

South Meridian Elementary School – PAC Meeting Minutes

October 16, 2024, 6:30 pm, via Zoom

Welcome and Introductions

- Present: Rhian Walker, Co-chair; Marloes Holland, Co-chair; Courtney Peluso, co-VP; Wendy Bloye, Treasurer; Marilyn Fransen, Secretary; Andrea LaPointe, Principal; six other parents

Motion to Approve the Last PAC Meeting's Minutes (AGM)

- The minutes were distributed with the notice of this meeting.
- Courtney motioned they be approved.
- Marloes seconded.
- Vote: approved

Principal's report – Andrea LaPointe, Acting Principal

- **Lots of activities going on:**
 - There have been many **field trips** already (Buntzen Lake Hiking, Pumpkin Patch, Chan's Market, Fort Langley).
 - We observed **Orange Shirt Day** as a school.
 - A **board game club** is starting up, for Grades 2 to 5 students on a rotating schedule. Anyone in those grades can go on their day; no sign-up is necessary.
 - **Reading Link Challenge** with grades 4s and 5s has started.
- **School Plan** – Each school has a school plan and it is usually focussed on a school goal. South Meridian's goal had been "numeracy" for some time, but they are looking for a different new focus (although numeracy will still be important). So now the staff have chosen to focus on **literacy** to increase reading comprehension. Lunch-and-learns are being set up, book materials being offered to any teachers who want them. Collaboration and professional development is ongoing.
- **Interim reports are going home on Oct. 24th**. Focus will be on how students are adjusting to this year at school.
- **Halloween event** is garnering a lot of excitement.
- **Noon-hour supervisors**. There are now two full-time supervisors and one three days per week. Ms. Lapointe helps out as well. She is hoping for two more to be hired soon (awaiting criminal record checks). Then will be able to open up the full school yard for students to use.
- **Renovation/addition**. Outside spaces being developed.
 - The **gaga ball pit** has been installed but is currently fenced. They are waiting for balls to be delivered, and a couple of teachers are working on establishing rules. All funds have been covered by the addition project and the PAC will not be covering any of it. As well, the prize money won by a student last year which was to go toward it, is also not needed, so discussion will be needed about what else to spend that on. PAC will be consulted. **[ACTION ITEM]**
 - **New grass** is in and currently fenced. It will be for some time, likely until spring, to allow it to properly establish.

- **The drop-off lane** is still being worked on (water pipes underneath). She is hoping it can be completed before the next pro-D day so it can be paved on that day when the school is not in use.
- **Wish list for existing building work.** Technology needs a facelift, requested by teachers to have more, and also thinking of growth for future enrollment expansion. Asking for new furniture as well.
- **Mural.** Hoping to have existing mural removed. For this year the suggestion is just to paint that wall and freshen up the school name sign, and then commission an artist, likely an Indigenous artist, which can take quite a lot of time and involves an approval process. Committee for new mascot has met twice now (9 teachers involved and one parent). Want something culturally representative of where we are, diverse group of people at the school, want something unique as compared to other schools in the area. Something that binds us with strong characteristics and traits. Have about 8 ideas to discuss and will create a short list. Then will consult groups of students and the PAC about the short list. One option is still to keep the dolphin and just update the logo.
- **Deficiencies of flood remediation** have been worked through. Still working on some items that are awaiting replacement.
- **Safety drills.** The school is obligated to do four drills: earthquake, fire, lockdown, and hold and secure. So the staff are going to hold a safety week and talk about it with the students. Coming up in early November.
- **Gym sound and audio equipment.** Only one quote received so far, and seems high at first glance, but it involves a lot of work, permits, electrical etc. \$15,000 for audio only. Another \$10K for video to be added. Electrical work is about \$6,000, which would be required for each.
- **Grade 4 and Grade 7 FSA tests starting.** Grade 7 started online portion today. Letter was sent to all relevant parents by the district. Ms. LaPointe feels they provide a very important set of data.

Treasurer's Report – Wendy Bloye

- **Hot lunch** – have made about \$1,000 profit so far.
- **Expenses**
 - Halloween party budgeted \$1,500 in expenses, and so far is on track.
 - Needed to buy cheques
 - Purchased baskets to organize PAC storage at the school
- Received the annual **Gaming grant**, as expected.
- **Accounts**
 - **\$35,686 in general account**, about \$20,000 of which will be hot lunch expenses.
 - **\$19,800 in playground account** – was to be for blue playground but that was covered by the addition, so we should have a discussion about what to do with it.
[ACTION ITEM]
 - **\$9,700 now in gaming account**
- **Upcoming:** will need to decide on the gym sound system. **[ACTION ITEM]** Andrea has provided a quote through the district because district-approved vendors mean that district staff can then support/repair the items in future.

Proposed Events/Activities Upcoming

- **Halloween Party:**
 - **October 24, 5-8pm.**
 - **265 tickets sold as of this afternoon (max is 400).**
 - **Sales being cut off on Friday** so we can finalize food order (pizza) and confirm other supplies needed.
 - **Volunteer recruitment:** have about 14 volunteers so far but need several more for set-up, take down, managing games, serving food, etc.
 - **Games are ready.** Still need some grade 7s who are being asked to help run the games (they will receive a free candy bag). Being coordinated with Mr. Frost and Mr. Foley.
 - **Spread the word.** Flyers went to K classes and signs on classroom doors. Will be pushing info out via the class chats as well.
 - **Can the PAC support a couple of families** (two students each, plus need a parent in attendance) with entry fees and game cards? Yes, approved. Ms. LaPointe is coordinating.
- [Reminder: [sign up for PAC Google calendar](#) for all events and fundraising (see PAC emails/newsletters for the link)]

Fundraising

- **Art cards.** Being done now and information and proofs will be sent home in the coming weeks.
- **Purdy's** will also be before Christmas, probably late Nov/early Dec. Details to come. **[ACTION ITEM]**
- Other fundraising ideas?

Other PAC Activities

Giving Tree. Looking to do that again and have a parent volunteer to take that on. Would need to connect with Sources or determine if we are going to do a wish list internally to the school community as we did last year. Tasks would be to setting up the tree in the school entranceway, adding tags/descriptions, wrapping, and general coordinating. Marie Trip has volunteered, and Marloes will work with her as well. **[ACTION ITEM]**

Supporting other school community. Andrea brought up a couple of other ideas. Ms. Smith (who was our Principal last year) has asked if we may consider supporting families in her school community, which has a lot of families in need, with Christmas hampers as well as possibly a warm coat drive. Yes we can.

Parent Education Topics

- Rhiann asked for ideas/discussion. Nothing at this time.

Student Education Topics

- **Get Real.** Info sent to Ms. LaPointe and she will review. Would be for the spring.

Call for Additional Items

- Marie brought forth the idea to open up conversations about **how to approach technology differently**. She is a counsellor at a different school and a parent at SME. She is seeing there needs to be a collective effort in order to effect change. WhatsApp chat group is one idea (her school has a “Wait til 8” group promoting the idea of waiting until grade 8 to get a phone.) Also she has expert book to recommend (The Anxious Generation by Johnathan Haidt). Idea is to start with a WhatsApp chat group for any parents wanting to participate. Go from there to see what the level of interest is. Marie will contact Wendy afterward to set up a group WhatsApp chat. **[ACTION ITEM]**

Date of next meeting; Next meeting tentatively scheduled for Nov. 27, on Zoom, at 6:30pm.

Meeting Adjourned 7:45 pm