

Bell High School  
Council Meeting  
April 24, 2023  
MINUTES

**Attendees:** Karyn Curtis, Ann Matejicka, Jon Harris, Mo Tait, Julie Johnstone, Anne Marie Salter, Ethan Guan, Maris Stasko, Jen Samuel, Murjan Abdi, Rim Alassad

**Welcome and Introductions – Ann Matejicka**

Ann welcomed participants, each of whom introduced themselves.

**Approval of Agenda – Ann Matejicka**

The agenda was approved, with an addition under Other Business. Motion to approve: Murjan Abdi; seconded: Jen Samuel

**Approval of Minutes – Ann Matejicka**

The minutes from March 27, 2023, were approved. Motion to approve: Mo Tait; seconded: Jen Samuel

**Student Council Report – Ethan Guan**

- We are holding a sustainable clothing drive, in which students can donate clothes and earn eco points to purchase other clothing. Any items remaining will be donated to charity.
- Relay for Life, a 12-hour relay that raises funds for cancer research, will be held in June. Registration is open until May 4.
- Student elections for grade reps, co-presidents, and student senator will be held in late May.
- There will be an event in June for students needing volunteer hours, in which students can help clean up the trails behind the arena. Mr. Tasse is the lead.

**Principal's Report – Jon Harris**

- Staffing changes: Katie O'Brien (VP), Mary Capehart (LTO – English), Margaret Orford (LTO - Math)
- Mid-term report cards will go out April 28.
- Two Grade 8 classes have been randomly selected to take the Pan-Canadian Assessment Program test.
- Commencement will be held on June 19 at Centreponte. There will be seating for 900, so students can invite more than two guests.
- Mark-based awards will not be given at the ceremony, as marks will not be finalized by then. Athletic and school-based awards will be provided.
- Grads will be invited to gather the first week of July to celebrate awards and pick up diplomas.
- Parent volunteers may be needed for the grad ceremony. Funding from Council for drinks and snacks would also be appreciated.
- Grade 8 Leaving Ceremony will be held on June 27 in the cafeteria. Parents are welcome to attend. There will be photos, certificates, and a BBQ. Parent volunteers would be appreciated.
- Motion to approve the expenditure of up to \$350 for commencement ceremony approved. Motion to approve: Mo Tait; seconded: Murjan Abdi
- There have been several reports of a bear in the woods by the arena. There is also a family of foxes living under one of the portables not currently in use. The Ministry of Natural Resources is hoping to be able to relocate the animals.
- Enrolment in virtual classes is low. We are looking for teachers for auto tech and business.

- May 22: Victoria Day weekend
- June 2: Elementary PD day
- June 19: Commencement
- June 21-26: exams
- June 26: Student success day
- June 27: Grade 8 Leaving Ceremony
- June 28: Last day of school
- Jon is looking for input on activities for Grade 9 and 10 students during the exam period, as they will not have exams.

### **Staff Report – Maris Stasko**

- Construction tech students are working on the picnic tables ordered by Council.
- The DDP class is selling flower baskets, available at the greenhouse.
- We continue to enrol ESL students throughout the year, as Bell is a constant intake school.
- Vocal groups will be performing with Glebe and Nepean high schools on May 4 at First United Church in Westboro at 7:30.
- Jr. Boys' Volleyball team had an exciting season, culminating in a silver medal at the T2 City Championships.
- Girls' Soccer, Girls' Touch Football, Baseball, and Track & Field are all practising hard to get ready for their seasons.
- All classes are starting to enjoy the first hints of late spring and summer with some outdoor activity.
- Fitness classes are training hard, and working on run-training in preparation for their participation in Ottawa Race Weekend at the end of May.
- We are always in need of gently used **running shoes and cleats** (and shin guards) for students who do not have appropriate gear. Also happy to accept soccer socks, skates, shorts, winter coats, warm gloves and mitts, snowpants, towels and tea towels, etc. Items may be dropped at the gym office or the main office.

### **Treasurer's Report – Jen Samuel**

We netted over \$900 from the Purdy's chocolate sales, which will be divided proportionately between the Intermediate and Secondary accounts. There is \$3,215.00 in the Intermediate account, and \$6,586.74 in the Secondary account.

### **OCASC – Ann Matejicka on behalf of Vivian Chan**

- There was discussion of how to increase access to the Children's Festival in May. The cost and busing are limiting factors. Possibly programs can be brought to students in future.
- Issues of transgender students' inclusion, lack of resources, and safety have been raised. There has been significant vitriol against Trustee Kaplan Myrth, and delegates are encouraged to attend meeting virtually.
- Once you have been a delegate (i.e., made a representation at a Board meeting), you can't delegate to another meeting for 12 months. This has raised concerns because it serves to limit parent involvement.
- Anyone wishing to have an issue raised at a Committee of the Whole meeting should contact Christine Wardle-Moulaison or Tom Holloway, both of OCASC.
- There will be staffing cuts, but the Board does not yet have solid numbers. It is hoped answers will be provided at the May meeting.
- Enrolment is expected to be higher next year due to decreased virtual learning.
- A significant number of schools experienced technical difficulties with the OSSLT (literacy testing), including overloaded wifi.

- Councils are asked to gather information on wifi connectivity issues in their schools.
- Sub-committees are being created for parent engagement, mental health, and Parents Reaching Out (PRO) grants.
- Seventy-five schools applied for PRO grants, down from 106 last year. Almost half applied after the deadline was extended. Many were unaware of the extension, and the Board has been asked to improve its communication with school councils.
- Money not used for PRO grants will be applied to mental health resources.
- The Board has been asked to prioritize Arts, which has the smallest amount of instruction hours in elementary classes.
- The last OCASC meeting will be held in May, and the executive elected for next year. Information on OCASC can be found at <https://ocasc.ca/>.

### **Other Business**

Julie Johnstone asked if the Vocal and Choir classes are to be eliminated. Jon indicated that the decision to retain or drop classes is based on the number of students requesting them. As Bell is a relatively small school with several specialized programs (Immersion, Gifted, ESL, DDP), it can be challenging to offer a wide array of options. There are currently enough requests for Vocal and Choir to make them viable; therefore, they will be offered.

Further to the decision of March 27 to order picnic tables from the construction tech class, it was agreed to purchase four picnic tables, at a cost of \$400 each. Motion to approve: Mo Tait; seconded: Anne Marie Salter

It was agreed to approve \$750 in funding requests, as follows: \$250 for DDP field trips; \$250 for the snack program; and \$250 for materials to build picnic tables. Motion to approve: Karyn Curtis; seconded: Mo Tait

Meeting adjourned at 8:14.

**Next meeting Monday, May 29, 2023**