

**Parent Council of River Heights Elementary School**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**February 3, 2021**

Attendance: Taneill Selinger, Karla Tweten, Tara Betts, Megan Loran, Wes King-Hunter, Laura Gale, Dayna Maloy, Kim McDowall, Debbie Miller, Carolyn Freeman, Khrista McDowall

Note: This meeting was live broadcast via Zoom.

1. Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 7:32 pm by Taneill Selinger. The Treaty Land Acknowledgement was read aloud.
2. Adopt Minutes: Tara Betts asked if there was anyone present who had read and was able to adopt the minutes from the Parent Council meeting on December 9, 2020. The minutes were adopted by Kim McDowall and seconded by Megan Loran.
3. Reports from school and council:
  - a. School Administration Team - Wes King-Hunter and Laura Gale
    - i. Appreciation and thanks were extended to families, students and staff for efforts during the week of online learning, January 4-8. While it is not the ideal method of delivery for education, the administration team was very impressed with how well everyone managed and students adapted.
    - ii. Thank you to the parent council for support with fundraising, hot lunch, social media, Division Council of School Council and for finding ways to help normalize things for students.
    - iii. Thank you to the River Heights School and Community (RHSCA) for redirecting field trip funding. The remaining 2019-2020 budget of \$8,000 has been spent on digital subscriptions, visual journals, recess equipment, numeracy/literacy supports, etc. The administration team is working with the RHSCA to allocate the 2020-21 amount.
    - iv. Thank you to families for their ongoing diligence and vigilance in support of our school and required covid practices. While we recognize it can be challenging, we are all working together to keep the school as safe as possible. Everyone has adjusted with virtual learning and staff meetings, etc. We are all living what we want our kids to do.
    - v. Registration for the upcoming 2021-22 school year is now available online. Bailey Stuber can be contacted, at the school main number, to assist with technical glitches.
    - vi. Surveys/Feedback - Students and staff for grades 4-6 participated in a return to school survey. Overall, the feedback was very good. More will be shared regarding the same at a later date. The Accountability Pillar Survey, while not out yet, is usually seen before the end of February and will include feedback from parents, staff and students. There will be a Powerschool survey to come as well.

- b. Report from Co-Chairs - Taneill Selinger and Karla Tweten
    - i. Although the parent council does not have any specific plans for Valentines Day, we will encourage everyone to post pictures on social media.
  - c. Report from Treasurer - Megan Loran - See Attached Financial Report
    - i. Review of report.
    - ii. There are a few outstanding cheques, hot lunch deposit (last event) and additional cash from hot lunch and Growing Smiles. These will hopefully be deposited by the end of next week.
    - iii. Deficit - Kim asked if we were expecting a significant deficit this year. Taneill indicated we are currently showing a deficit of \$5000, not including future events, i.e. Spring Fling, Donuts for Mom/Dad, guest presentations and staff appreciation.
4. Report from committees and council representatives:
- a. Hot Lunch - Khirsta McDowall and Debbie Miller
    - i. Hot lunch items for the remainder of the school year are now available on School Cash Online. Posts will be made on RH social media with monthly reminders, countdown reminders and hot lunch dates. There has also been some confusion when placing orders. All parents are reminded to ensure River Heights is selected when ordering hot lunch items. A big thank you to Khirsta and Debbie for taking over the hot lunch program for the current year and for agreeing to stay on through the 2021-22 school year!
  - b. Fundraising - Taniell Selinger and Karla Tweten
    - i. Kernels - the details for this fundraiser will be finalized and posted soon. We are working through the Lethbridge franchise which is locally owned and they offer free delivery to Medicine Hat. They also contribute to their own charity, the Optimism Project that supports other organizations such as Autism Canada. The retail cost will be around \$2.50 per bag, including the School Cash Online surcharge. The popcorn is gluten free and has a shelf life of approximately four months. The fundraiser will run for about two weeks.
    - ii. Brewmaster - hoping to run another fundraiser closer to camping season, possibly May.
    - iii. Greenhouse vegetables - again, hoping to run this fundraiser closer to camping season in May, possibly alongside the Brewmaster fundraiser.
    - iv. Bottle Drive - easy add on, no outlay of money required. It was discussed that a truck could be made available during pick up for the Kernels fundraiser.
    - v. Growing Smiles - when the plants were delivered before Christmas, the driver dropped a number of arrangements. The company initially said that replacements would be sent out right away. After challenging

communications, the refund is still in limbo. Several suggestions were made for a replacement company if we wanted to continue with this type of fundraiser in the future. Suggestions include: Sunterra (they provide all of the downtown Medicine Hat hanging baskets), Lofgren Greenhouse (reportedly wonderful to deal with) or Blondies.

c. DCOSC (Division Council of School Councils) - Taneill Selinger

The last meeting was held on January 14, 2021. Minutes, agendas and other related documents are available on the Medicine Hat Public School Division website, [www.sd76.ab.ca](http://www.sd76.ab.ca), under Publications, Division Council of School Councils.

- i. Division Calendar 2021-22 School Year - the proposed calendar is now available for review on the division website and parent council Facebook page. Please forward questions/concerns to Taneill or Karla who will then forward the same to Lyle Cunningham. The year is set up with four quarters again to allow returns to school from the HUB. The three local area school districts are working to synchronize holidays/breaks to make it easier for parents with students in multiple divisions and to better facilitate scheduling for exams.
- ii. Transportation Policy - the transportation policy has been in place, but was recently formalized. It provides guidance regarding how to appeal if not approved for bussing, bus rules, occasional riders (kid going to friends house), etc. The division has tried to make it as accommodating as possible. This is one of only a few school districts in the province with free bussing and we are thankful the district is trying hard to maintain that. Likely, in the next few years, there will be some type of charge for bussing. With regard to bussing, there have been a lot of questions from parents outside of RH wondering why students living anywhere in the city can still qualify for bussing to RH. Typically bussing is not available to students outside their designated community school. The short answer is that RH is not not a community school, it is a magnet school because of the type of programming offered. To note, Connaught also receives bussing privileges. Carolyn further explained that RH began in 1994 as the brainchild of 4-5 teachers who embraced critical thinking, problem solving and collaborative work. With the support of a strong board and a leap of faith, RH started as a magnet school that promoted critical and creative thinking. It has grown and become a stellar place. Children have the opportunity to learn in a way that interests them and pushes them forward as problem solving, creative thinking individuals.
- iii. Supports for Mental Health - there was a presentation at the DCOSC meeting by Claire Petersen who is a parent at RH. A summary of the presentation is available on the division website under the same link identified above. At a future parent council meeting, Claire may attend to share some of the available support. The Family Support Worker

designated for RH is Tanis Bailey. Taneill will post the applicable information on the parent council Facebook page.

- iv. Annual Education Report Results/Assurance - summary available online.
- v. The Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) Annual General Meeting/Conference will be held online, April 23-25, 2021.

5. New Business - Taneill Selinger and Karla Tweten

- a. Spring Fling - in a similar fashion to Winter Village, we are hoping to send home Spring Fling in a bag. It would include some of the favorite and fun activities and reimagined games. We don't have a budget yet for the same, but will need a planning committee. Pizza 73 offers the tenth hot lunch free. There was discussion that the tenth one might be well timed for June and could be a free treat for all students, supplemented by parent council.
- b. Staff Appreciation - due to Covid-19 restrictions, staff appreciation will be restricted so we will need to get creative. This will likely take place, alongside Student Led Conferences in March. Tara and Kim offered to help.
- c. Recruiting - Taneill has only a few months left on her term and we will be needing a new co-chair. As above, Khirsta and Debbie have agreed to continue looking after the hot lunch program. We are looking for volunteers to form a fundraising committee as well. The openings will be posted on the parent council social media. Anyone who is interested should contact Taneill or Karla. Positions will be voted in at our June AGM.
- d. Next meeting: the next meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday, March 3, 2021 at 7:30 pm. The meeting will be broadcast via Zoom.

6. Meeting Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8.25 pm by Taneill Selinger.