

## **NWS Parent Council Meeting Minutes October 27, 2009**

**Attending:** Paige Adair, Martha Wilson, Catherine Lummiss, Iain Pardoe, Georgia Argyle, Phil Fertey, Bronwyn Murray, Lisa Lockett

**Regrets** – Claire Leishman, Bev Barcham, Ilana Pengelly

**Chair:** Iain Pardoe

**Note:**

red is an action

blue is a question posed

highlighted areas are things that needed a bigger discussion and a dedicated amount of time to create itemized actions.

### **Item One – Social Inclusion (SI) Update – Georgia and Paige**

- The SI parent group is creating a framework for the ongoing and consistent delivery of SI information to the NWS parent body.
- A proposal is being presented to the faculty to include a presentation at each regular parent meeting, in each class, every year.
- In the spring the SI parent group will complete and formalize the hospitality work within each class including welcoming in and leave taking, class get-togethers.

### **Item Two – Marketing – Bronwyn and Georgia**

- An E-zine has been created using a free account with Mail Chimp. Georgia will present the outline and example to the Faculty in November for approval to be used as a 3 or more times per year update to people interested in the school.
- A question was put to Iain if we could include a button on the website that allowed people to sign up for the newsletter. [Update: the "contact us" page on the school website has been updated to let people know that they can sign-up to receive newsletters using the existing form and also the "home" page now links directly to the "contact us" page.]
- Grant – Georgia will forward a completed grant application for a portable marketing display to Parent Council for input and approval. Then it will be forwarded to faculty for approval before being submitted to the Nelson and District Credit Union.

### **Item Three – Information Nights - Phil**

- The faculty has approved information nights to be held in Nelson.
- The dates have been set for Feb/Mar/April.
- The events will happen in downtown Nelson.

- The events will precede Windows on Waldorf school tours.
- A curriculum presentation will be given to those who do not know what the school offers.
- Effort will be put into myth busting around common misunderstandings people have about Waldorf education and the NWS.
- These will be structured evenings with the presentation beginning with preschool to Kindergarden curriculum; then grade 1-5 then grades 6-8 (middle school).
- A panel will be available with alumni, parents, and faculty to answer questions.
- There will be visual displays to support the presentation.
- Question – Can we get local statistics from LV Rogers High School around how many Waldorf graduates are on the honour roll, principal's honour role, receive grants, receive scholarships, etc. Also, what is the percentage of awards given to Waldorf graduates and what percentage of students in the school are Waldorf graduates?

#### **Item Four – Update on the Faculty-Board visioning meeting - Phil**

- Focused visioning on the Kinderhouse.
- Recognition that the Kinderhouse is the bedrock of the school.
- The school is going to prepare a third Kindergarten space at the school to be ready for the possibility of a third class next year.
- Question was how to do that.
- Also a vision to have a stand-alone Sweet Pea's program with it's own space and offered on more days.
- In January a teacher will be looked for to hold the Sweet Pea's program.
- Question was, where do we put these programs? A task force was created for this question and given one month to find an answer.
- This task force for space usage will put a recommendation forth on Nov 5 2009.
- Question – Do we have the demographics to fill three classes?
- The Province has mandated the offering of full day Kindergartens beginning 2010.

#### **Item Five – Fundraising – Iain reporting for Claire Leishman**

- The last Fundraising Committee meeting was a positive, constructive meeting in which we talked through issues surrounding the grocery card fundraisers and the decision to communicate the history of class fundraisers and this one in particular.
- Georgia and Ilana have the third draft in process.
- We discussed whether festivals belong under Parent Council responsibilities.
- Discussed the concert with Dharel Verville.
- Ilana will work with Bev to create a spreadsheet of grants we can apply for as needed.

## **Item Six – Festivals under the responsibilities of Parent Council Martha reporting**

- Question – do we have Parent Council hold the festivals?
- Festivals need to be acknowledged from a triple bottom line of being a special event for the community, a possible fundraiser and providing public relations.
- The Halloween Journey and Winter Faire need a place to be held and communicated about.
- A support system needs to be created for the person leading the event.
- Funds – the events earn money and the focus can become the money raised while the other two items of public relations and special community events are lost. This is very hard on the person leading the event.
- Note that Admin sits in the financial realm.
- Note that volunteers sit in the other two realms.
- Recognition that there is a hole in the school governance around the financial part of holding an event. Admin does not have a set of guidelines from which to work under around the expenditure of school funds for events, the reimbursement of those funds from profit at events, the allocation of funds raised from the events, and the purchase of permanent supplies for events. Without this structure nobody has a common place from which to work leaving admin in an uncomfortable position and placing an inappropriate level of responsibility on a parent volunteer.
- This unstructured system causes stress on the parent volunteers when they hand in receipts needing reimbursement.
- Question – Do we move the funds from those festivals into the realm of Parent Council so that they can hold the event, create the budget, issue reimbursements and determine where the profit is directed in conjunction with faculty?
- Proposal – that how profits from fundraisers are spent is a joint decision between Parent Council and faculty.
- Suggestion that an item is identified before an event so that everybody knows what the funds are going to prior to the event as people are more inspired when they know where money is going.
- From these ideas we would need to create a structure for how Parent Council handles funds.
- There will always be a need for support from the school to sell the tickets and there may be other support needed.
- Question – could Parent Council be secretarially supported for major events?
- Question – how do we bring Parent Council into the structure of the school to be seen as a legitimate part of the school over time?

- A goal – Can we by this time next year place an amount of money into the Parent Council bank account from the festival profits that is used to support events and reimburse parents?
- There is a need for direction on what to do now. How are we going to handle the Winter Faire expenditures?
- A structure is needed for the accounting for fundraisers. This cannot realistically be done this year.
- Could we do Mayfest as a dry run?
- Question – can we have a financial structure for receipts?
- How do we remove the stress around the finances of events?
- Phil will act as an advocate for the work the parents do for the events to reset the tone of appreciation around the work.
- We will manage this as a transition to a healthier place with structure.
- A note that parent volunteers acknowledge the support from faculty.

### **Item Five – Prioritizing Parent Council Work for 09/10**

- A question was put forward on how do we restructure Parent Council so that we are not trying to fill roles but rather going with the impetus of those involved.
- Fundraising Committee – Claire – still moving forward
- Marketing Committee – Bronwyn – still moving forward
- Social Inclusion – Paige and Georgia – all work still moving forward
- Parent Council class reps – class 6 rep has been found (Lisa McGeady)
- Festival Coordinator – Martha and .... (looking for a second)
- Organizing Festival Supplies and Costumes – Jodi Berman – Festival supply room is completed, it has been emptied, all garbage hauled away, walls and floors painted, shelves built and supplies organized and catalogued. Costume room to happen in the New Year.
- Upgrading of the parent room, hallway, fountain and display board at the bottom of the stairs is all on hold until faculty approves space usage.
- Re-imagining of the library – on hold – see above.
- Documentation of festivals, fundraisers and event – Continuing as planned with a wider contribution happening from many parents as they hold/host events. Spiral Walk and Lantern Walk have been completed and sent to faculty for approval. John Leishman and Iain Pardoe have created a Wiki site to upload the information when it is approved.
- Handbook – continued revision and additions – Martha and Carron Mulligan with Georgia doing formatting. This work is ongoing.
- Parent Council display area – Iain
- Portable Marketing Display – In process to get a grant.
- Grants database – Ilana and Bev

Question – what are we going to work on right away?