



2019/2020 AGM Minutes September 23, 2020

**** meeting conducted via Zoom ****

Attendance: no in-person attendance. Zoom meeting was moderated by Caren Morris (PAC communications). PAC executive members (Jacob Buurma, president; Vanessa Lloyd, vice-president; Tiffanie Hanoski, treasurer; Teresa Bubela, secretary); Torquay school administration (Lois Bender, principal; Sarah Elford, vice-principal). **Over 40 Torquay parents, grandparents and guardians were signed in to participate.**

Call to Order at 7:02 pm by Jacob

Adoption of meeting agenda by Jacob (last year's AGM business). Moved by Vanessa, seconded by Tiffanie.

Adoption of meeting minutes from previous PAC meeting (February 12, 2020) stayed due to the long break between meetings (all minutes available on the Torquay PAC website).

Opening remarks: Jacob thanks Caren for setting up and moderating the Zoom meeting. PAC executive members introduce themselves to all present. Jacob (president) and Vanessa (vice president) both announce their intentions to step down this year after numerous years of service to the PAC. Jacob briefly describes the role of the PAC and how it can help parents stay connected to Torquay, offer perspective on how the school works, and assist in getting to know the school admin. Especially important at this time, when parents aren't able to come into the school or participate in the classroom as they have in years past. There are also roles that the PAC plays in terms of fundraising for important purchases like home reading supplies, earthquake/safety kits, sports equipment and other expenses that aren't covered by the school budgets. **All new parents are encouraged to get involved** as it will help them to get a finger on the pulse of the school.

Standing Items

Admin Report

Lois Bender, principal:

- Lois thanks all the parents in attendance and briefly introduces herself. She also thanks the PAC executive for their input and feedback as the school year started.
- About 90% of students have returned to full instruction, with the remainder attending hybrid classes as well as other students who are home schooling or are immune suppressed (or have close relations who are immune suppressed). This year admin are trying to keep in close contact with these other groups so they are still very much part of Torquay.
- **Staffing:** Lois is still filling other holes in staffing, but it is going well. She introduces the new vice-principal Sarah Elford (formerly of South Park school), Breena Blazko (inclusive learning) and Christina Apa (ELL) and teachers Ms. Grant (Grade 2) and Ms. Garat (grade 3). Ms. Garat speaks to how fortunate she feels to be at Torquay in her second year (formerly of George Jay). She wanted to thank the PAC for purchasing leveled books for her class as it made a huge difference starting fresh in a new classroom.
- Lois will be additionally introducing other new staff in the next while. She recognizes a new admin staff member, Ann, who helped Lois set up things for the school year and will be welcoming a new admin team member formerly of Hillcrest school. Lois also thanks Kim for her ongoing help and support in the office.
- **School organization: 7 cohorts, 15 divisions with staggered recess and lunch breaks. Four cohorts go out at a time and each have their own "zones" to play in.** It's been challenging to coordinate (especially with inclimate weather) so she asks parents to send kids prepared for all weather.
- Lois recaps that the first few days were used as orientation to get staff and students used to the new health protocols. First priority is keeping students and staff safe. Lois appreciates all kind words and supportive comments she's received from parents as the new routines are established.
- She thanks parents for their attention to all the mailouts of guidelines and appreciates that everyone is trying to follow the new procedures, in particular at pick-up and drop-off. She reminds parents that we need to keep the drop-off and pick-ups as quick as possible, including line-ups and drop-off zones.

Sarah Elford, vice-principal:

- Sarah speaks to being happy to be back at Torquay after a brief stint prior to a maternity leave. She appreciates the friendly welcome. She draws attention to the newly revised parent health check that has just gone out to all families from the ministry of health. The list of symptoms has been revised (recaps the list). What is absent is stuffy/runny nose. Obviously, children should stay home if they are sick, but she did note this change and encourages parents to call 811 for additional support if needed.
- Lois reminds parents of the upcoming **Pro-d day September 28**. Staff will spend the day reviewing newly revised 61 strategic goals and how Torquay's goals align with that (Torquay goals include social/emotional learning and enhanced independence in our readers). Afternoon will focus on new technology and learning (i.e. Google slides, YouTube videos and G-suite).
- Lois concludes with a teaser for future Spirit Days, details of which will be announced soon. She reminds parents they are welcome to contact the school anytime with questions.

Financials

- Tiffanie reports a balance of approximately \$20,900 in the chequing account, \$450 in the gaming account. Lots of things were purchased from the gaming account per annual requirements. Gaming account funds come from the government and there are strict guidelines for how the funds are used (must enhance learning experience for all students in the school). Examples of this are reading recovery/take-home reading sets, sports equipment.
- Tiffany presents the proposed budget for 2020/21. **Budget is presented onscreen for all to view.**
- Tiffanie discusses how the elements of the budget have been kept very basic due to Covid-19. There are funds allocated to the Eco Tigers, Fun Lunch software, contingency for Earthquake Kits and the annual fun day, possible educational performances for later in the year, parent education nights and food safe training, sports equipment, funds for assisting students missing lunch.
- Budget items will be added later for specific things once the PAC receives the teachers' wish lists for this year (discretionary spending amounts).
- Fun Lunch brings in the majority of the fundraising amounts to the PAC each year, as well as the annual donation drive.
- Other fundraisers have been done through Benjamin Moore, Purdys and Mabels Labels.
- Jacob speaks to how proficiently Tiffanie has managed funds over the years and that it's good to have contingency funds in the account.
- Tiffanie moves that the budget be adopted as presented, Jacob seconds. **An online poll is taken to approve the budget; it is approved unanimously.**

Voting in of PAC executive

Jacob thanks Vanessa for her service as vice president, and Jacob is thanked for his service as well. Nominations include Teresa Bubela for President, Tiffanie Hanoski for Vice President and Caren Morris for Treasurer. With no objections or other nominations received, they are elected as presented. Tuire is nominated for PAC secretary and she accepts the role. Parents express their approval via comments in Chat.

- Jacob mentions that he has been maintaining the Torquay PAC website and that he will be continuing this service along with Caren.
- Caren reminds all present that they can reach the PAC executive anytime via email (list of emails can be found on the PAC website, torquaypac.ca).

PAC in the pandemic

- Jacob discussed that all in-person events are suspended until further notice. That said, there are still many ways that the PAC can assist families and staff this year.
- Teresa talks more about cancelled events such as the Spring Fair and how fundraising can still occur (Purdy's sales, online auction etc).

Fun Lunches: Lois speaks to the challenges around distribution of Fun Lunches. Parent volunteers within the school are an issue but if students or other people already in the school can assist, that could be a solution?

- Lois describes some of the safety requirements from the Ministry of Health. Christina Apa speaks and mentions that several fun lunch options fit within these new rules. For example: all pizzas are personal and individual and as long as the businesses are following the provincial guidelines there should be no issues.
- Tuire speaks to the distribution of fun lunches: in the past grade fives took the crates to each classroom, Subway and Pizza Hut didn't require parent participation but sushi and White Spot did.
- Christina speaks to the challenges of cancelling orders that were affected by COVID closures last year, but Tiffanie reassures that if the same email stays with the account the funds will carry over.
- Reduced number of fun lunch days is discussed—perhaps one day a month, or less frequently than every week?
- Tuire is happy to keep up with the communication with the vendors

ACTION: Tuire and Christina Apa will speak further with Lois to see what is possible for this year re: Fun Lunch.

Cash donation drive question: Devon asks if there will be a letter going out this year? Yes, we have a letter drafted and will be distributing it to all families shortly. Caren describes that this year is obviously different to past years but in terms of helping the teachers and classrooms, the donations will be a big help. It will go out in early October.

- Several suggestions come in from parents via Chat regarding fundraising.
- **Spirit wear:** Julena is in the process of following up with this and has the cheque to get things started.
- Spirit days could coincide with the roll out of the spirit wear. Could be a particular day for spirit wear.
- Julena also offers to help with posters or designed emails to parents for the spirit days.

Open forum discussion:

- Jacob asks if there are any ways that parents can support Lois/admin this year. Lois appreciates this and suggest that small group discussions with parents on specific topics are helpful.
- **Drop-off zone:** Julena wants to know if there are ways to make it clearer that this area is **not** for stopping/parking. It's become more of a "two-minute zone" which is creating more congestion. Julena wants to know if signs can be put up as they have been in past years.
- Lois discusses how all extra staff and admin have been manning the back blacktop so there are not as many staff out front.

ACTION: Lois will look into getting the signs put out again.

- **Meet the teacher night:** Lois mentions that meet the teacher night won't be happening this year, each teacher will do something different in terms of connecting with the parents. More details on this will be coming soon.
- Chat question regarding the hybrid group teachers: Lois says there is no decision yet on teachers for the hybrid group.
- **Torquay Facebook page vs a private group:** Caren poses the question as to how parents can connect and communicate with each other without the usual in-person chats. Christina discusses that other schools are using class reps to open communication within the classrooms
- Lois gently reminds parents that outside meetups between kids should be kept within cohort groups as much as possible.
- Jacob notes a question from Chloe about WeChat: it's an option for Torquay parents, if someone wants to set this up?
- **PAC parent reps for each class:** the PAC can help facilitate this for each class. This may be a good chance for parents to connect with each other. Lois suggests putting together a list of things that PAC reps could do. Caren offers to send this.
- Qi also mentions that other formats like Google Classroom are useful and can use Messenger if they want talk with each other. Lois responds that Google Classrooms, GSuite and Freshgrade are all used by teachers at the moment.
- The upcoming pro-d day is well-timed in terms of helping teachers to use this technology.
- Caren notes that communication is two-sided: communications between school and parents are really for the school to facilitate, whereas communication between families is something the PAC can help with. For example, she mentions helping kids to join a school Minecraft community, in which Skype calls happen at the same time. Caren offers to take emails from interested parents.
- Ashwin: a new Kindergarten parent speaks regarding new parents' groups, thanks Lois and the other admin for all they have done to make the year go smoothly so far.
- Caren echoes Ashwin's comments about how grateful parents are for how well things have gone.
- Qi asks if the teachers have expressed any concerns about the school re-opening and how parents can best support them? Lois speaks to the human factor with the teachers on staff and how everyone has their own reasons for maintaining protocols. There is a health and safety committee at Torquay that meets regularly.
- Qi asks if PAC funds could/should go towards PPE for teachers? Lois reassures that all PPE is being well provided for by the school district and the teachers have all that they need but appreciates being able to come to the PAC if needed.
- Question from a parent via Chat: how can parents find out who is in their child's cohort group (each cohort is made up of two divisions). Melinda Garat speaks to this: she created a special parent handbook she created which does include who the cohort group is. Lois says that all teachers are encouraged to distribute this information as well.

Jacob thanks everyone for the lively discussion and participation. Lois offers a hearty thanks to Jacob and Vanessa for their service.

Meeting adjourned: at 8:29 pm by Jacob.

Thank you to all who attended our first-ever Zoom PAC meeting!

Next meeting: WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 14, 2020