

Graminia School Council
6:30pm Wednesday March 8, 2023, in the Graminia School Library

Attendees Angie Gehlert (Chair), Amber Darragh (Vice Chair), Cassandra Graham (Secretary), Treena Neumann (Principal), Erin Chessor (Vice-Principal), Aimee Hennig (School Board Trustee), John Blood (PSD Director of Transportation), Sheila Avison, Christine Gehlert, Kerri Golka, Kate LaFavor, Anna Liska, Britany Preece, Angayla Waterman

1. Meeting Called to Order and Introductions

- 1.1. Meeting called to order by Angie Gehlert at 6:36pm
- 1.2. Land Acknowledgement

2. Adoption of Agenda

- 2.1. Amber Darragh made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Seconded by Kerri Golka. Carried.

3. Adoption of January and February Minutes

- 3.1. January minutes were reviewed and approved by Amber Darragh. Seconded by Angayla Waterman. Carried.
- 3.2. February minutes were reviewed and approved by Amber Darragh. Seconded by Sheila Avison. Carried.

4. Special Presentation by John Blood, PSD Director of Transportation

- 4.1. Parkland School District (PSD) transportation receives funding from Alberta Education. There is \$11.5 million in the budget for entire district. PSD is a very large geographical area. Transportation is funded per student is based on eligible students versus ineligible students. There is a set base of funding per student. Then an additional amount of \$9.8 million in funding is contributed from the government. The difference is topped up with fees charged individually.
- 4.2. There are 153 routes in PSD division and 16 of those routes serve Graminia School. Bussing transports students in kindergarten to grade 12 within PSD. In addition, transportation is provided to Evergreen Catholic Schools. Specialized transportation for students with intellectual and physical disabilities to specialized programs in Edmonton such as ELVES, (a specialized program in Edmonton dealing with students with severe physical, behaviour and learning disabilities) and Alberta School for the Deaf in Edmonton as well as schools with specialized programs in Spruce Grove and Stony Plain is provided.
- 4.3. Routes for 2023-24 year are already built. Applications are processed once school registration closes, which is at the end of March and beginning of April. There were 7139 students requiring bussing the past school year. In the summer routes are fine tuned and late registrations are added in. There are usually 400-600 late applications.
- 4.4. Transportation issues at start up are usually drivers not phoning parents or phoning last minute. Bus drivers are provided contact information and are encouraged to call parents the week before school starts.
- 4.5. Bus routes are contracted out. The bus drivers are not employees for PSD. Thirteen contractors provide the bus service for PSD. Safety is taken very seriously.
- 4.6. Graminia is an extremely busy area. The school boundary is massive. Some bus routes have an early pick up because of how long they are. Anchor time is the arrival time to the school the buses deliver to. The routes are designed by working backwards from the anchor times. Graminia has an early bell time, therefore students are picked up early.
- 4.7. Across Canada there is a school bus driver shortage. Recruitment has been ongoing. An open route is one that cannot be filled by a driver. Graminia has had one open route since October. Each year there is a Request For Proposal. PSD is hoping that an additional route can be added for the next school year.

- 4.8. The school boundary is set by the board of trustees. On the school website there is a map for reference that is inaccurate. It is just for reference as the map was developed by the website provider. There is an agreement with Spruce Grove that PSD transports students. There is an agreement with Black Gold School District to transport their students into Devon. Catholic students are transported to Devon and Stony Plain. The transportation agreement with the Catholic School Division has been in place since 1996.
- 4.9. An app is being trialed in smaller rural areas such as Blueberry, Duffield, Tomahawk and Entwistle that will live stream bus locations to parents and notify parents if the bus is late. The hope is that in September all Schools will be on the app.
- 4.10. When the routes are made in August drivers do a dry run. They work backwards from the anchor time and that is how the driver determines each pick up time. It is recommended that students be at their stop five minutes before their designated pick up time. Times can be adjusted for winter roads.
- 4.11. Most buses have a seventy two person seating capacity, that is three students to a seat. Three to a seat is acceptable and allowed by transportation and education rules. If you are the first on in the morning the bus service tries their best to have you the first off in the afternoon.
- 4.12. It costs \$65 000-\$70 000 annually to run a bus route.
- 4.13. Budget announcements for transportation eligibility distance will change in the 2024-25 school year. Currently this eligibility distance is 2.4km. In 2024 the kindergarten to grade 6 eligibility will be 1km and the grades 7 to 12 eligibility is going to be 2km. There will be pros and cons from the eligibility changes. More students will ride because there is increased funding. Ridership is going to explode. Cons are driver and bus shortages, especially wheelchair buses. The current order time for a bus with a wheelchair lift is 12-15 months. Everything that can be done will be to mitigate the driver shortage. The funding for transportation eligibility has been promised but not confirmed. There will be changes to the provincial government between now and then that will tweak the promised ridership funding.
- 4.14. A driver retention program is starting with the government. School bus drivers do it for the love of the kids. They are not well paid.

5. Trustee Report by Aimee Hennig

- 5.1. Kirwan Kawa was nominated for the Edwin Parr Award. The Edwin Parr Award honours six outstanding first year teachers within the Alberta School Board. PSD had five submissions between the Edwin Parr Award and the Merits and Milestones Award.
- 5.2. Funding was approved for the proposal of a new high school in Spruce Grove. The proposal will have to be submitted and the final plans for the school will still await approval. Priority one is a high school in Spruce Grove. Priority two is a new school on the land already designated for a school in Tonewood in Spruce Grove. There will be a proposal in the future for a school on the east side of Spruce Grove and the third priority is the modernization of Tomahawk and Brookwood schools.
- 5.3. Fees have been set for next year. There will be increase in transportation costs for the upcoming school year. The costs for rural riders and urban riders have been adjusted and are now in alignment. There is a minimal increase because the budget is only \$30 000 short for transportation.

6. Council of School Councils (COSC) Update by Angie Gehlert

- 6.1. Super Intendant of Parkland school district Megan Miskolzie was the special guest speaker. Dr. Miskolzie specializes in student supports and services, offers holistic support in student wellness, facilitates community wellness and partnerships, focuses on comprehensive school health, and provides trauma response and assessment.
- 6.2. Planning season for the next school year is underway. The school division is pushing for early registration and for improved transportation.

- 6.3. Provincial surveys need to be submitted by March 15. The Alberta government gives an accountability survey to students, staff and parents. The survey results help them to set goals for the next school year. If you have a student in grade 4, 7, or 11 surveys have been sent out and need to be completed.
- 6.4. Registration is open for the Alberta School Council Association (ASCA) conference April 22 and 23. It is \$400 per weekend for two parents. For further information please see their website: <https://www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca/about/annual-conference>
- 6.5. The next COSC meeting is May 2 at 6:30. COSC within PSD Headquarters are in Stony Plain.
- 6.6. The first day of the 2023-24 school year starts after Labor Day. The reason the first day of school starts year sometimes started before Labor Day and sometimes starts afterwards is because school will never start after September 5. The date has to do with fitting instructional time in.

7. Principal's Report by Treena Neumann

- 7.1. Report cards will be live on Powerschool on March 23.
- 7.2. Grade nine course selections will be sent home on March 23 with teacher recommendations.
- 7.3. Please register students for the 2023-24 school year. Registration is much slower than it was last year and is currently only at 30% for next year. Mrs. Kent, the school secretary, will start making phone calls to families who have not registered their children.
- 7.4. Parent teacher conferences will start on April 4 and 5. Teachers will send out online links to book parent teacher conferences.
- 7.5. The next Hawks Spirit Assembly features the sacred teaching of Humility. The Wolf Spirit assembly is on March 23.
- 7.6. The kick off to the Learn-A-Thon Fundraiser is an assembly on March 15.
- 7.7. MyPath registration is open. MyPath deadline is May 1. There needs to be a minimum of 20-25 students registered per program for the school to be able to offer MyPath.
- 7.8. Full day kindergarten needs 18 students registered and Graminia is currently at 14 students.
- 7.9. Planning for next year has started and class configurations have been shared in the March newsletter. The budget has been released and then the funding manual has been released. It is based on the budget last year.
- 7.10. Early literacy and numeracy supports are needed in the school. There is a need in at least one third of the school population. A position of support is still required.
- 7.11. There is a possibility of after school care for the next school year at Graminia. The school is currently interviewing potential service providers with facilities.
- 7.12. Provincial achievement tests (PATs) are running. Test security all of the exams is greater now that the exams are scheduled. There is a posted schedule for all of the PATs.

8. Principal's Updated Spending List

- 8.1. Graminia School Foundation requests for a change of funding request was made for this current school year. There is a current approved list of items. These items were explained by Treena Neumann. How they benefit students and why the school is requesting this funds from the foundation were explained. The funding is voted on by school council prior to the approval of funding by the foundation. The current approved list of items that the Graminia School Foundation is funding are: drama program support (\$5000), recess bins (\$2000) for the outdoor spring refill, subscriptions to reading programs RCAT, RAZ (\$2000), Fountas and Pinnell literacy teaching aids for grades 1-2 (\$1532), rainbow crosswalk (\$500), two way radios for staff to communicate during outdoor supervision (\$6000), Graminia Rink equipment (\$1500), furniture for hallways in school (\$10 000).

- 8.2. Funds requested from the Graminia School Foundation by Treena Neumann during the meeting totalled \$28 500. Requested items in order of preference are as follows:
- 8.3. Athletics for grades 4-6. (\$1560)
- 8.4. Music instruments for grades 1-5 for the purchase of musical instruments and repair of current instruments. (\$3000)
- 8.5. Wheelchair rental adapted PE wheelchair basketball for grades 6-9. (\$1500)
- 8.6. Heroes program which is a self esteem social and emotional health program for grades 7-9. (a reimbursement of \$1500)
- 8.7. Bussing for a field trip to the Skills Canada Exposition. Grades 7-9 go to the Edmonton Expo Centre and watch skilled tradesmen do their jobs and compete. There is also a try it yourself section. Skills Canada is a trades fair, showcase and symposium which is free to enter the school only had to pay for bussing. (\$1500)
- 8.8. Two new FM systems for classrooms. The current equipment is aging and needs repairs and replacement. (\$5250)
- 8.9. A field trip for the entire school to go to Fitset Ninja. Fitset Ninja is an obstacle course that promotes problem solving, cooperation and physical fitness. (\$15 000)
- 8.10. A motion was made to approve the requested funds. Brittany Preece approved \$26 967.88 to fund the principal's requests in all categories. Amber seconded. Majority rule.
- 8.11. The funds requested were approved at a council level to be brought to the Graminia School Foundation.
- 8.12. \$7000 was released back to The Graminia School Foundation from the school. This was for Chromebook Evergreening which was not required this school year, but will be needed next year.
- 8.13. A motion to fund \$1560 for Athletics for grades 4-6 was made by Angayla Waterman. Anna Liska Seconded. Majority rule.
- 8.14. A motion to fund \$3000 for musical instruments for grades one to five was made by Amber Darragh. Angayla Waterman seconded. Majority rule.
- 8.15. Radios for outdoor supervision came in \$700 over budget. A motion to fund the additional \$700 was made by Anna Liska. Angayla Waterman seconded. Majority rule.
- 8.16. A motion to fund \$1500 to fund wheelchair rental for adapted PE (for example, wheelchair basketball) for two weeks by Angayla Waterman. Anna Liska seconded. Majority rule.
- 8.17. A motion to fund \$1500 to the Heroes program, a self-esteem social and emotional health program for grades 7 to 9 was released by Kerri Golka. Christine Gehlert seconded. Majority rule.
- 8.18. A motion to fund \$1500 for bussing to the Skills Canada field trip was made by Cassandra Graham. Angayla Waterman seconded. Majority rule.
- 8.19. A motion to fund \$5250 for two new FM systems was made by Amber Darragh. Anna Liska seconded. Majority rule.
- 8.20. A motion to fund \$15 000 for a field trip to Fitset Ninja for the entire school, with the exception of the kindergarten classes, was made by Angayla Waterman. Kerri Golka seconded. Majority rule.

9. New Business

- 9.1. No new business

10. Adjournment

- 10.1. Angie Gehlert made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:40pm. Kerri Golka seconded. Carried.

Next council meeting date: April 12 at 6:30pm in the Graminia School Library.

If you have questions or thoughts or concerns that you believe should be addressed by the school council please speak to Angie Gehlert, Amber Darragh, or Treena Neumann.