

# Knox Academy

## *Parent School Partnership*



## Minutes

Date: Wednesday 4 February 2009 (6.15pm)

Present: Tim Holden (Chair)  
K Robertson (Parent Member)  
C Hall (Parent Member)  
K White (Parent Member)  
F MacKenzie (Parent Member)  
I Smith (Parent Member)  
M Wyllie (Parent Member)  
A McCulloch (Clerk)

Apologies: 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)  
L Brown (Pupil Member)  
G McDermott (Pupil Member)

---

### 1. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 10 December were agreed subject to clarification on a point raised on the *Staffing* section of the Head Teachers.

## **2. Matters Arising and Mail Received**

Liability Insurance - T Holden reported that the offer of Liability Insurance with SPTC was not taken up.

Haddington Cluster Parent Council Meeting – An invitation was put forward to the PSP for members to attend the meeting and put forward questions to be included on the agenda. T Holden is to attend on behalf of the PSP and F MacKenzie offered to attend if she could.

Backchat – the PSP received the SPTC Newsletter

Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) – the PSP received an email regarding the date of an extra in-service day for school staff as part of the development of CfE.

Central Committee for Education – the latest update was received.

You Pay, Now Have Your Say – No response from David Spilsbury (ELC) has been received - T Holden to chase up.

## **3. Chairperson's Report and Action Plan**

### HAGS / ELAPC

#### ELAPC

Two emails were sent from ELAPC to the PSP. A McCulloch redistributed the emails.

K Robertson and I Smith worked as part of a sub-group which submitted a response to ELC's You Pay, Now Have Your Say consultation and requested a meeting with the Council Leader, Deputy Leader and Convenor of Education. The meeting took place on 26 January. ELAPC also submitted two requests under the Freedom of Information Act, one on the levels of efficiency savings and another for data on school budget figures.

K Robertson reported the figures received from ELC were from October/ November and not the current figures. This was raised with the councillors at meeting. He remarked that though ELAPC had researched the matters for discussion and had good information, his impression was that the arguments offered by ELAPC fell on stony ground. Following a frank discussion ELAPC agreed with the councillors present that they would come to a form of words and put out a public statement

ELAPC are now awaiting the outcome of budget meeting on 10 February.

I Smith expressed his feeling that ELACP needs to campaign elsewhere

Knox PSP thanked K Robertson and I Smith for the information and unanimously agreed to continue to support ELAPC.

### Communications

C Hall continues to do lots of work but may need help from other willing members of the PSP. The floor was opened for discussion on ideas to improve communication.

K White wants to see if anything can be done to improve communication with parents. She expressed her opinion that there is a mass of information available, lots on the school website but not many people look at this. She went on to explain that the PSP still misses 70% of households and a possible way forward is to send out more updates and publicise what information the PSP can provide to parents.

T Holden and K White agreed to meet to discuss these ideas. T Holden will also ask J Craig for a list of events parents attend.

T Holden to look at the feasibility of producing a journalistic newsletter following PSP meetings.

The PSP agreed to see if it can work with the Pupil Council to get them to sign parents up.

The discussion then turned to the Curriculum. C Hall has previously spoken to a teacher and acquired links to websites to let parents know what their children are being taught and how they can help them. The PSP discussed whether they should approach Heads of Departments to see if they are able and willing to put out something about what the subject entails.

C Hall expressed his opinion that parents should be able to influence curriculum and ask what is being taught to try and ensure teachers have some accountability towards parents.

The PSP concluded that the best way to approach curriculum matters is by faculty – Numeracy, Science, Social Science, Modern Languages and Expressive Arts. T Holden agreed to liaise with J Craig regarding curriculum awareness and try and arrange a parent representative meeting with a faculty head once a term.

The PSP decided that a regular slot for a Curriculum Update should be a standing item on the agenda going forward and faculty heads will be invited to present to the PSP.

## **4. Head Teachers Report**

### Staffing

Maternity leave: L Jones and S Muirhead still on maternity leave.  
LTA: K Hossack (cover: D Landells).

Acting Principal Teacher, Guidance: R Greenaway  
S Illingworth has joined the school as Principal Teacher: Curriculum (Social Subjects).

### Budget

Figures for the end of the financial year are being finalised. Given the vagaries of the budget for next year, (draft budget papers for 2009-10 should be in schools in the next couple of days), we hope to carry forward the maximum sum allowed to help balance any savings required. These monies have emerged from SQA payments, staffing claims, cost cutting etc.

### Session 2009 - 10

Staffing analysis is underway but this is difficult, as the roll has not been confirmed. Aim is to offer the full range of courses but we will have to be vigilant about the numbers in the class sets.

### Adverse Weather

'Bus pupils' had to leave school at 12.30pm on Monday 2 February, although the school remained open as usual. One prelim was affected and will be re-arranged.

### Events that have taken place

- Senior Dance: 11 December
- Christmas Concert: 17 December
- Last day of term: 19 December, included the S6 pantomime
- Spring term: began 5 January 2009
- S6 Pantomime evening performance: 8 January
- Cadets Centenary Reception: 13 January
- S3 Parents Consultation: 21 January
- East Linton Parents Evening: 22 January

### Forthcoming Events

- S5/6 Prelims: 26 January – 6 February
- New York Trip: 9 – 14 February
- February Holiday: 9 – 14 February
- In-service day: 16 February
- Knox News Deadline: 20 February

Staffing analysis – clarification from J Craig.  
T Holden to ask J Craig for an update on the management structure.  
PSP agreed to look at contributing an article to Knox News.

## **5. Parents' Matters**

I Smith raised concerns on the availability of teaching materials outwith the school. The teaching of some subjects is done with booklets handed out in class. The booklets are then collected at the end of the class and pupils have no access to notes to assist them with homework. I Smith feels the content of the booklets should be made available online or the pupils allowed to take them home. Failing this, parents should be informed of what book or books they can use. The PSP agreed to raise this with J Craig. C Hall offered to write to J Craig and see if it would be possible to scan two or three booklets and put them on the website.

T Holden is to try and arrange a meeting with J Craig to cover some questions.

F MacKenzie reported she had received a response on an FOI request on requests for pupil placement into Knox Academy.

M Wyllie attended a child protection meeting and reported social networking sites are now being clamped down on.

## **6. Date of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 4 March 2009, 6.15pm

Signed:

Chair: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Clerk: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_