



Minutes

Date: Wednesday 5 November 2008 (6.15pm)

Present: Tim Holden (Chair)
K Robertson (Parent Member)
C Hall (Parent Member)
I Smith (Parent Member)
K White (Parent Member)
F MacKenzie (Parent Member)
A Greathead (Associate Parent Member)
J Craig (Head Teacher)
K Anderson (Teacher Member)
S Ingham (Teacher Member)
L McInnes (Teacher Member)
N Davidson (School Staff Member)
A McCulloch (Clerk)

Apologies: M Wyllie (Parent Member)
L Brown (Pupil Member)
G McDermott (Pupil Member)

1. Introducing new members

Following an election held on Wednesday 22 October, K White was elected onto the PSP as a parent member. Prior to the election K Robertson spoke to both standing candidates and an invitation to join the PSP as an associate parent member was made to both candidates dependent upon the outcome of the election.

C Hall commented that the electoral process ran smoothly and turnout increased from the previous year. However it was disappointing that this was only a small increase.

The PSP thanked C Hall and the school office for the organisation and support of the electoral process.

K Robertson proposed that A Greathead joined the meeting as an associate member. The motion was seconded by F MacKenzie and passed unanimously. Introductions were made by the PSP and both new members expressed their appreciation for the warm welcome and outlined their hopes for the PSP's future.

2. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 8 October were agreed

3. Matters Arising

Food Court

J Craig met again with K Milne (School's PPP Co-coordinator) and J Young (Depute Head Teacher) to discuss a solution to issues raised by a parent regarding the management of the food court. J Craig will be contacting the parent directly and putting a proposed solution forward to the school council.

Liability Insurance

It was clarified that membership of Scottish Parent Teacher Council provides liability insurance. The PSP discussed the merits of joining this independent Parent Council group. T Holden, I Smith and C Hall to look at this outwith the PSP meeting.

Annual Report

To be discussed in Head Teachers Report.

KASG

J Craig spoke to school staff regarding membership of KASG. M Duddin (KASG manager) looking for three new members. L McInnes to recommend NQT join KASG.

Budget

J Craig explained the school is still working on the budget in context with the school's business plan and feels it would be beneficial to the PSP if the presentation on the budget was delayed until December meeting. She remains positive on the school's response to the budget.

Curriculum for Excellence

J Craig reported the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) group are happy to make a presentation to the PSP. A date will be arranged in the spring term.

K Robertson enquired about the possibility of the CfE roadshow visiting the school. A McCulloch to pass on request to V McIntyre.

STACS

J Craig reported STACS (attainment website) is now live. C Sutherland (Head Teacher, North Berwick High School) is to be invited to speak to the PSP on this. A date will be arranged in the spring term

Internet Issues

The lesson filmed and placed on YouTube has now been removed and the pupils involved identified and disciplined. The staff member involved was very upset by the incident and has received an apology from the pupils involved. L McInnes reported that the pupil body are largely aware the school deals with all incidents of this nature robustly.

J Craig reported that following this incident the school are currently dealing with other issues regarding pupils non-school use of the internet.

4. Mail

None received

5. Action Plan

HAGS

The action group met D Ledingham (Acting Director of Education and Children's Services, East Lothian Council) regarding roll capping. F MacKenzie to provide a note of the meeting.

A Freedom of Information request has been made regarding pupil placement requests and reasoning behind decisions made regarding places. This is due to be responded to by 2 November. HAGS will feed into ELACP.

F MacKenzie and I Smith met with Iain Gray MSP to discuss their work.

The group have started work on a response to ELC's budget consultation and they welcome this opportunity to work with the council.

A letter had been drafted to the Information Commissioner regarding issues on how the original FOI request was dealt with. D Ledingham is currently looking at this and will meet with the group to discuss.

The group now have a contact dealing with public relations and are looking to get a press release together with a view to publication on 7 November.

I Smith agreed to be the principal contact between the PSP and the press.

K Robertson and I Smith are due to meet with Provost Sheena Richardson and Cllr Tom Trotter on 12 November.

It was noted that this was the third consecutive PSP meeting with no council attendees.

Communications

The PSP discussed the need to communicate to the wider parent body.

6. Chairperson's Report

The PSP discussed issues raised by T Holden in an email to J Craig. J Craig explained the falling school roll had led to some staff being asked if they would like to reduce their working hours and a surplus staff member had moved to Musselburgh Grammar School. This has not resulted in cuts in classes. Efficiency savings have been made by not replacing staff who had retired. These staff members would not necessarily have been replaced as department structures change. The school are now looking at efficiency savings rather than budget cuts and are looking at doing things better. She warned that efficiency savings would be tougher to make next year but all options are being explored and the school will move forward. I Smith asked for details of how the budget cuts are affecting the school.

Concerns were raised over instability in the Biology dept as the Head of dept is due to retire at Christmas. J Craig indicated that three very able internal candidates had applied for the post

and the knock on effect would be managed. She confirmed that the school would continue to have a subject specialist in post.

7. Head Teachers Report

Staffing

L Jones and S Muirhead are still on maternity leave. J Taylor on paternity leave from 3 November.

Angela Legatt joined the school 20 October.

Kath Anderson has been appointed to the acting post of Principal Teacher (Curriculum) Social Subjects.

Budget

J Craig hopes to present on the Budget at the next meeting.

Annual Report

J Craig spoke to the report and offered to provide more information should the PSP require it. PSP to study report and bring questions to next meeting. A copy will be made available for the school website.

Events that have taken place

- P7 Evening: Thursday 9 October
- Inter-house Games: 9/10 October
- S4 Parents' Consultation Evening: 23 October
- Evaluation Visit: 27 October
- 'Study Skills' Assemblies
- 'Wear it Pink' Day: 31 October
- Cadet Ceilidh: 31 October

Forthcoming Events

- Higher Drama Performance: 5/6 November
- S4 Prelims: 6-21 November
- S1 Parents' Consultation Evening: 10 November
- Remembrance Day assemblies: 11 November
- Knox News Deadline: 21 November
- S4 Work Experience: 24-28 November
- Junior Dance: 2 December
- S5/6 Parents' Consultation Evening: 9 December
- Senior Dance: 11 December
- Christmas Concert: 17 December
- Last day of term: 19 December
- Spring Term: 5 January 2009

ICT

Continued problems have affected the production of the S1 Progress Reports.

J Craig and N Davidson left the meeting

8. Teacher Members Report

Nothing to report.

9. Support Staff Members Report

Nothing to report.

10. Parents' Matters

F MacKenzie raised the issue of working with the school and school pupils to produce a response to ELC budget consultation. She opined that a response directly from the pupils would be hard hitting. S Ingham and L McInnes stated their view that this would be difficult to manage, would put pressure on pupils at an important time in their school career and the pupils were largely protected from financial worries. They did however agree to run this request past J Craig.

11. Pupils' Matters

The Head Boy and Head Girl are now aware of meeting dates and will attend where possible.

12. Any Other Business

C Hall asked about sports teams and whether events outside the school were curtailed by a lack of transport. S Ingham replied that while transport costs had increased in the current financial climate a school team would never be prevented from progressing through a competition. C Hall then raised the question of parents assisting with transport. S Ingham explained that it may be possible if parents are disclosure checked though this was an expensive process. F MacKenzie and C Hall offered to put out an invitation for help with sports for S Ingham to include in Knox News.

The Teacher Members and Clerk then left the meeting. The Parent Members then held a closed discussion on the roles of HAGS and ELAPC.

13. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 10 December 2008, 6.15pm

Signed:

Chair: _____ Date: _____

Clerk: _____ Date: _____