
New Horizons School Council Meeting Minutes

November 3, 2016
7:00 pm to 9:00 pm
Learning Common, New Horizons School

Bring/ Read: Please be aware that a limited number of paper copies of meeting minutes and agenda will be available. If you are able, please bring a device to view agenda online.

Attendees: Kim Johnson, Brandy Cox, Dena Freed, Manda Wilde, Sandra Dargis, Ted Zarowny, Allison Joly, Ellisa Wilson

1. Call to order 7:02 PM
2. Welcome and introductions
3. Review agenda
4. Review and approve minutes from October 13, 2016

MOTION: Brandy Cox moved to approve the minutes from the October 13, 2016 meeting. Seconded by Manda Wilde. Motion Carried

5. Reports

- Principal's report 20 minutes Mr. Zarowny
 - See attached
 - Junior High Investigations fair

MOTION: Manda Wilde moves that the council provide funds (not to exceed \$200) for the NHS Junior High Investigations Week (November 25, 2016). Brandy Cox seconded. Motion carried.

ACTION ITEM: School council will provide assistance organizing and operating refreshment and nutrition stations. Kim Johnson offered to be the contact person and coordinator

- Ceasing NHS school newsletter, pilot project
- Report card update
Report cards will be out on December 2nd
- Financial Officer's report 5 minutes Manda Wilde

Nothing to Report
- FANHS' report 5 minutes NA

Nothing to report

Communications Officer 5 minutes Dena Freed

Movie night poster is completed. Dena Freed will send to Lisa H for email to parents, and will be posted on Facebook and Twitter.

- Chair's report 5 minutes Kim Johnson

6. Previously Tabled Business
NA

7. Items for Discussion/Input 15 minutes

- Movie Night

Brandy Cox offered to organize RSVPing on Event Bright or to assist the Junior High fundraising coordinator to set up a google docs form. Council members agreed that we would only ask parents to RSVP if this would be useful information for the Junior High Fundraisers to determine quantity of concession supplies to purchase.

8. New Business

- Communication of volunteer opportunities.

An attendee expressed concern that as a new parent to the school, she felt rather disconnected from the parent community and had the following suggestions:
Make signing up for volunteer opportunities more accessible. Advertise on website or Facebook page rather than just the manual sign-up sheets that were at the Meet the Teacher night.
She also wondered if we could stream council meetings or have a teleconferencing option to make it easier for parents who aren't able to attend in person to still participate.

9. Guest lecture series 30 min

(see principal's report attached)

10. Future Agenda Items

- Add gymnastics mats approval to the agenda for next agenda.
- Manda Wilde suggested that in the spring, the council conduct a review of the expenditure approval process to clarify what is required by law and if the current process could be simplified while still providing adequate transparency.

11. Mail/ Communications

12. Adjourned at 8:16pm.

Confirmation for date of next meeting. December 8, January 19, February 9, March 9, April 13, May 11, June 8.

NHS School Council Meeting

Principal's Report

November 3, 2016

6:45 p.m.

New Horizons School

1. Newsletter Review

Background

One of the outcomes of our Education Plan is to increase communication with parents. As we examined this outcome, we looked carefully at the function of our current use of the monthly PDF school newsletter. For many years New Horizons School has produced monthly newsletters to share stories relating to school events and other information with parents. Upon examination, and felt that there were some drawbacks to the monthly newsletter, ranging from timeliness and relevance of the news to searchability of specific news stories and information.

Over time, the communication tools available to us have changed, and we sense that the way information is being consumed has changed as well. In order to address these changes and the shortcoming of a monthly newsletter, we propose the following.

Proposal

The proposal is that New Horizons School eliminates the traditional monthly newsletter for a two month trial period and replace it with more consistent, regular, and timely posts and stories on our website.

1. In order to ensure parents are informed of the updates, we have put the following in place.
 - Facebook updates with links to each story;
 - Twitter tweets with links to each story;
 - We have added the ability for parents to receive notifications each time something new is posted on our news feed;
 - Any time we update any page on our site, we will post a link to it on our news feed on the home page of our site.
 - Any information that is important for parents to receive will continued to be emailed directly to them
2. We propose piloting tis format for the months of November and December.
 - In early January, we will evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot.
 - That evaluation will include surveying all parents early in January for their input into the effectiveness of the new format versus the monthly newsletter.
 - Our evaluation will determine whether to continue with the monthly newsletter, or to continue with the frequent website updates.

Action

Receive feedback from School Council regarding the proposed pilot.

2. Request for Funds

Background

In the past few years, the NHS Junior High program had its independent studies integrated into the regular schedule as a designated time block. Independent studies has since been called “Investigations” at the Junior High level.

This year, we are changing our format. Instead of having Investigations time spread throughout the year, we have designated “Investigations Week.” By doing so, students can remain focused on their projects and not be distracted from the demands of other courses.

Our first Investigations Week is November 21-25. The focus for the week is for students to investigate and develop an *engaging* presentation in a self-selected passion area. The Investigations Week ends with a day of students sharing their presentations in a “conference style” format. Like at a conference, student presentations will be occurring concurrently, and all NHS students from grades 4-9, as well as any interested parents and invited guests, can sign up for a session that interests them.

We want the presentation day to be special. We are planning for an opening and closing ceremonies, and hope to have refreshment and nutrition sessions set up for students and guests.

In order to help make this day exciting and successful, we are seeing assistance from School Council in two ways:

- Provide funding for the refreshment and nutrition stations;
- Organize and operate the refreshment and nutrition stations;
- Provide funding for door prizes and other incentives for the day.

Recommendation

It is recommended that

- School Council provide funds that will not exceed \$200.00 for the NHS Junior High Investigations Week, November 21-25, 2016.
- Provide assistance by organizing and operating refreshment and nutrition stations

3. Report Card Update

Information

This year, we are using a new Student Information System (SIS) called Maplewood. A SIS is our way of maintaining student information with Alberta Education.

Accompanying the new SIS is a new **report card**.

- The new report card will have a similar look to as our previous report cards and will use the same achievement levels (excellent, proficient, acceptable, and limited).
 - Junior High report cards will continue to use percentages for core subjects and levels of achievement for option courses.
- Our new system has the ability to create a **parent portal** that will allow parents to access their child's grades at any time. We are currently working with Maplewood to initiate this function in the system at the junior high level.