District School Council Minutes for March 6, 2017

Prior to the meeting, there was a presentation on Technology software: what are students using in schools and what can be accessed from home. These included Office 365, Microsoft Classroom, Moodle, MyBlueprint, Learn Alberta (username: LA33, password: 7434), MyPass, Discovery Education, amongst others. Many of these are not used by every teacher in every classroom. We were also told that the District is ready to provide printable report cards next week.

1. **Welcome and Introductions**
2. **Additions to the Agenda:** School Council meeting nights for feeder schools as 10.4
3. **Approval of Agenda:**
   Moved by Hollie Tarasewich, seconded Edna Asem - approved.
4. **Approval of the Minutes from January 2017:**
   Moved by Trina Tymko, seconded Courtney Lamb - approved.
5. **Business Arising from the Minutes**
   5.1. **Town Hall results**
      Cheryl Gilmore thanked parents for attending the Town Hall meeting. At the Board’s retreat they discussed the new format, including challenges of hearing in large groups, and the rotation schemes. People enjoyed moving around, and thought the facilitation was well done. Results are available on the District web site, at [http://www.lethsd.ab.ca/Town%20Hall%20Meeting%20Summary.php](http://www.lethsd.ab.ca/Town%20Hall%20Meeting%20Summary.php). There were some overlaps in responses. The Board felt that a resounding message from the Town Hall was a desire for more direct involvement for students in the community and with businesses, and more opportunities to leave the classroom, with credit available for non-classroom activities. There was also support for increased use of real-world problems in the classroom, which may often require strong background understanding of fundamentals. There was support for encouragement of risk-taking, and for improved support of parents to engage in their children’s education. The Board will put further thought into all of this over the next month or so.
6. **Trustee Report - Keith Fowler reported:**
   At their February meeting the Board was pleased to meet the new Edwin Parr Award nominee from Mike Mountain Horse school - Brittney Petkau. They reviewed several policies. Some of these policies didn’t go out to stakeholder groups for consultation. Concern was raised about a policy change that removes stakeholder groups from consultation on reviews of the superintendent, but was not sent out for consultation to stakeholder groups. Mich Forster responded that stakeholder groups to be consulted are kept the same from review to review in order to compare apples to apples. Donna Hunt reported on her trip to China as part of a southern Alberta delegation. About 15-20 students from Anyang, China will visit Lethbridge this summer, as well as students from Japan in 2018. The District received a donation from RBC of $5000 for the Gay-Straight Alliance conference on March 22. There is a parents’ portion of the GSA conference, but parents must register in advance. We don’t know how the recent government announcement about the elimination of school fees will play out for districts like ours who have already eliminated basic fees. We also don’t know exactly what school fees will be affected (for example option course fees, agenda fees, etc. that we do still charge) - the government will need to define “basic education” and “basic school fees” amongst
other terms in regulations, after the bill has been passed. The amount of funding that has been announced works out to about $83/student, which does not cover the fees that many parents pay. There has been some question as to whether or not the 2.4 km cut-off (distance from home to school) at which students are bused will be changed. If it were to be decreased without increasing funding, the expense would have to come out of funding for classrooms.

7. **Alberta School Councils Association (ASCA) Report** – Brooke gave a report from Allison, and Hollie added some details. Registration for the ASCA Conference and AGM is open; registration fees and $250 for expenses is provided by the district for one parent from each school council. School Councils can complete proxy forms to allow another school council to cast their vote. Representatives should be in touch if they are interested in carpooling to the meeting. The Conference will include the Blanket Exercise, and Chief Wilton Littlechild (one of the Truth and Reconciliation Commissioners) will give the keynote address. There will be a session on the fentanyl crisis and many other sessions on topics of interest, including practical help in running school councils.

8. **Reports from District Committees**

8.1. **District Policy Advisory Committee.** Joy Morris reported that the committee has reviewed various policies and circulated drafts for further feedback. Some went to the February Board meeting; others will go to the March meeting; the deadline for feedback on these is March 20. Some policies that she had not seen at the committee were also on the February Board agenda, as was discussed in the Board report. The next meeting will be on April 5.

8.2. **Poverty Intervention Committee** Joy Morris reported that the other parent representatives are now definitely on the committee’s contact list. There has not been a meeting since the last District School Council Meeting. The next meeting will be on March 30. Cheryl Gilmore reported that the committee received a generous donation of approximately $92,000 from E-Free Church’s Christmas donation drive.

8.3. **Healthy Schools Committee** Laura Scarpelli was not present.

8.4. **SAPDC** Hollie Tarasewich reported that the Fall sessions engaging the community in consultation around the Curriculum Development had good participation, and the next round of consultations will be forthcoming in May. They will work to improve communication with parents from the Fall sessions. The committee’s next meeting will be on May 3.

8.5. **Community Engagement** held their first annual scholarship breakfast for scholarships on Innovation, Creativity and Exploration. It was very successful, with almost 200 people in attendance (which was the capacity). The District is very grateful for this support. The breakfast included an amazing speaker, student displays, and a robotics demo. Parents should encourage grade 9-12 students (there are junior- and senior-level scholarships) to apply for the scholarships by March 31. Students can apply singly or in groups. The next step will be to evaluate the applications.

9. **District School Council Calendar of Events and Shared Opportunities**

Remember to look at it on the District web site for this. High school basketball championships are next weekend.

10. **New Business**

10.1. **Correspondence from LCI School Council** A letter was included in the agenda and read at the meeting expressing concern over the amount of time that local school councils and District School Council (DSC) have allocated to discussion of policy proposals for ASCA through DSC;
the DSC guidelines are also in the agenda. A document requesting feedback from school councils around this was also circulated, and is attached to these minutes. School councils should discuss and respond to the questions that have been raised, and bring their responses to the May 1 DSC meeting for further discussion.

10.2. **School Board Elections - candidates’ forum (sub-committee)** Keith told the ATA local council that District School Council is interested in working with them on a forum, and they were also interested in a shared event. School councils could be asked for question suggestions. Format, moderation and publicity need to be planned. Ask school councils for volunteers for this subcommittee. This will come back to our April meeting.

10.3. **Minister's Youth Council** The Minister has put out a call for 32 students to join a youth council that will inform him on matters related to education. Information can be found at [https://education.alberta.ca/student-engagement/minister-s-youth-council/](https://education.alberta.ca/student-engagement/minister-s-youth-council/).

10.4. **School Council meeting nights for feeder schools** Hollie Tarasewich reported that school council meetings for two different schools one of which feeds into the other are sometimes scheduled on the same night in months when one or the other doesn’t meet on their “typical” night for some reason (eg. Easter or other breaks), which is a problem for parents with older and younger kids. Cheryl said she would talk to principals about avoiding this.

11. **Superintendent’s Report - Cheryl Gilmore**

11.1. **A Public Education video** was produced about our parent math help workshops. It is available at [https://youtu.be/jJ4QwvhbEww](https://youtu.be/jJ4QwvhbEww). It was shown at the meeting. There has been quite a bit of positive feedback about the sessions. Turnout has varied from 7 to about 30 participants. Two sessions remain, March 8 and 15 at 6:30 p.m. at G.S. Lakie.

12. **Roundtable Reports**

are in the agenda for information. Grade 8 Lethbridge Christian students have produced a My Parks Canada video that they would like people to vote for. More information is at [http://www.lethsd.ab.ca/view.php?action=object&id=46945&stream=Homepage%20News](http://www.lethsd.ab.ca/view.php?action=object&id=46945&stream=Homepage%20News), and voting can be done at [www.myparkspass.ca](http://www.myparkspass.ca).

13. **Adjournment**

14. **Announcements.** The next DSC Meeting will be on April 3.