

FOREST HILL PUBLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE 2013-14 SCHOOL YEAR

Dear Parents and School Community,

As we all look forward to the wonderful summer break, the Forest Hill Public School Council submit to you, the parents of Forest Hill, our Annual Report, outlining the activities of this year's Council.

The 2013-14 FHPS Council was comprised of a record number of parent members (48), two administrative staff (Principal Deb Russell and Vice-Principal Sean Phillips) and two teacher representatives (Rob Norris & Allyson Desormeaux). An official election was held for the first time in the history of the school. The only contested position was Chair, and the winners were Susan Anderson and Debra Kapy, who resumed the roles of Co-Chairs, after stepping down last year. For the 4th consecutive year, the Secretary position was filled by Patti Joslin.

Angie Swain and Mary Jane Ulens worked together to Co-Chair the Fundraising Committee, comprised of 10 members, which operated separate from Council for the 2nd year. This arrangement functions very well, allowing for more efficient council meetings and a stronger fundraising committee, so will continue into next year. Council and Fundraising meetings are open to all, and parents are invited and encouraged to attend and participate in these meetings, as members, or on an informal basis. Council meetings are held on the first Monday of the month and Fundraising meetings usually are scheduled for the last Monday of the month. This allows the fundraising committee to be able to provide their progress report/update at the council meeting.

The focus of our monthly Council meetings, the month, is to provide a forum for the exchange of information between school representatives and parents. It is essential that there is open communication between all parties for the betterment of all students.

All School Councils in Simcoe County have now been assigned official SCDSB email addresses. Forest Hill's is councilchairfor@scdsb.on.ca. It is to be used for council correspondence and as a point of contact for our parent community. This email will remain constant for future councils and will be transferred to the new Chairs via SCDSB assigned passwords each year.

As a result, communication between council members was improved and minutes, agendas and meeting notifications were forwarded in a timely manner to all members and all meetings were well attended. The minutes and agendas from the School Council meetings are published on the school website, posted inside the school lobby as well as filed in the Council Minute Book which is stored in the office and available to all parents.

In addition, the Interested Parents Group continues to receive copies of all council correspondence via email. This group, which was originally created in 2010, gets smaller each year as more parents make use of the school website where all the council information can be found. It began with over 100 names, but now is comprised of only about 35 families. However, anyone who would like to receive the council correspondence and notifications directly to their inbox, is welcome to add their name to

that list. This is another way to ensure we are maximizing communication between council and our school families.

This year council had a parent member who regularly attended the PIC Meetings as well as other events, like the Circle of Learning, at the Board office and reported back to Council on those meetings. We would like to thank Jo-Ann Giorshev for her time and her updates.

In response to member requests, council reviewed and revised the FHPS Council By-laws to more accurately reflect the attitudes and opinions of the current membership to make Council more inviting and inclusive for all parents in the future. Comments, additions and deletions were submitted to the Chairs prior to the meeting, and the revised By-laws were reviewed, voted on and passed almost unanimously (18 to 1) at the April Meeting with no additional discussion/debate.

In keeping with our mission statement, "To Foster Partnerships that Enhance Student Achievement", the Council worked hand in hand with the Fundraising Committee, the Grade 8 Committee, as well as school Administration and Staff throughout the year on a variety of activities that funded a number of initiatives.

Highlights included the following events and activities:

- **Open House / Pizza Q:** An annual event in late September for parents to meet the teachers get a look at what their kids have been learning. Pizza and drinks sold during this dinner hour event.
- **Parent Engagement Grant:** As in past years, these funds (\$500) were used to help purchase agendas for students in grades 2 to 8.
- **Forest Hill Holiday Fayre:** Pre Christmas Craft Show and Sale with a Lunch Cafe. A first time event and a huge success with proceeds going to technology.
- **Basket Raffle:** The 2nd year for this much anticipated fundraiser which benefits athletics.
- **Water Bottles:** Sold throughout the year at the Open House, Holiday Fair and other events, with profits benefitting the library.
- **Dance-A-Thon:** A fun event for the whole school with proceeds benefitting technology.
- **Jump Rope for Heart:** An annual spring event to encourage physical activity and raise money for the Heart & Stroke Foundation.
- **Hot Dog Lunch:** This program increased in popularity and doubled its revenue over last year. Proceeds go towards technology.
- **Pizza Lunch:** Proceeds support athletics.
- **Milk Program:** Sold at near cost as a important nutritional supplement.
- **Pita Lunch:** Proceeds support the Grade 7 trips.
- **Burrito Lunch & Applebee's Pancake Breakfast:** Proceeds support the Grade 8 Graduation activities.
- **Used Cell Phone Collection:** Proceeds to fund the photo booth at Graduation.
- **Lego Movie Screening:** A big hit with the kids, proceeds to help subsidize the Grade 8 trip to Ottawa This event was so successful, that the Grade 8 Parent Committee decided to donate half their proceeds to help support Arts within the school.

- **QSP Magazine Sales:** On the decline due to on-line availability of magazines but still viable. Proceeds to technology.
- **Wendy's Night:** 10% of sales were donated back to the school on 2 very successful Forest Hill nights at Wendy's.
- **Labels Labels:** Available via link on the school website. Proceeds to General School Needs.
- **Fundscrip (Gift card program):** Available via link on the school website. Proceeds to Student Achievement.
- **Birthday Book Club:** This new initiative that benefits the library was launched in 2014 and is expected to run indefinitely.
- **Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grant:** For the 4th consecutive year, Forest Hill Council applied for and was awarded the PRO Grant of \$1,000 for the 2013-14 school year. As the name implies, this money is to be used to "reach out" to parents. This year the focus was on Mental Health and included presentations for both students and parents, as well additions of resource materials to our parent lending library.
- **Midhurst Mile:** This annual spring event was much expanded and well attended. It included a Bike Rodeo and a BBQ and there was lots of community involvement. Proceeds go to athletics.
- **Chicken on the Run:** A new fundraiser, launched at the Midhurst Mile just in time for BBQ season, this company is owned by one of our parents and is expected to be very popular.
- **Spiritwear:** A new program introduced in May, that will be repeated in September.
- **TV in the front foyer:** Funded by the activities of the 2011-12 Council but not installed until 2013, the TV provides information updates and a lovely "scrapbook" of photos of our children participating in a variety of activities, for the entertainment of anyone waiting in the foyer.
- **School Photos:** Council approved a new company, Edge Imaging, to take over the annual school pictures. They were hired to take the kindergarten graduation photos this year. Edge Imaging also re-took the 2013-14 class photos this spring at no additional cost to the school.
- **Global Action:** Raises funds to support a school in Bungkulung, India through various student driven activities like the Valentine Hearts and the White Elephant Sale, as well collecting donations for the local food banks.
- **Character Education Assemblies:** Held throughout the year to highlight the many positive character traits of our students.

As a result of all these activities the school was able to support academic achievement through the following purchases:

- 15 iPads, along with cases and many academic apps to support grades 1, 3 and 6.
- Short Throw projector for the Leadership Assemblies in the gym
- Kindergarten and Grade 1 take home books
- Purchase and installation of Smart Projectors for classrooms
- Supported many field trips (*for those that required financial assistance*)
- EQAO support packages
- Athletic supplies
- Primary Music Resources

There is still money in the account, and we will be ordering more iPads for the classrooms and books to support reading at the primary level.

2013-14 Past Meeting Dates: The Council held 5 meetings during the 2013-14 school year: October 7, November 4, February 3, April 7, and June 2. One meeting (January 6) was cancelled due to weather as per SCDSB directive. The originally scheduled May meeting was re-assigned as the Pro Grant Presentation date.

2014-15 Future Meeting Dates: For next year Council meetings are tentatively scheduled for September 8 (*to plan September Open House*), October 6, November 3, January 5, February 2, April 6, May 4 and June 1.

Thank you to all School Council Members for their commitment to and involvement in Forest Hill Public School – your efforts are appreciated by all. A special Thank You to Susan Anderson, whose youngest son graduates this year. Susan has been at Forest Hill for 17 years and has participated in almost every possible volunteer opportunity within the school. Her contribution has been incredible and we wish her all the best as she moves on to "high school"!

Sincerely yours,

Susan Anderson and Debra Kapy
Co-Chairs FHPS Council 2013-14

Note:

With Susan leaving the school this year and Debra planning to focus on other volunteer opportunities within the school next year, the council will be seeking new candidates for the chair positions. Interested council members should contact the principal, ideally before the end of this school year.