

EARL HAIG SCHOOL COUNCIL MINUTES

December 15, 2020 - Meeting held via Zoom Videoconference

ATTENDEES (50 attendees noted on Zoom)

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Name	Role	In Attendance
Polly VandenBerg	Chair	Y
Shannon Butcher	Past Chair	Y
Nicole Lambe	Co-Treasurer & Fundraising Committee	Y
Stephanie Little	Co-Treasurer	
Cleo Buster	Co-Secretary	Y
Jen Wilkinson	Co-Secretary	
Michelle Loney	Communications Committee	Y
Karen Simpson	Communications Committee	Y
Kate Raven	Communications Committee	Y
Madelaine Hamilton	Communications Committee	Y
Rosalyn Wise	Ward 16 Council Co Representative	
Nupur Deonarine	Ward 16 Council Co-Representative	Y
TBD ?	Technology Officer	N/A
Nupur Deonarine	Co-Advocacy Lead	Y
Dara Rawlins	Co- Advocacy Lead	Y
Pilar Hernandez	Nutrition Coordinator	Y
Claire Sibonney	Nutrition Coordinator	
Josh Grossman	Fundraising Committee	Y
GRADE REPS		
Michael Duffy	Kindergarten Rep	Y
Kirsten Currie	Primary Rep	Y
Jennifer Haynes	Junior Rep	Y
Lorraine Godwin	Intermediate Rep	Y
Sherry Lin	French Rep	Y
Jennifer Barnes	Virtual Rep	Y
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION	Principal Madelaine Allan	Y
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION	Vice Principal Lizz Landry	N

MEMBERS AT LARGE

Name	In Attendance
Amanda Cormier	Y
Tanya Mustachi	Y
SCHOOL COMMUNITY	
Robyn Citizen	Y
Kim Tham	Y
Kate Hang	Y
Jenny Chung Mejia	Y
Chris Nokes	Y
Hilary Gray	Y
MattHew Tulk	Y
Claire Zaya	Y
Helen Schneider	Y
Susan Ly	Y
Jenn Bottoms	Y
Samantha Ambrozy	Y
Kenton Vaughan	Y
Erin Stoyanoff	Y
Liza Lou	Y
Litsa	Y
Helen Schneider	Y
Liza Luu	Y
Lydia Bracht	Y
Nikki Logan	Y
Nicole Adrisevic	Y
Renee Beneteau	Y

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Welcoming Remarks and Introductions

.1 Superintendent Marc Sprack was planning to attend the SAC meeting tonight to discuss the TDSB's response to the recent acts of hate that occurred at our school as well as discuss ways to support our staff and students, especially BIPOC staff and students. However, a family member died and he is currently away on bereavement.

2. Principal Updates – Madelaine Allan

.1 EH currently has 548 students enrolled, with another 115 in virtual school.

.2 There have been no new cases of COVID-19 at EH since our last SAC mtg.

.3 Community Food Drive

-All the food that was donated was dropped off today at a local food bank

-The school also received \$1,115 in food gift cards. The staff are distributing to families in the neighbourhood that have noted they would appreciate assistance

-Thank you to the community for all the donations and to the volunteers that helped to make this happen. It was very well done and well received.

.4 Clothing drive – thank you to all that have donated and to the volunteers that have organized this. It is extremely well done and most appreciated.

.5 Lost and Found – thank you to all the volunteers that came and stood at tables outside so that parents could look through the lost belongings. Anything that is left and without a name on it will be donated. Polly and Shannon took some photos of the items remaining and posted them on the SAC website vs. Family FB page. Question: How to get lost and Found Items back to their owners – If found best to contact the teacher first but can always bring to the front office if you don't know who the teacher is.

.6 The school will conduct a deep cleaning of all the classrooms and buildings over the holidays.

.7 Eleni Burke-Tsakmakas, the incoming principal, was at the school this week and will do a walkabout with Principal Allan to familiarize her with the building/staff/students

3. Letters/Statements from Staff – Principal Allan, Hillary Grey, & Ms. McKenzie

.1 Principal Allan noted that the hate letters sent to the teachers at the Earl Haig are now considered a matter under investigation by the TDSB and the Toronto Police and thus she is not at liberty to discuss the contents of the letters. However, the school and TDSB are firmly resolved to continue their support of the staff and student community.

.2 Hillary read a letter from one of the teachers that received hate mail at Earl Haig.

.3 Visual signs of support were discussed. Could we have lawn signs printed that say, "We support our teachers at Earl Haig"

.4 Renee Beneteau noted that for her, it is more important to influence school policy and teacher hiring than making lawn signs

.5 Polly noted that she has been listening to the podcast "Nice White Parents" and recommends it.

.6 Questions: Were the comments directed towards children, or towards harming children in the letters? How will the School address further incidences, if they should occur? Several parents noted they would like to have confirmation from the school that the letters did not contain anything that would indicate that children were at risk of being harmed. What are the concrete actions that are taken against someone that does this, if they find out who did it? Principal Allan noted there can be Criminal repercussions that follow the Criminal Code of Conduct, Loss of Pay, Termination of Employment. What is the timeline for something like this before parents are able to find out more detail? For example our previous principal is still under investigation for racist comments and there is no timeline to when this situation will be resolved.

.7 Principal Allan, asked parents and teachers to please share if they are hearing racist or sexist comments from their children/students

.8 The letters arrived via Canada Post. The mail comes to the front office and the principal goes through all the mail and then distributes it to the staff

.9 Litsa is a local parent and also a teacher at Central Tech. She gave an example of the Westwood school entrance where students make statements about equity and then put them on placards and hang/post them at the entrance to the school so that it is the first thing you see when you enter. Principal Allan thought this sounded like a great idea and something we could do at Earl Haig.

.9 Parents expressed concern that there is a systemic issue within the school and within the TDSB, which needs to be addressed.

.10 We need to advocate for minority teachers/more diversity amongst the staff.

.11 How can parents influence the hiring of teachers? You can apply to be part of the process for VP's but parents are not able to vote.

.12 The school/staff will be having further conversations about this when the new principal comes on board in 2021.

4. Treasurer Report – Nicole

.1 Several more checks cashed for Classroom support

.2 Fundraising Effort: Earl Haig Swag is now available. Last day to order is Saturday, December 19th at Midnight. \$8.50 will be given back to the school for every \$100 spent by our community.

.2 Other than that there has not been much of a change to the current SAC balance

5. Virtual Dance Party Event – Polly

- This event was postponed to 2021 to allow more time to figure out who can be used to give this event and security measures for a fun and safe event for all
- It was voted on through email with the direct council members

6. Lending Library – Tanya

.1 Update: There is one bin that is used for return clothes. Clothes in the bin are taken home by Tanya, washed and then returned.

.2 Tanya is going to do an inventory of the current library before the holidays and if it seems like more items are needed do another drive in January 2021. This time smaller sizes are needed more than larger sizes. More small snow pants needed. Don't need hats and mitts. They have obtained some funding to buy some.

- Protocols are: clothes are held for 7 days and then sorted by size
- Then kept for another 7 days before being used by students.
- If you borrow, please wash and return if possible. But also o.k. for kids to just keep, if they need them.

7. Advocacy Update – Nupur /Dara

.1 They would like to make sure that the efforts they are making to find someone to speak to parents about racism and bias are aligned with the efforts that the school is making.

.2 Training Sessions – start with the free session(s) offered by TDSB and move on from there. We were going to do this before the Holidays but in light of the recent hate mail and the Superintendent planning to speak at the SAC meeting, it has been pushed to 2021.

8. Scientists in the School –

.1 Do we want to do this again this year? The program has come up with a virtual version where they send kits to the school and then you join a Teams call or other virtual presentation platform vs. having an instructor come to the school.

.2 Last year it was \$205/class. This year it is \$220/class or approximately \$6,000 for the entire school.

.3 Funds were approved last year. Moneys that were unused due to the teachers' strike or COVID-19 were reallocated to fund recess kits instead.

.4 Question: why is this program not paid for by the board, as it is curricular? Principal Allan noted that it depends on the size of the school's budget and what the school decides to spend the budget on. Something like this is considered enhancement. The board is now allowed to ask each student to pay \$5 to participate but SAC decided that it would rather not put the burden on students and just cover the cost.

.5 Question: Is there a way for the virtual students to participate as well? It seems like it is set-up perfectly for virtual students.

.6 Question: What is our current balance? Answer: Current Balance is \$9k-\$10k. So if we do the Scientists in the School we would be allocating 2/3 of our budget to this alone. Very difficult to know if it is the right decision during COVID-19, as there are so many unknowns and things keep changing.

.7 What other things are we planning to spend money on this year? If we don't spend it on this, what else would we spend it on? We will have to justify, if we decide to hold on to the SAC funds. The purpose of the SAC is to spend the money within a two year period.

.8 How many classrooms participate? Last year 70-80% participated. Do we know how many classrooms would want to participate this year? Confirmed we should find out exactly how many classrooms would like to participate before we purchase the kits.

.9 We also need to confirm that each classroom has the ability to offer the program in a safe and socially distanced manner. Question: does every classroom now have a projector and ability to connect to the internet? This was not really confirmed. Shannon noted that the recently allocated tech \$\$ was supposed to be being used to help procure projectors for every classroom.

.10 Litsa noted there is a free STEM program that they use at her school. She will find out the details for it and send the information to Polly.

.11 Agreed this should be tabled until all the pertinent information and details can be worked out/confirmed.

9. Fundraising Offer – Keith Gould

.1 When you invite friends & family to join you on Charitable Impact, they will receive \$20 charitable dollars in their new Impact Account. Refer friends today to send them FREE e-gift cards for charitable dollars. They can give to Earl Haig Parent Council - care of TDSB. This could raise \$1,000 without anyone actually having to contribute money into it.

10. Save Toronto Ravines – Cleo (www.smalls Creek.ca)

.1 Many people may not be aware that as part of the 4th track Go Train Expansion project Metrolinx is planning to cut down over 267 within the Toronto & Region Conservation Authorities (TRCA) boundaries in both the Small's Creek Ravine (north side of the tracks) and the Williamson Park Ravine (south side of the tracks). In the Small's Creek Ravine Metrolinx is also planning to replace all the trees on the south bank with a 29 metre long concrete retaining wall, that will be over 3m tall in some spots, as well as rerouting the existing creek into a much larger culvert, 2m in diameter.

.2 As a way to help visualize the proposed destruction to the ravines, members from the local community tied red, yellow, and blue ribbons around 280 + trees on the South bank in the Small's Creek Ravine and another 100+ trees in the Williamson Park Ravine on the North bank.

.3 To be very clear, SmallsCreek.ca supports the addition of the 4th track but thinks there is a better social, economical, and technical solution to achieving the addition of the 4th track. Metrolinx has been less than forthcoming with the details of their proposed plans, including the drawings and replanting plans. The only information that has been shared with the community are the documents the community requested through a Freedom of Information Act.

.4 It seemed important to bring this up here, as we know how highly used these green spaces are by the community, and even more so since the start of COVID-19. Many Earl Haig classes take field trips to the ravines, as they provide a hands-on experience in nature and the closest thing we have to a forest in the city. Currently, both ravines are threatened by Metrolinx's proposed plans. Our goal is to spread awareness to as many people in the community as possible and to let Metrolinx know they need to respect the Communities they work in.

5. Please visit the website for more detailed information, to sign up for our emails, and find out how you can get involved and help the cause: www.smalls Creek.ca

6. SmallsCreek.ca have started a petition, which can be found here: [SIGN NOW](https://you.leadnow.ca/petitions/sign-now-help-a-toronto-neighbourhood-save-its-green-spaces-from-destruction-by-metrolinx?share=a8c17d89-9180-468b-ae41-bb9ed6f60ec6&source=email-share-button&utm_source=email)
https://you.leadnow.ca/petitions/sign-now-help-a-toronto-neighbourhood-save-its-green-spaces-from-destruction-by-metrolinx?share=a8c17d89-9180-468b-ae41-bb9ed6f60ec6&source=email-share-button&utm_source=email

11. Council Meeting Dates – Polly

.1 The remaining Meeting dates are as follows:

- Wednesday, January 20
- Tuesday, February 23
- Wednesday, March 24
- Tuesday, April 20
- Wednesday, May 19
- Tuesday, June 15 or 22

Motion for meeting to adjourn.

12. Meeting adjourned.

Minutes prepared by Cleo Buster

Next Meeting is January 20, 2020 - 7:00pm- 8:30pm

Connect with us online:

