

ELIJAH SMITH SCHOOL COUNCIL
Minutes of Special Meeting
August 4, 2020
Via ZOOM

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

Present:

Council Members:

Jeff Hunston: Chair
Rosemary Waugh-Wilson
Richard Bradford-Andrew
Sean Smith
Rachel Sutherland

Administration:

Jeff Cressman: Principal
Jim Snider: Vice Principal

Regrets: Amanda Leas: Council Member

1. Call to Order:

Meeting was called to order at 6:45PM.

School council and administration held discussions on the opening of the school plan. As well, discussions were held with reference to the transition position at the school. School council wrote a letter to the Dept. Superintendent Chris Stacey on June 11, 2020. To date a response has not been received.

Due to the actual enrolment of the school, between 265-268 students, (actual is 267) it is therefore necessary for an extra position to be provided to the school. The staffing projection which was prepared by the department in early spring was on an estimated enrolment of 237 students.

The department will look at the enrolment number on the 1st day of school. School council is still asking for an additional teaching position.

Rosemary advised that Chief Bill has spoken with the Minister of Education, Mrs. McPhee. Minister McPhee is willing to work with the school with respect to the staffing formula.

ACTION: Rosemary will obtain more information and advise school council and administration of same.

Opening of school plan:

Jeff C discussed the opening of the school and the health and safety plan. School is ensuring that all students are safe. The Gr. 1 -3 are now "overfull". There are now 24 and 23 students in the classrooms.

The Aurora Virtual School will be offered to the families who want to keep their children at home rather than send them to school. This will be done on a case by case basis and should not affect the staffing at the school.

The plan of the school shows the layout of the school. There will be sanitation stations in the entry way, in each classroom. There will be social distancing and each classroom will be in their own "pod". This way if there is a sickness in the classroom it will be easier to track down.

Sean inquired as to the concerns of the teachers and class sizes? Are numbers due to size or health?

Jeff C provided number is the grades:

K-18

1-2 = 22

4-7 = 25

Classes are now full or overfull. This is why the department will be looking at the numbers at the school and if there is a need for more staffing at the beginning of the school year.

The Gr.1 classes are fuller and this will prove to be challenging.

Jeff C. will be working with the administration assistant on the numbers and then will provide information to Chris Stacey, Superintendent.

Sean also feels that more teachers will be required due to the COVID-19 restrictions. As well, more EA's will be required to help and support the teachers.

Jeff H. feels the report to be provided to the dept. will show the information which shows the need for more staffing.

Some other areas which will be in the report will show, that there are no more than 8 staff members in the staff room, over lunches or breaks. As well, there will be no coffee makers in place.

The first day of school has now been postponed until August 20, 2020.

There has been a lack of communication with everyone from the department. This could have been done better which would have in turn made it easier for the school to communicate with parents as well.

The school will be doing social distancing, such as the 3ft radius circle. They will be over protective if there is anyone exhibiting “sniffles”, or cold. A call will be made to the parent to come and pick up their child. When necessary a COVID test will be done. This goes for any staff member as well. If a child shows any symptoms in a class, the class student’s parents will be notified and then it will be suggested to maybe get tested.

Markers will be on the floors to make sure there is distancing.

Community groups i.e.: floor hockey, Girl Guides, etc.: Jeff C will be in contact with the Dept. to see if these groups should be stopped.

The school has been cleaned, sanitized, including the portable and storage areas.

Sean inquired about breaks, lunches. Staggered breaks may work better as it could be challenging otherwise to keep social distancing practices. Supervision will also be staggered. Administration is to work on the scheduling of this. The needs and operation of the school needs to be met!

Again, Jeff C and Jim both indicated that more teaching positions are required at the school. Jim advised as well, that due to the Gr.1 classes being full another position is needed so it is not as “full”. As enrolment numbers are going up and not down.

Food: Breakfast: There will be food available at the school, will be prepared such as: granola bars, fruits. This will be provided differently than in the past. The school is working on this as well to make sure it is all safe.

It will be challenging for staff during these times, and help should be available to them with their mental health being as well. Jeff C. advised there will be help available to them.

2 days before school begins, is to be used to help teachers. Jeff C will be discussing issues with them. Discussions will be held with students as well. As well, let everyone know what supports are there for them and their parents.

Health and Social Services has/is preparing info with reference to resources available. This will be shared by the school to help everyone.

Finalized operational plan is to be shared with School Council and communities by August 12th.

Jeff C. advised on the 2 teachers who were seconded by CYFN last school year.

Darby is to be seconded for another year by CYFN. Rebecca Bradford will advise if she is coming back on the 18th of August.

Amanda Lloyd is going to Jack Hulland.

L. Pierce is going to Takhini

Council held roundtable discussions.

ACTION: Jeff C. to send info with reference to the Operational plan to Jerry and KDFN.
Superintendent would like info by Friday, August 7.
If there are any comments, they are to be provided to Jeff C. prior to Friday.

Jeff H. thanked administration for the hard work that they have had to do this summer.

Next scheduled meeting to be held via ZOOM is set for August 25th, 2020, at 6:30PM.

The AGM meeting has been rescheduled until Sept. 15, 2020, at 6:30PM followed by regular council meeting.

ACTION: Jerry to notify Superintendent of the change.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 7:57PM.

Jeff Hunston: Chair

Jerry Zahora: Secretary Treasurer