain to decide on a time/date for the next meeting after consulting with others and to post an announcement in the first School Bulletin of 2009/10.

ACTION: Pam to write up a draft of the meeting minutes, Iain to edit and circulate to other attendees for approval; approved minutes to be posted on the Parent Council page of the school website as soon as possible.

8. Close meeting

Closed meeting with quiet reverence and verse, and extinguishing the candle.