

Elizabeth Simcoe Jr. Public School School Council Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 6, 2025 – Online | 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm

Attendance:

Amanda Formentini, Amanda Young, Chantal Elward, Elizabeth Hyland, Julia Lakats, Katie Eley, Kim Rogers, Megan Fitzpatrick, Raluca Kostovski, Rebecca Viapiana, Robyn Bluestein, Ruth Coulter, Stephan Psarros, Tammy Hewitt, Tricia Davey

Regrets:

Beth Brooks, Carolyn Tyson, Jesse Chao, Sharmila Sivasankaran, Stuart Rogers

1. Welcome & Land Acknowledgement

- Katie

- The TDSB Land Acknowledgement was read: *We acknowledge we are hosted on the lands of the Mississaugas of the Anishinaabe, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the Wendat. We also recognize the enduring presence of all First Nations, Métis and the Inuit peoples.*

2. Approval of Minutes

- Katie

- Megan moved to approve the February 13, 2025 Minutes, seconded by Chantal thereby passing the motion.

3. Principal's Report

- Ruth

Pancake Breakfast Recap

- Ruth thanked the council for organizing the pancake breakfast. Students had a great time.

Skating

- The event faced some logistical challenges, particularly with coordination and softening of ice, but overall, most classes had the opportunity to participate.

Family Games Night: Scheduled for April 24th

- A variety of games will be rented for the event, including a large-scale Connect 4.
- The event will provide a fun and interactive environment where students will have the chance to play against parents and staff. This will foster community engagement and create a memorable experience for all attendees.
- A robotics presentation will be organized to showcase how parent contributions have funded the robotics program. The presentation will demonstrate how students are benefiting from the program and provide insight into the impact of the funds.

Staffing and Enrollment Numbers:

- Projected enrollment numbers for the school are as follows:
 - 290 students (297.5-298 students expected)
 - Current number of students: 289
- There may be a slight chance of an additional half position being added to maintain current staffing levels.
- As of now, the staffing situation remains at 17 teachers, with no immediate surplus or shortages anticipated.
- There was a discussion regarding whether teachers might have lower seniority roles, but it is not expected to result in a surplus of staff.

Discussion on Dash

- Grade 6 students will be trained on how to use Dash robots. The Grade 6 students will then teach the rest of the classes how to use the robots, allowing for peer-to-peer learning and engagement.
- A total of 5 additional robots will be ordered, bringing the total number of robots to 7. These robots will be used for coding and educational activities with the students.
- A budget of \$1,300 is being proposed for the purchase of the robots. A vote is required to approve this budget.

4. Sunshine Childcare Report

– Kim

March Break

- Students will participate in a number of field trips including Bruce Mills, Treetop Village, and Spring Fest at Markham Fair.

Enrollment

- Availability for before and after-school spots for school-age children. Preschool and Kindergarten programs are at full capacity.

Playocity

- The preschool children have been participating in a "Playocity" program over the past three weeks on Thursday morning featuring dancing, singing, and yoga. The program features themes like "The Lion King," which has been a hit with some children.
- Feedback from preschool families will be solicited to gauge interest in continuing the program after the ten-week session ends.
- The program provides a mix of participation and observation, allowing children to engage in activities at their own comfort level. Teachers also enjoy the program, as it provides a fun, low-pressure environment for the children.

5. Treasurer's Report

– Megan

- Not all classes have maxed out their \$300 budget for Class Room Enrichment, so Megan will reach out to those who have not.
- Pancake Day was budgeted \$200 and came in with \$173.42.
- A new purchase was made for the Chrome cart.
- Caretaker for Movie Night - The permit was approved, but there was no response to the inquiry regarding the caretaker's pay. The caretaker's cost would likely be about \$1,000.

Action Items:

- Ruth to follow up on caretaker for movie night
- Megan to remind teachers about unclaimed classroom budget.

Cedar Drive Visit

- Faye, a parent at Simcoe and the new Vice Principal from Cedar Drive shared feedback regarding a donation that was previously contributed.
- The feedback highlighted that Cedar Drive is a wonderful but very needy school. They currently have limited funds, around \$1,500.
- The acting Vice Principal shared that the school lacks the resources and skills to effectively manage and secure additional funding, which led to missing out on \$2,500 in potential grants.
- A donation from the Simcoe School Council allowed the purchase of an Indigenous book about the importance of valuing water, which was given to each classroom.

- In addition to monetary donations, she suggested that offering help with grant writing could be beneficial for the school, as they lack the expertise in this area.

Events and Activities Update

Pancake Breakfast Recap

- Elizabeth

- The Pancake Breakfast event went smoothly and was well-organized. The actual process of pancake making and serving ran efficiently, and kids had a lot of fun.
- Dietary Restrictions: Emails were sent to inform the community about dietary options ahead of time. There were a few dietary restrictions to accommodate, but the team managed these well.
- Volunteer Support: The volunteers were highlighted for their excellent support throughout the event. Special thanks by Julia were extended to Amanda F and Elizabeth, who did a phenomenal job in both the gym and other areas. Their efficiency and effectiveness made the event run seamlessly.
- Staff Appreciation: The staff expressed their gratitude for the efforts made by the volunteers. The event was considered a success, with positive feedback on how well it was organized and executed.
- Supplies and Donations: The only additional need was some dish towels, as there was a lot of washing and drying to be done.

Puppets Cool

- Rebecca

- A proposed puppet workshop was discussed, specifically for grades 1-3. A total of 5 classes at \$25 per child. Total cost less than \$2500. The workshop includes a lesson on puppets, where the instructor teaches students how to make a puppet, tells stories with it, and allows students to take their puppet home.
- The workshop is estimated for 25 students per class, with a slight reduction as class sizes are just under 25.

Action Items:

- The team will vote on whether to proceed with the workshop and finalize details.

Rocks and Rings

- Katie

- The Rocks and Rings event is scheduled for April 23rd and 24th.
- There is a school event scheduled for the 24th, but there are no conflicts expected as both events should be manageable.

Guildwood News and Views

- Robyn

- Discussion about photos to be used for Fun Fair. It was confirmed that photos can be used as long as no students are front and center in the images. A selection of generic photos, including some with bouncy castles, was shared for potential use.

NitWits

- Katie

- The Nitwits event is scheduled for March 21st. It is a regular annual occurrence twice a year. The timing is considered ideal for the students following the spring break.

Act on Litter Clean Up

- Amanda Y

- Students participating in a litter clean-up on school grounds. The event is planned around Earth Day, which falls on April 22nd. However, some challenges were raised, including the fact that the school grounds are generally very clean, and there may not be enough litter to collect.
- The event would involve teachers organizing classes to clean up, with students provided gloves and garbage bags for safety.
- It was noted that volunteers would help organize the necessary supplies, and there would be a safety talk regarding what to avoid (e.g., dog waste).
- Tentatively scheduled for April 22nd (Tuesday), right after Easter Monday

Action Items:

- Finalize plans for Act on Litter event (April 22) and organize necessary supplies (gloves, garbage bags).

Earthly Change Fundraising

- Amanda Fortier

- Amanda, a local entrepreneur and founder of Earthly Change, introduced herself. Earthly Change focuses on providing eco-friendly and sustainable products.
- The company partners with local businesses to provide these products, including household essentials and personal care items.
- Earthly Change was founded in 2022 as an online marketplace aimed at helping local vendors recover from COVID-19 by offering sustainable products to the community.
- Amanda shared that she won a business grant that provided time with a business advisor, which helped her refine her business plan.
- Shared two fundraising programs:
 1. **Virtual Fundraiser:** The school can promote a fundraising period (e.g., three weeks), and 15% of the sales are donated back to the school.
 2. **In-person Fun Fair:** Earthly Change sets up a booth at the school, and 15% of the sales from that day are donated back to the school.
- Products sold at retail value with no markup for donation. The 15% donation comes from Amanda's share of the profit.
- The program allows for free shipping for Guildwood-based families.
- Fundraisers can be set up with the school name at checkout to track the donations. For in-person events, Earthly Change would bring the products to display.
- Fundraisers can be set for any period, but typically they run in October and around Earth Month (April).
- The products are primarily eco-friendly items that customers would regularly purchase, such as shampoo, garbage bags, and tissues, making them easy to sell.
- Allows for custom packaging with the school or organization's name, making the fundraiser feel more personalized.
- Mentioned plans to expand the product range, including larger trash bags and specialized bags for dog waste.
- It was suggested that Amanda investigate eco-certified schools to form a partnership with them, as they may be more aligned with Earthly Change's values.

Staff Appreciation

- Amanda Y

- The event is planned to coincide with Education Week and will involve parents showing appreciation for the educators at Simcoe.
- Ruth highlighted a conflict with May 7th, as it coincides with Birchmount Day and several staff members will be at the track and field event. Amanda F suggested that either Monday or Friday might be more convenient for volunteers as they are more likely to work from home on these days. The event will take place likely May 9th.
- Event will be a large potluck, where parents contribute, and staff appreciate the thoughtful donations.
- The group discussed asking for people to sign up to volunteer for the event. There will be a call for monetary donations, which will be used to purchase food, such as small gift cards for teacher gifts.
- It was suggested that a volunteer sign-up sheet be prepared in advance.

Action Items:

- Additional details on donations, volunteer coordination, and finalizing the event dates will be reviewed as the date approaches.

- Friday after long weekend in May purchase freezies and sell them for 50 cents or \$1. Council member had a lead for donations for freezies.

Action Items:

- More discussion to happen at next council meeting.

Fundraising for Sister School

- Julia

- As there were mixed feelings from members on council about how and if we should support a sister school, Katie will draft some vote questions after the meeting and send to voting members to gather their feedback.

Games Night

- Katie/Ruth

- Ruth proposed organizing a Family Games Night, noting the importance of involving children in the event to engage parents.
- The idea was to rent large games such as Connect Four, Jenga, and others, costing around \$260, as sourced by Sharon Noble, one of the teachers. The rental would save on storage and purchasing costs.
- A question was raised about whether the vendor is board approved. Clarified that while the vendor is not officially board-approved, the games have been successfully used at other school events without issues. It was agreed that, based on past positive experiences, the event could proceed with this vendor.
- Financial Update: The Treasurer provided an update on the current financial status, stating there is approximately \$9,000 available in the bank, after covering already-approved expenses. It was clarified that this balance does not include funds raised from recent events like Movie Night.
- **Vote Results: A motion was made and passed to approve the budget for the event, with a vote tally of 11 in favor, 0 opposed.**

Sprit Wear Update

- Megan

- We are \$17.00 shy of reaching the \$1,000 threshold.
- It was noted that a number of items were out of stock, such as shorts.
- It was confirmed that it takes approximately 2 weeks for shipping.
- It was reaffirmed that every Pizza Day is Simcoe Spirit Day.

Movie Night

- Katie

- Date set for the 28th, 6:30 PM. Price set at \$7 per person. Snacks and drinks will be available for \$1. Square reader will be set up for payments.
- Primary: Moana 2. Junior: Yes Day
- Discussion on door logistics:
 - Primary grades to exit via a dedicated door near the primary gym.
 - Junior grades should use the main doors for pick-up.
 - Need to revisit how pick-up is managed for families with children in multiple grades.
- Popcorn discussion: Option to purchase pre-packed bags or buy a popcorn machine. The pre-packed bags are more cost-effective and easier to manage.

Action Items:

- Set up an online link for cash payments and finalize snack orders.
- Investigate logistics for movie night pick-up.

Fun Fair

- Robyn / Chantal

- The Fun Fair sponsorship update discussed, with a target of \$6,000.
- A question was raised regarding a potential sponsor bring dogs and it was clarified that pets are not allowed on school property and is a liability.
- Sponsorship proposal discussed, including potential sponsors like Westfield Soccer.
- Next meeting: virtual either March 18 or 20th

Action Items:

- Chantel to confirm and notify members of next Fun Fair meeting.

Additional Items

- Little Yogis: A question was raised about feedback on the event. Teachers provided mixed feedback on the yoga program: Some felt it could be more in-depth, while others were happy with it. A suggestion made to tailor the program by grade level.
- Scientist in the Classroom: Further discussion around whether it met the expectations for different age groups. One parent felt the activities were not engaging enough for certain grades, while others were very pleased.
- Kindergarten Playground and Facilities Update: A request made for potential renovations to the kindergarten play area. Drainage issues have been a concern for the past two years, and the request for repairs is in the works. No action can be taken until the drainage issue is resolved, expected around May.
- A discussion around washroom tiles—uric acid buildup has been causing cleaning challenges. The proposal is to replace old tiles with ceramic tiles, which are easier to clean.

Next Meeting: April 10, 2025 at 6:30pm - Library

Elizabeth Simcoe School Council Income/Expenses YTD

Prepared on March 6, 2025 by Megan Fitzpatrick

	Income	Expenses	Profit / Loss	NOTES
Welcome BBQ	\$ 3,076.50	\$ (3,202.98)	\$ (126.48)	Cheque issued; Cash Online paid out.
Nitwits		\$ (791.00)	\$ (791.00)	Cheque issued
LEGO Robotics Purchase		\$ (7,103.18)	\$ (7,103.18)	Cheque issued
		\$ (3,943.70)	\$ (3,943.70)	Cheque issued by Mary- from donation account
Youthspeak		\$ (300.00)	\$ (300.00)	Cheque issued
Cross Country Bus		\$ (333.35)	\$ (333.35)	Cheque issued
Cross Country Fees		\$ (100.00)	\$ (100.00)	Cheque issued
Simcoe Tshirts		\$ (130.00)	\$ (130.00)	Cheque issued
Cedar Drive Donation		\$ (850.00)	\$ (850.00)	Cheque issued
Cheque Re-issue		\$ (271.83)	\$ (271.83)	Carry over from previous budget- cheques from old account not cashed
Bank Fees	\$ 2.00	\$ (32.00)	\$ (30.00)	Alterna fee \$15 x2 (Aug/Sept), CIBC fee \$6 (Sept-reversed), \$2 transfer fee.
Classroom Enrichment		\$ (4,591.94)	\$ (4,591.94)	17 classrooms have submitted
Pizza Lunch	\$ 16,188.50	\$ (3,875.28)	\$ 12,313.22	Cheque issued; Cash Online paid out.
Mabel's Label	\$ 52.97	\$ -	\$ 52.97	Deposited
Scientist in the School		\$ (3,237.00)	\$ (3,237.00)	Cheque issued
Holiday Concert Raffle	\$ 605.00	\$ (605.00)	\$ -	Donation- Cheque issued
Krispy Kreme	\$ 1,980.00	\$ (1,320.00)	\$ 660.00	Cheque issued; Cash Online paid out.
Little Yogis		\$ (678.00)	\$ (678.00)	Cheque issued
Chromebook Cart		\$ (1,789.55)	\$ (1,789.55)	Cheque issued
Fun Fair- Main Event		\$ (2,529.90)	\$ (2,529.90)	Cheque issued
TOTAL	\$ 21,904.97	\$ (35,684.71)	\$ (13,779.74)	
Donations Funds (TDSB)	\$5,936.69			Funds collected from Fun Fair Sponsorships held in school account
Starting Bank Balance	\$25,860.02	August 1 2024		
TOTAL STARTING FUNDS	\$31,796.71			
Total In YTD	\$21,904.97			
Total Paid out YTD	-\$35,684.71			
Donations Funds (TDSB)	\$0.00			Used for Main Event Deposit for 2025 Fun Fair
Current Bank Balance	\$17,094.20			After all above listed transactions are completed; per master spreadsheet
FUNDS AVAILABLE	\$17,094.20			

Elizabeth Simcoe School Council APPROVED PLANNED/PROJECTED Income/Expenses YTD

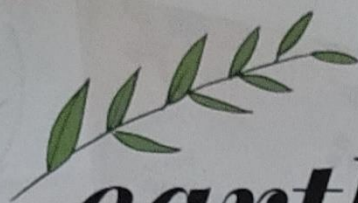
	Income	Expenses	Profit / Loss	NOTES
Classroom Enrichment		\$ (808.06)		1 staff left + surplus of unclaimed total available.
Grade 6 Graduation		\$ (2,500.00)		Amount not verified- TBD; historical allotment as placeholder
Admin Expenses		\$ (40.00)		Domain Renewal (\$30) ; postage stamps
Pizza Lunch		\$ (2,600.00)		Expenses for remaining 4 pizza lunches
Pancake Breakfast		\$ (200.00)		Approved budget (previous year \$119)
Nitwits		\$ (800.00)		Approved budget (previous invoice \$791)
Movie Night		\$ (1,000.00)		Expense & Extra Caretaker? ESTIMATION
	\$ -	\$ (7,948.06)	\$ -	
Current Bank Balance	\$17,094.20			
Projected Total In YTD	\$0.00			
Projected Total Paid out YTD	-\$7,948.06			
Projected Bank Balance	\$9,146.14			

FUN FAIR BUDGET

	Income	Expenses	Profit / Loss	NOTES
Main Event- Inflatables		\$ (4,940.00)	\$ (4,940.00)	Invoiced Total
DJ		\$ (734.50)	\$ (734.50)	QUOTE
Signage		\$ (800.00)	\$ (800.00)	ESTIMATE
Drinks/Pizza		\$ (1,400.00)	\$ (1,400.00)	ESTIMATE
Face Paint		\$ (400.00)	\$ (400.00)	ESTIMATE
Miscellaneous		\$ (500.00)	\$ (500.00)	ESTIMATE
Sponsorships	\$ 3,750.00		\$ 3,750.00	ACTUAL RECEIVED TO DATE
	\$ 3,750.00	\$ (8,774.50)	\$ (5,024.50)	



Approved!



earthly.

We have created a fundraising program where local families can support their school, small businesses and the environment at the same time.



15% of purchases will be donated back to your school.



**All of our items are sold at the standard retail prices.
We never mark up to compensate for the donation.**



Items on our marketplace are from local, eco friendly and sustainable vendors.



We ship directly to the customer, no volunteers are needed from your school.



We offer a wide variety of products, there is something for every household.

We can offer a one time virtual event, a month over month program or a booth at a fun fair style event. If you think that our programs would be a good fit for your fundraising needs, and would like more information please contact us or visit our profile on the TDSB fundraising vendor list.

www.earthlychange.ca

earthlychangeinc@gmail.com

Follow us on instagram @earthly.change