

**RSVP
by
Monday**

**CALGARY SCIENCE SCHOOL
AGENDA FOR SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING
December 02, 2009**



VISION:

The Calgary Science School will inspire passion and innovation within an active inquiry-based learning community by bringing learning to life and life to learning.

Special time: 6:30 P.M.

Chicks and Chocolate

*An evening of “Just Desserts” and lively discussion
on how to help our daughters succeed in school.*

We're please to offer a dessert buffet at this month's School Council Meeting. Take advantage of the opportunity to enjoy a variety of tasty treats and to mingle with other CSS parents prior to our panel discussion. To register your attendance, please email bailliew@shaw.ca.

NOTE: Thanks to our Grade 9 leadership students, free on-site babysitting will be available for students and siblings under the age of 12. Please INCLUDE THE NUMBER / AGE OF ANY CHILDREN who will be using this service in your RSVP to bailliew@shaw.ca NOT LATER THAN MONDAY NIGHT (Nov 30). Please do NOT bring sick children to the school.

6:30 pm Dessert buffet and mingling

7:00 pm Panel discussion: “Girls and What They Need From Our Schools”

7:30 pm Council Meeting

1. Welcome
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes Oct 07 & Nov 04, 2009
4. Parent Corner in Library
5. Reports
 - Principal
 - Treasurer
 - Board
 - Committee Reports including:
 - i. Parent Volunteer Development Committee
 - ii. Planning Committee
6. Draw for Door Prize
7. Adjournment

Next Meeting: February 03, 2009 @ 7:00 P.M. in the School Library

**Calgary Science School
School Council Minutes
Wednesday, November 4, 2009
Anne Tingle Library - CSS**

Prior to the school council meeting parents participated in “A Man, A Can, A Plan - Chili Cook Off” and a Panel Discussion on “Boys and what they need from our schools” featuring Ron Sweet, Phil Butterfield and Shelley Robinson. Attendance was great with 20 participating in the chili cook off and 35 parents attending the panel discussion. Congratulations to the winner of the Chili Cook Off: chili #7 – Warren Anderson

Meeting called to order at 7:50pm with a welcome by Leann Meronek and brief introductions of those in attendance.

Approval of Agenda - Defer approval of minutes to December meeting. Denise approved adoption of modified agenda, Ray Caddy seconded.

Volunteer Activity – Shelley Robinson spoke on behalf of Denise Ronsky.

A Parent Volunteer Development Committee has been established: Denise Ronsky, Liesa Miller, Rebecca Lyon. Together with Shelley Robinson, they are working to develop the existing resources the school has. Currently, parents sign up for volunteer opportunities on Welcome Day in August, complete information online when registering their student (s). This group is working to use this information more proactively. They are considering developing a parent orientation package and deciding on what parent volunteer framework should look like. November 13 at 11:00am is next meeting.

Denise Kitigawa requested outdoor education volunteers be included in any volunteer orientation. Shelley is considering posting their meeting minutes on Parent Corner of the website so parents can stay involved if they can't commit to participating in the committee.

Reports

Principal's Report

Phil Butterfield delivered the report on Darrell's behalf.

The Parent Corner on the CSS website will be up and running tomorrow (November 5). Following up on an item from last month, Darrell spoke with Donna Alden about expanding parent resources in the library. She's excited to work with parents to develop them and is looking to have some parents involved. Donna will attend the December School Council meeting to update the group.

Provincial Achievement Test (PAT) Results – Students have done very well. They notice a slight trend down from last year, but they can't explain it. Could simply be the cohort of students? Administration and teachers will look into it more closely, but overall the results are trending up and CSS is above provincial averages. Teachers will look at results in more detail and report back.

AERR (Annual Education Results Report) – The school received a report from Alberta Education on three-year education plan from June 2008. The new tack is to look for more parental input into report. Administration needs parents to participate in reviewing report prior to the November 24 CSS Board meeting. Email/contact Phil if you're interested.

Report Cards – Phys Ed and Fine Arts are now digital portfolios. You won't receive a written report but will find information on your child's laptop. Mr. Schmeichel is interviewing each student to discuss their work for this term – a considerable undertaking!

Student Led Conferences – Set for November 19, 20, administration continues to look at modifications for Grades 4-8 and significant changes for Grade 9. There will be some work done at home prior to the conferences and some follow up work after the conference. The Grade 9 conference comprises a student-led interview with the teacher and parents in 15-minute appointments. Minds in Motion will be set up in the gym during the conference times.

Outdoor Education Donation – The Kitagawa family donated 10 new GPS units to the school. Many thanks to them for that donation. Emily Brown said her class has used them already.

Indoor Activity Centre – On track to be finished for the end of November. Grand opening planned for early January 2010. Staff room renos will commence in January/February 2010.

Lockdown Drill planned for Friday, November 13 at 10:00am. A notice will go home. One of two scheduled for the year (along with four fire drills).

Annual Parent Conference – Inviting a committee of parents to volunteer to help set up next year's conference.

High School Orientation session November 5 in the gym.

iLife workshop on Thursday, November 12 in Library with Scott Petronech

Kids and Drugs part 2 session November 17 in the Library with Stacy McCrae.

Thanks from Denise Kitagawa for administrative follow up on stressing the importance of hand washing in the school. Emily Brown commented they're seeing changes in student behaviour in the school.

Denise also asked if administration need parental input on possible changes to the School Act? Phil said not at this time, but mentioned the "Inspiring Education" is a link on Alberta Education website. Parents are welcome to look at it and provide feedback.

A question was asked on absence levels due to H1N1. Phil said 11% of students were away today and 6-8% last week. Teachers are prepared with virtual learning models and pandemic planning occurred last spring. Kathy Babiuk suggested that the bus drivers provide hand sanitizer when the kids get on/off the bus in an attempt to help keep the buses cleaner.

Treasurer – Leann reported that signing authority on the bank account has been transferred. Three people have signing authority. The account balance from September 2009 is around \$500. Allison Earl was not available tonight to provide a more detailed report.

Board Report – Report from the October 27 meeting provided by Lori Einsporn.

Interviews to replace Gordon Welch as Superintendent are in progress.

Regarding the snowshoe funding requested by school council, the board is in favour but require more detail:

- A letter to the Board to outline the request for funds and why (use/rationale for purchase)
- Indicate the budget/cost and maximum dollar exposure to the Board depending on grant eligibility
- Indication of what grants are being applied for

Sean McLean is a new director on the Board. He was previously principal of Edge School since its inception and is now a principal at Conroy Ross.

The School Operations Committee presented the history of transportation at CSS. Margaret Mills presented a 2009/2010 and prior year summary of the CSS transportation system by bus route, number of students and age. An ad hoc committee was struck to review the transportation system. Issues to be discussed include Board governance philosophy, the effect of transportation on the school, the value of the transportation system to the school and its success/mandate. An interim report is expected January 8/9, 2010 and the final report is due in February 2010.

Other matter discussed included considering putting a CSS report in the North Glenmore Park/Lakeview Community papers. Administration will consider this suggestion. Following up on the query regarding tobacco policy from the school council, School Operations reviewed the policy and a medical model versus a punitive approach is the policy. The policy excerpt will be printed in the next Spectrum.

The Annual General Meeting is scheduled for November 24, 2009 at 5:30pm.

Committee Reports

Transportation – Margaret added further comments from the information in the Board report. Drivers are more accurately reporting their arrival time at the school which helps for route planning. The committee is working to prepare documents (procedures) to help future committees. So far everything is working very smoothly.

Communication Committee – Rob Pegg will try a digital newsletter in early in 2010. This newsletter would be fully digital, not a PDF, but will include integrated podcasts and other media. A “teaser” flyer and an email will be prepared before publication and he’ll gather feedback afterwards.

Kim commented that she really appreciated the babysitting. In fact, it allowed her and her husband to attend the meeting, so thanks for that. Special thanks to the babysitters from Grade 9: Tara M., Kelly H. and Julia H.

Lori Einsporn moved to adjourn. Ray seconded. 8:45pm

Calgary Science School (CSS) School Council
October 7, 2009

Present at meeting:

Denise Ronsky	Ramona Holmes	Catherine Cook
Denise Kitagawa	Angela Matthews	James Trofimuk
Jackie Stewart	Cheryl Lemieux	Leanne Meronek
Wendy Baillie	Monica Gomez Reso	Darrell Lonsberry
Tara Charran	Allison Earl	Shelley Robinson

Meeting called to order at 7:02pm by Leann Meronek.

Leann welcomed everyone to the meeting and those in attendance at the meeting provided brief introductions.

Approval of Agenda for October 7, 2009 – Motion to approve the agenda was made by Denise Ronsky and seconded by Ramona Holmes.

Approval of Minutes from June 3 and September 2, 2009. Jackie Stewart made a motion to approve both sets of minutes as submitted. Unanimously approved.

Overview of the AADAC on “Kids and Drugs” Program

Stacey McCrae will present four workshops at CSS over the coming months. First workshop is Tuesday, October 20 in conjunction with Wendy Parker from CPS. Wendy’s focus is internet safety. Generally workshops are on third Tuesday of month except in December, with the final one on a Thursday in February.

The program has a parent education program, teacher education (happening Friday, October 9) and then peer education with Grade 9 leadership. Darrell reviewed CSS’ policy on drug and alcohol abuse. CSS has a zero tolerance of drugs and alcohol on campus. If necessary, they will refer families to outside services for support. CSS is working to develop a cohesive approach to the subject matter together with support from this program. Leann asked what the role of the school council should be for this program. Council support is through word-of-mouth promotion of the events. Administration will advertise the event through school means. It was suggested that if parents are unable to attend the workshop, that the material be made available in some other form i.e. Powerpoint presentation posted to the website or a blog. Stacey suggested that food is a good thing to have at the workshops.

First Annual CSS Parent Conference Discussion

Approximately 100-115 parents attended the first-ever event on Saturday, October 3 at the school. Leann has had discussions with another charter school council member to have a bigger kind of session with breakout sessions and it is something on the radar. Next year administration would like to have greater teacher involvement and support from Council. Feedback for future sessions: homework, bullying. Goal is to get parents thinking on the topic and then further development from there. Event cost CSS around \$600. Congratulations from everyone on a successful event.

Dr. Gabor Mate Presentation

Wendy Baillie attended a presentation by Dr. Mate on Monday, October 5. He spoke about the material covered in his book “Hold on to Your Kids – Why Parents are More Important than Peers”. Dr. Mate spoke about the importance of attachment to kids and families. In summary, he commented that you shouldn’t parent when you’re stressed. Parents and caregivers need to take care of themselves; don’t try to exceed the parenting power you have and take responsibility to repair the emotional bridge with your kids when it is compromised.

Shelley talked about adding to the parent resource area of the library so CSS parents can use materials. As well, there is support from other charter schools to fund costs associated with bringing a major keynote speaker into the event. Dr. Mate might be that type of speaker.

Challenge Day follow-up given from Shelley Robinson. She provided an overview of the day presented on October 1 for all the grade 9 students at CSS. The presenting group is from California and also provided their program at Westmount and Foundations for the Future Charter Academy (FFCA) while in Calgary. Go to www.challengeday.org for more information on the program. Comments that more education needs to happen for the entire school so that other students don’t “freak out” over what Challenge Day is.

Strategic Planning Update

Denise reviewed how we got where we are. Two key roles exist for school council: advisory role and to facilitate communication. Denise reviewed some of the draft short-term plan and hit on some of the key areas. There is a need to work on governance, need to develop a school community and a need to involve parents in volunteering at CSS. Denise would like to leave this document with parents to get some feedback and direction to set priorities. Is there a role for school council to offer advice regarding the education plan? Is there an opportunity for school council to be more involved in the AADAC workshops? Consider the need to review the School Council Bylaws. The goal is to distill it into a vision for the school council. Jackie commented that it is important to distinguish between what is administration-driven and what is school council-driven. The roles need to be clearly defined. Only activities that are lead by council should be on the action plan. The goal is to get council organized and focused to deliver better value to all stakeholders.

Fundraising priorities and committee setup

The Council has some money from the sale of coupon books - \$6,000 approximately. Last year, the council had to commit to selling for this school year and it said yes. At that time, the anticipated funds were earmarked for outdoor education needs. This money is separate and distinct from the budget. Some items that could be purchased are snowshoes, replacement tents for Camp Sweet or equipment for the Instructional Activity Centre (IAC or “the cage”). These three items are not in the budget so if administration wants these items, council would fundraise for them. The CSS Board wants to see a specific need that will not be met in the school-based budget.

Tara suggested attaching a fundraising component to upcoming workshops.

Darrell doesn’t want fundraising to become divisive. It can be purposeful, but otherwise, maybe it shouldn’t happen. He would rather dedicate time and energy to social events to bring parents together rather than raising money and focus on parent education.

Denise proposed the idea of offering grocery cards. Jackie cautioned that there is a lot of administration involved with them.

Leann moved that the \$6000 raised through the sale of coupon books be put toward purchase of snowshoes as approved by school council last year at the February 4, 2009 meeting with Darrell approaching the Board to match the funds. Motion approved.

Volunteer Committee

Denise will report on this item at the November 4 meeting when more information will be available.

Reports

Principal

Darrell's report is attached at the end of these minutes.

Gordon's retirement is a big thing. He has played a huge role in the development of the school and has been very valuable to CSS. He will retire at the end of January 2010. Leann asked if there is a role for the council to play in that. More discussion will come.

Treasurer

Allison Earl will draft a motion for the treasurer, president and vice president to have signing authority. Dual signing required on all cheques. This process will occur prior to the next council meeting in November.

Board

Cheryl shared the Board watched Neil Stephenson's video about the outreach position. Mr. Stephenson received a certificate of achievement from the Prime Minister's Teacher Awards. The link www.calgaryscienceschoolblogspot.com is part of his outreach role. This blog provides information on different roles in teaching and is available for everyone to look at. It's linked on the CSS homepage and is part of the school's mandate to provide outreach to others in education. In addition to Gordon Welch retiring, Tom Collins, Board Vice Chair is also retiring from the CSS Board. There were budget changes from Alberta Learning that impact charter schools including CSS, but there is no anticipated impact on delivery of education at CSS. CSS Board Chair and Calgary Board of Education (CBE) Board Chair have had meetings to explore potential areas of cooperation called by the CBE. Minister of Education has asked for information on providing permanence around charter schools.

Committee Reports

These reports were deferred to the next council meeting in November: Other comments/questions and Portfolio assessments

Denise Ronsky suggested that we offer babysitting for school council meetings. Investigate the possibility that a grade 9 student could provide the service.

Meeting adjournment at Denise Kitigawa moved and Denise Ronsky seconded the motion to adjourn at 9:15pm.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT
Wednesday, October 7th, 2009
School Council Meeting

September 30 Enrollment

Nola submitted our official September 30th enrollment of 601 students. We have an additional student in one class because the family will be leaving us shortly for the balance of the year. Therefore, we are fully funded.

Facilities

The latest news on the Instructional Activity Centre (a.k.a. the cage) is that the completion date has been pushed back to the end of November. Work has been progressing nicely in the past couple of weeks. Plumbers and electricians have completed their work, concrete has been poured, and the glazing wall has been ordered based on actual measurements. Interior work will continue, despite the open front.

Work on the staff room renovations, accessible washroom and switch closet expansion is set to commence over the Christmas break. It is expected that project will be completed in mid to late February.

Gordon's Retirement

Gordon has officially announced his retirement. He is retiring from teaching after over 40 years in education. He plans to stay on until after the new year to allow for a transition to a new superintendent. A sub-committee of the Board is performing the search, with Gordon's input. I can't tell you how much I have appreciated Gordon's guidance, particularly given the fact that I am relatively new to a principalship. His perspective and down-to-earth approach to problems and issues have been invaluable to school administration and the staff as a whole.

PAT Results

Results on last June's provincial achievement tests are now in. We haven't yet had an opportunity to go over the results as a staff, but I am happy to present to council a summary of our 08/09 results. Needless to say, I am again pleased with our students' performance on these tests.

Outdoor Education

The grade eights are currently in Jasper on their circle tour. The completion of this trip will bring an end to our Fall outdoor education schedule. The Camp Sweet trips were again very successful, with some additional programming at some grades. I am also pleased to report that Ron was incredibly thankful for the hard work of some parent volunteers in helping paint the fence around the cabin, plus sanding down two sides of the cabin and re-staining them. There are plans to do the other two sides in the Spring. Ray Caddy deserves particular thanks in this endeavour.

Pandemic Planning Update

Experts are suggesting that the second wave of the pandemic will have a greater impact than the first wave. We were relatively unaffected by the first wave late last year, but we have plans in place to address any contingency that might arise in the event the second wave is as significant as predicted. Parents should continue to work with their children around proper hygiene and cough “etiquette”, and remember to keep your children at home if they are showing signs or symptoms of influenza. Notify the office and tell them of the symptoms.

Student-Led Conferences

We had a meeting of the student-led conference review committee on Monday this week. In addition to the informal feedback we receive throughout the year, the five parents who attended the meeting have us some valuable insights into the parent perspective on the conferences. Problems and issues were identified and suggestions were made regarding solutions. We aren't necessarily looking at a complete overhaul of the student-led conference format, but some of the themes that emerged were:

- Increased and more effective communication regarding the purpose and structure of the conferences.
- Less is more – reduce the amount and duration of the activities.
- Address the attrition rate for attendance from grade 4 to 9

Teachers will take this feedback and decide on any changes to address parental concerns or issues.

Terry Fox Run

The Calgary Science School's participation in the Terry Fox Run has always been strong. I am very pleased to report that the school raised just under \$9500 for cancer research. Way to go CSS! I am also very pleased to let you know that we once again had people stop us to tell us how impressed they were with our students. They commented on how polite and well mannered our students were on the pathways.