

# **CAA School Council Meeting Minutes**

## **November 5, 2019**

### **Attendance:**

#### CAA Administration:

Michelle Stonehouse, Principal  
Rhonda Morrison, Elementary Campus Administrator  
Dale Erickson, Superintendent

#### Executive Member Attendance:

Christy Ford, Chair  
Lisa Ferris, Vice Chair  
Stephanie Westlund, Secretary  
Shelley Christenson, Treasurer

Additional School Council members present: 5

Total parent attendance: 9

Quorum established. (Quorum minimum = 4 School Council members, including at least 2 executive members)

### **1. Welcome & Call to Order**

Meeting called to order by Christy Ford at 6:31 p.m.

### **2. Approval of Agenda**

Motion to approve the agenda made by Christy Ford. Lisa Ford seconded the motion. Agenda approved.

### **3. Approval of Minutes from September 10, 2019, Council Meeting**

Motion to approve the minutes from the September 10, 2019 Council meeting made by Christy Ford. Lisa Ford seconded the motion. Minutes approved.

### **4. Chairperson's Report – Christy Ford**

- Last donation drive (birthday drive for the Calgary Food Bank) was very successful. Christy had to make 2 trips to EC to take all the donations.
- Halloween Dance went very well. We tried our first 50/50 draw (run by Cara Overholt, who did a great job!). Parent winner went home with \$125, and School Council received \$125. Good way to test out the 50/50 draw process. We will be offering another 50/50 draw in the spring.
- Spirit Club is collecting donations for the Veterans' Food Bank – Year 1 students are working together with Education Centre to do this.

### **5. Principal's Report**

- Halloween Dance was spectacular at KH campus
- Halloween Dance was organized by Student Council at the EC and was well attended
- Global Leadership Club at the EC has been working hard towards participating in the Fair Trade Conference in March 2020
- Year 8/9 performance at public library tomorrow (November 6) – Shakespeare Theme (The Force Doth Awaken - Calgary Public Library - 7:00 p.m. to 9:00

- p.m.)
- Report Cards will be coming out on November 22. Parent conferences will be held the week after (Nov 28 and 29)
- Remembrance Day will be recognized on November 8 at both campuses (Monday, November 11, is a holiday, and Tuesday is a PD day.) Parents are welcome to attend
- Calgary Arts Academy Society's 2019 Annual General Meeting will take place on Tuesday, November 19, 2019, at 7:00 p.m. at the Education Centre. Among the topics being discussed will be an update of the plans for the High School
- Charter School Conference – CAA hosted the Charter School Conference on October 24 and 25. It was amazingly well done. We hosted 500 teachers from across the province, and had great speakers. The Minister of Education was present. There were great sessions and lots of information. This was a great opportunity for CAA to showcase the work we do.

6. **Updates:**

a) **PA System Discussion and Other Questions - Dale Erickson (Superintendent)**

**Background information about PA System search and funding request**

We were initially looking to get a new Public Address (PA) system for the gym at the Education Centre (EC); however, when we spoke with staff, we realized that they were most concerned about the PA system at the Knob Hill campus. We went through a process of finding out what kind of PA system was the best for performances so that students could be properly heard. Initially we got a quote for the entire gym at the EC from St. John's Music. The quote was reasonable but included a \$5000 installation fee, so we decided to obtain additional quotes.

We spoke with the Calgary Stampede, who told us they had previously worked with Sound Art. Because one day, the KH campus will no longer be home to K-3, we realized that investing in a portable system that is compatible with the equipment at the TransAlta Studio makes the most sense as a long-term investment.

Accordingly, we sought to make sure that we were getting quotes for systems that would be compatible with all the equipment available at the EC.

We secured quotes from both Long & McQuade and Sound Art. The quotes came in at similar prices but only Sound Art has all the equipment we need so the decision was made to go with Sound Art. The first piece of equipment to be bought will be the portable PA system purchased for the KH campus.

The portable system for the KH campus will cost \$15,890.70. This will be the first system purchased, followed by the purchase of equipment for the EC gym, and then systems for the three learning studios at the EC.

**Other Questions**

**What is happening with the playground structure at EC?**

We have narrowed the structure to 2 options and are currently applying for grants and matching amounts to fund the structure, which will cost \$150,000. This requires professional installation. A select group of staff and students will be asked to help choose the final design and at this point, as long as we are able to secure all funding,

it will be installed in the spring.

**How do recent funding changes from the Alberta Government affect CAA?**

The Department of Education has changed how it funds schools. The Alberta Government has eliminated the small class size funding grant, which was meant to ensure that K-3 classes remain small. This means that CAA loses \$275,000 this year. All school jurisdictions were given a one-year grant to offset some of the losses; we received \$96,000. We do have a current surplus of \$300,000, and the current government has said that we must keep \$154,000 in reserve. Accordingly, we can use the rest of the money to maintain services for the next 3 years.

We are cutting back on some things. We had 2 full-time caretakers at Knob Hill, now we'll have 1.5 caretakers, which is in line with other schools. We have reduced the staff technology funding, including no new upgrades for staff computers and no new software purchases. We have reduced recognition funding for staff from \$10,000 to \$2,000, and the list goes on. Parents should not notice a lot this year but next year parents will notice some changes. It will take some time to figure out how to manage these funding cuts.

**CAA Society's AGM will be held November 19, 2019.** All parents are invited and welcome.

**b) Additional Wish List Requests/Casino Funds - Cara Overholt**

We have funds remaining from the last casino that need to be spent before we receive the new disbursement.

Cara will be making up a form for wish lists for classroom teachers that will help guide the spending for the next disbursement.

In the meantime, Roy has an outstanding list of IT requirements. The most pressing need is 20 iPads and cases to replace the old ones at Knob Hill.

Cara will be working with Roy this year to keep a database of the technology bought by School Council, so that when we have a technology sale, the money goes back to Council and can be used to fund other needs at the school.

In addition to the 20 iPads, some other items on Roy's list include:

- Adobe Creative Cloud subscription – up for renewal for a cost of \$3,500/year.
- RazKids subscription – US\$1000 for 10 classrooms at KH, request to add 4 classrooms for grades 4/5. This will add \$400.

What about books? Should we be spending money on books?

Teachers need to look at gaps of what books are needed in their classrooms.

Should we introduce a book budget? We could set out an annual book budget. Cara will touch base with Michelle Billington to find out what the needs are.

The vote on how to spend the remaining casino funds has been tabled for discussion (including the PA system and how else to spend the money). This will be discussed in the Society portion of the meeting.

We are considering having set budget items from casino funds for items such as a portion that goes to Kamp Kiwanis, a portion that goes to books, etc.

**c) Art Cards - Christy Ford**

The orders for Art Cards have been very low this year. Some classes are as low as 2%. We are wondering if parents missed the deadline. Let's extend the deadline to this Friday, November 8, to see if more families will submit orders. The money raised by art cards goes towards the Christmas Family fund.

Another question is whether we should think of a different fundraiser. Are parents getting tired of ordering art cards? Let's see how the sales go after we extend the deadline.

Michelle Stonehouse: Feedback from the Ed. Centre is that art cards would be a wonderful activity for the first 7 days of school, since after that they eat into time that should be spent on the curriculum.

Christy Ford: We agree! Next year, the plan is to have the art cards done during the first week of school, but we will still put the orders to parents in October, because we don't feel like we can ask anyone for money in September.

**d) Halloween Dance - Christy Ford**

The Halloween dance was a great success. The only thing that has happened the last three years is that Year 4/5 students aren't included. There has been discussion about the possibility of including the 4/5s next year, especially since most of the sibling tickets went to 4/5s.

Michelle Stonehouse: The only problem is that the Halloween dance at the EC is a fundraiser for Student Council. (Parent response: Since the events are on different nights, it doesn't prevent the 4/5s from attending both events.)

The other problem is that if we open the event to 4/5s, is it going to make it difficult for the K-3s to get tickets. This is why we haven't included the 4/5s for the past few years.

Christy Ford: We don't think this is a problem. We tried to limit the tickets sold this year to 350, but we only sold 300 tickets. Last year, we considered fire code as only the gym, but since we are using the whole school, fire code regulation numbers are higher and we could sell additional tickets beyond the 350 if we choose.

If we have more attendees, we would need more volunteers. We could ask Student Council at EC if they are interested in volunteering (if we give donation).

Christy Ford: Motion to make next year's dance K-5. James Graham second. All in favour. None opposed.

**e) Parent and Student Workshops - Nicole Sylvestre**

We are looking at various options for workshops and courses, including yoga and meditation, babysitting course, home alone course, youth engagement (internet safety, how to be an active student).

What is the budget for workshops? \$250 for student courses, \$250 for parent courses. The fees usually offset the costs, so a budget isn't of great concern.

At this point, Nicole is seeking to book workshops in the new year.

Note: Books from previous Home Alone courses are in the filing cabinet by the safe at the KH campus.

Nicole: we are seeking ideas from parents. Are there any workshops or courses you'd like to see?

Possible ideas: anxiety workshops, techniques, coping skills, social media

Is it worth asking the kids what would be good? What they want? Maybe asking the older students what might have helped them in the past?

Next steps – Nicole Sylvestre to create survey to send to parents in weekly update, Rhonda Morrison and Michelle Stonehouse will ask teachers if there are any courses/workshops they'd like made available to students.

**f) Volunteer Hour Logging Transition - Christy Ford**

We are transitioning away from the old ways of logging volunteer hours. Kevin Loftus is designing a form that will be added to the CAA website. When it goes live, the volunteer log book will be eliminated from the office, which will eliminate the need to cross-reference volunteer hours.

**g) Staff Dinner Jubilee Night - Christy Ford**

Typically, the budget for the staff dinner at the Jubilee event is \$1,500. We are planning to offer staff the ability to order through Healthy Hunger. We have chosen to use Mucho Burrito because they have the most options in terms of meeting dietary needs and restrictions.

Christy Ford: Motion to approve \$1,500 to spend on staff dinner. All in favour. None opposed. Motion carried.

**7. New Business**

**a) Garden Committee Painted Pots**

The Garden Committee is planning to send terracotta pots to students at the EC to have them decorated in time for spring. We are now asking parents to provide clippings from their house plants. We will be rooting these plants in the classrooms at the KH Campus to be eventually planted into the pots. The plant pots will be left on KH neighbours' doorsteps with a handwritten note saying "thank you for being good neighbours" on the community walk in the spring. Some of the plants could also be given to volunteers.

There are 300 students at the EC. Should all the students at the EC be involved in decorating their own pot? Is a smaller amount better? Is it better to arrange this through Student Council at the EC?

Decision made that we will be purchasing 30 pots per learning studio. Will work out additional details later.

**8. Parent Discussion and Questions**

Nicole: We used to have a resource guide for parents (for example, information about free programs available throughout the city, such as counselling, reading help, etc.). Nicole will work on putting together a new resource guide. If parents are aware of resources that should be added, they can let Nicole know. Plan to add the resource guide as an attachment to the weekly update.

**9. Adjournment**

Christy Ford: Meeting adjourned at 8:13 pm.