

ELIJAH SMITH SCHOOL COUNCIL
Minutes of Regular Meeting
January 4, 2022
Zoom

“School Council would like to acknowledge that we are on the lands of the Kwanlin Dun First Nation and Ta’an Kwach’an Council and would like to thank them for allowing us to live and work on their traditional land”

Present:

Council Members: Jeff Hunston: Vice Chair Megan Cromarty Rachel Sutherland Jessie Dawson Jerry Zahora: Secretary Treasurer	Administration: Jeff Cressman: Principal Jim Snider: Vice Principal
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Regrets: Sean Smith: Chair, School Council
Rosemary Waugh-Wilson: Council Member

Guests: Honourable Minister of Education: Jeanie McLean
Nicole Morgan: Deputy Minister, Dept. of Ed.
Donna Miller-Fry: Superintendent of Schools,
Lori Choquette: School Council Liaison
Christine Pottie: CELC, KDFN

1. **Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order at 6:42PM

2. **Adoption of Agenda:** Moved by Rachel, second by Megan, THAT the agenda be adopted. CARRIED

3. **Adoption of Minutes:** Moved by Jessie, second by Rachel, THAT the Minutes of Regular Meeting, December 7, 2021 be adopted. CARRIED

Moved by Megan, second by Rachel, THAT the Minutes of Special Meeting of December 13, 2021 be adopted. CARRIED

- 3.1 **Welcome Guests:** Honourable Minister of Education, Jeanie McLean, Deputy Minister Nicole Morgan.

Council welcomed guests to the meeting.

Nicole Morgan, DM, thanked for the invite. The key information to discuss is to keep schools open during these difficult times. As well, discussions were with the issue of Mr. Jeff Cressman being a principal at two schools at this time.

Minister McLean spoke about these issues as well. It has been very difficult prior to Christmas and navigating through these times and issues. Dept. is working on addressing these issues at the schools and are doing reviews.

The key role of Jeff Cressman is at Elijah Smith. As well, is a big part of the key to address the issues at Jack Hulland.

Nicole advised that she is happy to layout where they are at with the issues. Donna Miller-Fry, Superintendent, will work with school council on this as well. Jack Hulland is going to meet challenging times. And will continue working with school council. They are hearing the current concerns with the school community.

Jeff C. has taken a big role overseeing both schools, and can only do this with the support from the admin team at Elijah Smith. The commitment to Elijah Smith to have an FTE in place. It is important to have these conversations with administration, school council, employees.

Gord Miller has been hired as an Associate Superintendent to Jack Hulland to help with the RCMP investigation.

This is also a growth opportunity for Jeff C.

School council would like to move forward on the FTE. Jeff H. did speak about the great positives for ES, the relationship with the Vice Principal and Principal. They are both valued assets for Elijah Smith School. They are ensuring there are no gaps in the delivery of education at the school.

The competition for the FTE is to be a fair process. Council would like to proceed on this to make sure it is a fair process going forward. The timing of this has to be prioritized.

Megan C: still has heard concerns from staff and parents. Do not feel we were heard when the issue with appointing Jeff C. to another school was first discussed. The communication and transparency has been very frustrating to date.

Jessie voiced her concerns as well. Feels as a school council we should be able to voice our positions and concerns. Jeff C. and Jim work well together and keep the school going. Families deal with different issues. The trust that has been built with the admin team is very important. If this is broke, it will be hard to get it back.

Council agrees. Communication has not been great and needs to be worked on more

Minister McLean wanted a breakdown of the 1 FTE. As she was not understanding how it was going to split up.

The FTE is to be split up:

- .5 Vice Principal
- .2 Principal
- .3 to be determined, other

Discussions on the needs and interests need to take place to move forward in the right way so that the Dept. can take necessary steps to do this correctly.

Jeff C. provided input on how this would/could work. Further conversations with School Council, Jim to be held.

Council wants to ensure that Jim steps in role as principal and feel his work should be acknowledged.

DM Morgan advised that during normal times, a full time position would be posted. However these are unusual times especially during a pandemic.

Council held roundtable discussions with Minister and DM and Superintendent.

Donna suggested an in camera session be held on how this would look and suggested another meeting be set up for this discussion.

As well, the vacancy on the Ta'an Kwach'an Guaranteed rep needs to be resolved. All were in agreement an in camera meeting was a good idea.

Questions was asked as to what would happen at JH when a new principal needs to be placed there? Does that mean an extension to having Jeff C. there?

Christine asked how realistic is it to get someone there to fill the position at this time?

DM Morgan advised there are some vacant positions in rural communities which are different in Whitehorse. Temporary assignments attract internal staff,

Donna advised there are sample posting posters for School Council to look at. She will walk council through the different postings and is ready to present.

ACTION: A Zoom meeting to be set up for Thursday, January 6, 2022, at 5:30PM to review sample posting posters. Jerry to set up and advise Donna and council.

Melanie Abbott: Parent: is concerned about the lack of communication as well. The risk of posting a position and if it does not get filled?

Courtney McLeod: Parent: also feels there is a lot of miscommunication and feels the frustration as well. If a plan is created and not followed, might be due to administration shake up and do we post this and fill or not?

Need to find a way for the team to find a way to get this together, sooner than later. How do we move forward today, tomorrow, in a week, a month? Not a lot of action is going on now.

Jeff H. thanked parents for their input, and a plan needs to be in place to make sure that kids get the support they need.

Jim also provided a brief comment. Is doing the best he can, dealing with the stress; Across the board. Himself and Jeff C. are working on and are both committed to the school. He is not looking at taking over as Principal, but is looking at helping and supporting the school and students as much as he can. Is happy to step up and be a ½ time principal if need be. And if necessary will come in 5 days a week.

Rachel asked DM Morgan if Jeff C will be back at Elijah Smith School full time in September?

Donna advised that no date past the end of this school year to have Jeff C. between the two schools has been discussed.

Rachel asked officials to make this a promise!!!

DM Morgan advised that having one Principal overseeing two schools is **not a long term fix!** If there is a vacancy in the Principal position at Jack Hulland a posting to fill position will be posted in April, May, and June to recruit. Dept. appreciates what Jeff C and Elijah Smith School are doing to help out. This is a frustrating situation and this whole pandemic has been long and frustrating and not helping.

Council thanked all guests for attending and for their contribution and for the input from the parents.

4. Parent Concerns:

Schools opening: a concern with students who are not being vaccinated.

Donna advised they are taking direction from the CMOH who has advised that schools can remain open.

It is the right of a parent/guardian to keep their children at home. The Dept. will

provide education opportunities and materials to these students as well.
Decisions to keep schools open is made on a day to day basis.

5. School Administration Report:

- Gr. 2/3 teacher has been hired.
- A link is available on the School Website to see the "Christmas Concert"
- Capital: The pellet system has been started to be put in, (furnace to run on pellets.)
2 c-cans are now organized
- Roof, siding, windows: tender has been put out; someone has been hired to oversee project. Should be starting in April, May

ACTION: Jeff C. to forward report to Jerry to distribute to council members

ACTION: Jim to forward field trip applications for council to approve
(Mt. Sima trips)

6. CELC:

- Christine advised she has been working from home due to COVID
- no tutor in place at this time
- No in person is being done at this time (due to COVID)
- working with CYFN and ES on inclusion work to get it working and operational

7. Reports:

- 7.1 Transportation Committee: No meeting held
- 7.2 School Growth Plan: Meeting to be held 3rd week of January

8. AYSCBC:

Have been communicating with the Dept. of Standing Committee.
Spring Conference process has been started. If council members have any ideas suggestions, let AYSCBC know. No date has been set yet. However, AYSCBC would appreciate any input by Jan. 15.

9. Treasurer's Report: Balance in account is \$4,753.62

10. Old Business and Correspondence:

- 10.1 Traffic Update: Deferred to Meeting in February
Discussions took place with reference to the crossing guard at the crosswalk
It is not staffed at this time however, is being worked on.
Some suggestions were to perhaps teach students on the safety of the crosswalk.

11. New Business and Correspondence:

- 11.1 SWAG: Deferred to meeting in February

- 12. Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 9:06PM
Next regular meeting, February 1, 2022

Jeff Hunston:
A/Chair

Jerry Zahora:
Secretary Treasurer