

## South Branch School Council Minutes

Thursday October 12, 2023

Start time: 6:30 pm

### Attendance

Parents:

Jarek Anderson  
Ashley Beland – Treasurer  
Serena Bobbitt – Secretary  
Laurel Cardy – Vice-Chair  
Jasmine Eades  
Chris Hewitt  
Steve Ibbotson - Chair  
Sami Kutowy  
Katie OConnor

School Staff:

Tracey Haley – Vice- Principal  
Emily Kehler – teacher representative  
Tanya Preston – Principal

### **1. Welcome and Land Acknowledgement**

The meeting was called to order by Steve Ibbotson, chair of the South Branch School Council committee.

Tracey Haley delivered the land acknowledgement statement.

### **2. Approval of minutes from the September 26, 2023 council meeting**

The minutes from the September 26, 2023 meeting were accepted as presented. The minutes will be posted to the South Branch Elementary school website.

**ACTION:** Tanya Preston, school principal at South Branch Elementary School, will upload the September 2023 council meeting minutes to the South Branch Elementary School website for public viewing.

### **3. Teacher's Report**

Emily Kehler, kindergarten teacher at South Branch Elementary School, presented the teacher's report this month. She talked about what is happening in the "kinder world" at South Branch. They have been focusing a lot on outdoor learning. Every morning all kindergarteners from the different classes have outside play together. Thus far learning has been very play based. They

have been weeding the garden and planting seeds for Spring. The kindergarteners have also been exploring the forest, collecting and sorting leaves by colours and learning about the changing seasons as well as habitats and life cycles.

Upper Canada Real World Learning Group will be bringing in a grow wall to add to one of the kindergarten classrooms.

#### **4. Principal's Report**

##### **a. Hot lunches**

Hot lunches started this week- delivery ran very smoothly. Milk/juice delivery is also up and running with the Grade 6 students having the opportunity to take on as a leadership role with milk distribution. Milk and juice delivery is a separate fundraiser that does not contribute to the council fundraising activities.

##### **b. Tiger News**

On Friday, October 6, 2023, the grade 6 students hosted the first monthly newscast of Tiger News which highlights what school events have happened during the most recent month. This month students talked about the Terry Fox run, Orange Shirt Day etc. The grade 6 students also put on a skit about W.I.T.S (Walk Away, Ignore, Tell Someone, Seek Help). The newscast seemed to be a big hit with students and will continue moving forward on the 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of every month.

##### **c. Cross-Country**

The cross-country team is doing great and our South Branch athletes are ranking high. We will be sending 20 kids to the UC cup on October 24<sup>th</sup>.

##### **d. Academic Learning**

The school has been given 2 opportunities to meet with learning teams from the School Board regarding mathematics and languages. Lots of South Branch teachers have been getting involved in how to increase our numbers in academics.

##### **e. Baked goods in the classrooms**

Teachers have expressed some concerns regarding shared baked goods being brought into the school for various celebrations such as birthdays. They are seeing an increase in dietary restrictions and allergies in the classrooms. Staff would like to introduce a school wide rule preventing baked goods from being sent in for celebrations. The council agreed with teachers concerns and a notice will be added to the next school newsletter. There will still be select days where outside treats are allowed such as Halloween days, Valentines day etc. but these days will be scheduled and parents will be given notice in advance. Some suggested alternatives given were a "birthday book" where the birthday

child can pick a book to have read out loud and then the book is donated to the school library or non-food related awards.

**f. Popcorn fundraiser**

Teachers would like to see the return of the popcorn fundraiser from last year. It was a hit with students and allowed the grade 6 students to host the popcorn shopping. It is also a gluten free and dairy free treat which allows most students to participate. It is scheduled to return in November and will be run on a monthly basis.

**5. Treasurer's Report**

There is current no one in the Financial Assistant role on the school board and as such no accurate financial reports are able to be produced right now. There is no expected start date at this time for when that role will be filled. In the meantime, the treasurer will work to provide a best estimate on what funds will be available.

Our current free balance sits at \$7,659.00.

**a. Hot Lunches**

We do not have a confirmed final number for this months' hot lunch orders as the vendors still need to be paid. Laurel advised that the number is believed to be around \$6,033.75 gross for hot lunches orders covering the 5 week timeframe.

Pizza slice sale numbers and Subway orders remain on average from sales last year for this first month of the Hot Lunch Program.

The PayPal Sponsorship option for the Hot Lunch Program generated a donorship of \$270.00 which will go towards providing pizza to students.

**b. Big Brother and Big Sister Sponsorship**

The Big Brothers and Big Sisters program has provided a one time sponsorship payment of \$1,680.00 to support the Hot Lunch program which will be put towards milk & pizza.

**c. HEBL (Healthy Eating for Better Living)**

The HEBL (Healthy Eating for Better Living) program will be providing \$500.00 funding per month for the healthy breakfast or snack programs.

#### **d. Funding Request**

The only request for funding received this month was from the Gardening Club to bring forward their request which was discussed at the September meeting.

Jasmine Eades will be donating manure to the Gardening Club as per their request. Tanya Preston is to put her in contact with the head of the Gardening Club to make arrangements for same.

Mrs. Prosper has offered to donate a rain barrel.

The Gardening Club is hoping to have the eavestroughs installed this fall in order to maximize on snow melting in the spring thaw at a proposed cost of \$500.00.

Katie O'Connor initiated a motion to pay the \$500.00 to the Gardening Club which was seconded by Ashley Beland.

#### **e. Council Insurance**

The School Board covers insurance for all council members when on school property. However, insurance for activities taking place off of school property i.e. Pride and Santa Claus parades is required to be purchased at a cost of \$140.00 plus 8%.

A motion was brought by Katie O'Connor to purchase the additional insurance and seconded by Jarek Anderson.

#### **6. Update from the hot lunch coordinator**

We are currently two days into hot lunch program. The 1<sup>st</sup> two days ran quite smoothly. There has been a lack of volunteers for Thursdays hot lunch deliveries.

The vendor price this year for Subway is \$4.79 after taxes, which provides a profit of \$1.20 per order.

The vendor price for Gabriel's pizza is \$3.25 per slice, which generates a profit of \$0.85 per slice.

In November the Hot Lunch Program will see the return of chicken tenders. The vendor price this year for Mr. Mozzarella chicken tenders is \$4.50 plus tax. This pricing is down from \$6.50 the previous school year and provides a profit of \$0.92 per order. Katie O'Connor brought a

motion to set the price at \$6.00 per chicken tender order. Jarek Anderson seconded the motion.

The donation option on the Hot Lunch order forms will continue with a maximum of \$15.00. Tax receipts are not necessary if donations remain under \$20.00.

**ACTION:** Tanya Preston will ask the school board who would be responsible for issuing a tax receipt if any donations were received for over \$20.00.

**ACTION:** Katie requested that a discussion be added to the June council agenda to set up hot lunch orders to start in September for the following school year.

## **7. Update from the fundraising coordinator**

### **a. Glitter and Glee**

Katie O'Connor advised that we are looking for donations for wrapping paper and gift bags.

### **b. Holiday concert raffle**

Suggestion to sell raffle tickets on two gift baskets at this year's Christmas concert. The first will be a "Family Game Night" theme containing a family board game, popcorn and other treats. The second basket will be "Family Movie Night" theme containing a newly released DVD, popcorn etc.

Budget for each basket will be \$50.00 and the draw would happen at the end of the day of the concert.

**ACTION:** Katie O'Connor will reach out to the municipality to inquire about the criteria for a lottery licence. She will send an email to council members to vote on whether to move forward with the raffle

### **c. October food drive – scare away hunger**

Starting the week of October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023 running until Halloween, South Branch Elementary School will be having a food drive. All donations will be divided between House of Lazarus and Sheppard's both of whom support our backpack program. The backpack program ensures food is sent home with students for the weekend. Katie O'Connor has talked to both organisations and confirmed that they will be coming in the pick up donations after

the completion of the food drive. They will also provide a list of items they are looking for to be donated.

**d. February food drive – Cerealiously Love You**

Another food drive is in discussion to take place in February to collect as many boxes of cereal as we can. The school approved cereals will be donated to the school for our breakfast program.

The suggestion of lining up all the boxes in the hallway to knock over like dominos once the drive was complete was purposed to add incentive. The class with most donations will then nominate a student to knock them over.

**e. Passive fundraiser update**

**i. Mabel's Labels**

We have received some commission from Mabel's Labels, it was discussed that an updated notice should be sent out to parents.

**ii. Flip Give**

South Branch School Committee previously had a Flip Give account which is a free team funding app where you can earn cash back for buying items online. You may also purchase gift cards and part of the money comes back to the school without any extra fees on your purchase.

**ACTION:** Katie O'Connor to speak with Melody (former member of South Branch School Committee) who previously had access to the Flip Give account to confirm whether it is still active and the login credentials.

Any profit from Mabel's Labels and Flip Give will go towards the clothing drive.

**f. Clothing Drive**

South Branch Elementary School is in need of clothing donations for items such as rubber boots and rain pants in kinder sizes, jogging pants of all sizes, winter hats and mittens. It was suggested that the school host a clothing drive and a list be sent out to parents for donations.

Laurel Cardy made a motion to donate \$200 to the clothing fund for the purchase of mittens and hats, it was seconded by Katie O'Connor.

**8. "Council Corner" for monthly newsletter to parents**

It was discussed that rather than South Branch School Council sending out a monthly newsletter to parents, we will instead send a blurb to principal to be added to the South Branch newsletter which goes out monthly. Steve Ibbotson and Laurel Cardy will be drafting the monthly blurb with updates from the Hot Lunch Coordinator and Fundraising Coordinator.

## **9. Other business**

### **a. Childcare**

A discussion was held regarding offering a school childcare arrangement with high school students during council meetings. The idea would be to allow high school students to obtain their volunteer hours and hopefully allow for a higher parent attendance at council meetings.

Some of the potential concerns raised were lack of response from high school students, liability having childcare offered with children in a separate room of the school, not fair to custodians.

It was agreed that should we proceed with an offer of childcare services the children would be required to remain in the same room which the council meeting is proceeding and parents would have to RVSP beforehand if using the service.

<b>ACTION:</b>	We will include a proposal in the upcoming newsletter to see if we can engage interest from parents and then decide from there whether to implement childcare services.
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### **b. Communication**

The question of the best method for the South Branch School Council to communicate between meetings was raised.

<b>ACTION:</b>	Steve to find a shared platform for free that we can use to communicate in between meetings.
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<b>ACTION:</b>	Steve to communicate with Julie about obtaining access to the South Branch School Council Gmail account.
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## **10. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 19:44. The next meeting will take place in person on November 2, 2023 at 18:30.