

New Horizons School Council

Meeting Agenda

December 6, 2023

Meeting Called to Order: 7:00PM

Meeting Adjourned: 9:17PM

Hybrid In-Person (New Horizons School) / Virtual Meeting

Attendees: Elizabeth Macve, Sarah-Jane Lovgren, Anita Sanderson, Rebecca Koziak, Ellen Hanna, Julie Jackson, Lori Vigfusson, Anne Servold, Amanda Bullion, Beverly Doucette, Andrea Emberley, Christine Grabill, Paul Jackson, Eeksha Kakkan, Shannon Kurie, Chelsee Ladouceur, Denette Leask, Leah McCoy, Angela Page, Carol Slukynski, Erin Spence-Berjian, Stacey Stang-Sass, Dianne Blanche Villacura

1. Meeting Called to Order: 7:00PM.

Elizabeth Macve as Meeting Chair.

2. Statement of Territorial Acknowledgement

The School Council of the New Horizons Charter School respectfully acknowledges that the land on which we meet is Treaty 6 territory, a traditional home, gathering place, and a travelling route for diverse Indigenous Peoples, including Cree, Saulteaux, Blackfoot, Nakota, Sioux, as well as the homeland of the Metis Nation. We recognize our responsibility as Treaty members and honour the heritage and gifts of the First Peoples of this land.

3. Adoption of Agenda

MOTION: Sarah-Jane Lovgren moved to adopt the Agenda as presented.

Seconded by Julie Jackson. Motion Carried.

4. Approval of Minutes

November 1, 2023

MOTION: Julie Jackson moved to adopt the Minutes as presented.

Seconded by Sarah-Jane Lovgren. Motion Carried.

5. Reports

5.1 Chair/Vice-Chair/Secretary Report

School Council was invited to provide a report to the Board at their November meeting. This was well received. Council is grateful to FANHS 'use of Casino funds for the purchase of the Meeting Owl technology to ensure Council, FANHS, and Board Meetings are all more accessible. Board Meetings are generally not welcoming as they are not meant as a space for engagement or

feedback, so the hybrid format will likely be more inclusive for those who wish to listen remotely.

5.2 Principal's Report

See attached.

5.3 Financial Officer's Report

Nothing to report.

5.4 FANHS Report

Report shared by Rebecca Koziak.

As you're aware, a memo was sent out last week stating that FANHS received resignation (Bylaw: 4.1 e) *Any Officer or Director may resign his/her position by providing written notice to any two (2) Officers.*) from our President. On behalf of the FANHS Executive, we would like to thank our outgoing President, Chelsea Ladouceur, for the time, thought, and care she invested into FANHS.

While School Council and FANHS have proven that there are many opportunities for successful collaboration, I would like to thank our SC colleagues for trusting that additional communication with regard to the changes in FANHS could not be addressed jointly with respect to the confidentiality agreement with New Horizons and matters specifically pertaining to FANHS.

What I can share is that FANHS is doing our best — with the information and resources that we have — to create a path forward which includes participation in education opportunities such as our attendance at a conference hosted by [Edmonton Chamber of Volunteer Organizations](#) — [Across the Board - A day for non-profit Board Members in Strathcona County](#) — advertised as an opportunity to "[d]iscover best practices and strategies that will strengthen your board — including how to recruit new volunteers and board members, how to get the most out of your board members and how to set your organization up for success." This year, we will also prioritize the review and update of Bylaws, Policies & Procedures, and Membership Form.

5.5 Communication Officer's Report

The School Council and FANHS Communication team has welcomed additional support as we work together to rejuvenate our social media platforms.

5.6 Committee Reports

(A) Halloween Dance Committee

Date: October 28, 2023

As mentioned in November, the dance was largely successful in bringing many families together for a fun-filled evening. The addition of the calm space in the Learning Commons and the online auction to include those who could not be physically present were welcome additions and will be considered as standing features for next year's event. All items were received by raffle and auction winners on schedule.

(B) Spring Carnival Committee

Date: May 25, 2024

Nothing to report. Additional engagement will be sought early 2024.

(C) Grant Committee

The 2023 - 24 S'Cool Life Fund Grant Application was approved for \$2,837.94. This will support the Music program with the purchase of a drum set and table top gong.

The application has been submitted for the [MusiCounts Band Aid Program](#) Grant. The MusiCounts Band Aid Program provides under-resourced schools with grants of up to \$20,000 worth of musical instruments, equipment, and resources. This grant has been applied for with support from Mrs. Zelada, Ms. Vigfusson, and School Council Chair with instrument maintenance in mind.

The [TD Friends of the Environment Grant](#) is next in the lineup with a deadline of January 15, 2024. This application and project will be a collaboration between Ms. Stephens, Ms. Mackinnon, and Ms. Olfert.

(D) Book Club Committee

Date: Ongoing

Dr. Farha Shariff and Sarah Adomako-Ansah have been invited to collaborate on a Book Club proposal in consultation with Ms. Vigfusson. As discussed at November's meeting, Dr. Farha Shariff is a teacher educator — including a consultant at NHS — and advisor to the Office of the Dean (U of A) on equity, diversity and inclusivity (EDI) and racial justice in the Faculty of Education. is an Alberta teacher, co-founder of the Black Teachers Association of Alberta, was the 2021–2023 Educator in Residence at Canadian Museum for Human Rights (CMHR), and is now an Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism (EDIAR) Consultant at ECSD. We anticipate a date in early 2024.

(E) Parent Link

This Committee will be renamed so as not to align with the former name of what is now Strathcona County Family Resource Network. Heavy consultation will take place with Ms. Vigfusson — who is currently in the process of researching the best practices of classroom parents — to determine the most suitable development of this project. With unanimous consent, School Council has established a Committee with respect to this project. Details to come.

6. Motion to Accept Reports

MOTION: Sarah-Jane Lovgren moved to accept reports as presented.

Seconded by Julie Jackson. Motion Carried.

7. New Business

7.1 Funding Requests

Ms. Araujo has requested funds from School Support — Staff Support (Staff Appreciation) in the amount of \$330 for the Leadership students to offer a Gratitude Cart for staff as we enter the holiday season. This initiative would be led by the students with her guidance and would include a token of appreciation to all 40 staff members as listed on the website.

**MOTION: Julie Jackson moved to approve the funds disbursement as presented.
Seconded by Sarah-Jane Lovgren. Motion Carried.**

Ms. Servold has requested funds from School Support — Academic Support in the amount of \$160 for four Grade 6 students to participate in the [Women in Scholarship, Engineering, Science, and Technology \(WISEST\) CHOICES Conference](#). There is a limitation imposed by the UofA that only 4 students may attend per school. Students will be chosen through a random draw method.

**MOTION: Julie Jackson moved to approve the funds disbursement as presented.
Seconded by Sarah-Jane Lovgren. Motion Carried.**

7.2 Staff Report

School Update: We are about to enter a week and a half of Holiday School Spirit activities. The last month has offered many opportunities for collaboration with Buddy Activities. Grade 6 recently welcomed a parent who taught students about sacred medicines and the tradition of smudging.

7.3 Future School Event Planning and SC Outreach

(A) Winter Planning

- Family Movie Night

Movie night was postponed due to lack of RSVPs. A date will be determined at January's meeting. Suggestions for film choice are welcome.

- Holiday Committee

Elizabeth Macve suggested that Committees offer an opportunity to engage additional volunteers based on specific areas of interest.

MOTION: Sarah-Jane Lovgren motioned to establish a Holiday Committee as presented.

Seconded by Julie Jackson. Motion Carried.

- Date Night

Suggestion offers a segue to proposal for Artist in Residence programming for the 2024/2025 academic year: Mallory Chipman with the idea that this artist could be teased at a date night concert event in early 2024.

- Artist in Residence Proposal for 2024/2025

Mallory Chipman is a local singer, songwriter, producer, music scholar, and educator who is also Edmonton Public Library's inaugural Musician in Residence. Mallory has provided a proposal that outlines a two week Artist-In-Residence program in preparation and support of the 2024 Holiday Concert. Alongside the rich work that the existing school music program does supporting the development and understanding of melody, rhythm, and creative expression, this Artist-In-Residence program will build upon that with a specific focus on the creation, rehearsal, and performance of three original songs, written collaboratively between the students and the Artist in Residence and Mrs. Zelada. The proposal in its entirety — including objective, context, and execution were discussed in great detail.

Inclusion of K-9 and experiences connected to curricular goals are equally important. As long as instructional time allows and schedules are not disrupted by engaging with Artist in Residence programs, these opportunities can be viewed as ways to enhance educational value for our students. Developing suitable programming, as well as collaboration between the artist and the school to ensure curriculum outcomes are met takes time. There is also consideration of cost — and, while the Grant Committee has some opportunities to seek funding beyond what can be provided by FANHHS, there is also the consideration of time. Cost and time dependent, in some circumstances — permitting artists are different (ie. music and visual art) — two artists may be considered for one academic year.

If parents know of suitable programming, they are invited to submit proposals to councilchair@newhorizons.ca

Suggestion brought forward:

A parent suggested Robin Skaley with Red Poppy Art & Consulting — proposal to be submitted.

- Sustainability Event
Tabled.

- Family Math & Literacy Game Night with Box Cars & One-Eyed Jacks
Tabled.

(B) Field Trip Opportunities

- Telus World of Science new feature exhibit: Mazes & Brain Games
Tabled.

- Winspear Centre
Tabled.

7.4 Parent Perspectives

(A) Several Grade 6 parents would like to begin a dialogue with respect to

enhancing the athletics and physical education offered at NHS, particularly as their children enter Jr. High next year.

Response: Presently, Jr. High participates in extracurricular sports through Elk Island Athletics including: volleyball, basketball, badminton, track and field, golf, and handball. Grades 1-5 are offered swimming lessons. Our school has two Phys. Ed teachers who teach curricular programming for Jr. High. These teachers are qualified with sports backgrounds. One of our greatest barriers when it comes to sports is our shared gym space with our neighbouring school as this dictates scheduling. Another barrier is our lack of relationships with other schools for organized sports throughout the community in the elementary grades.

We will plan to have Intramural sports for grades 6 and 7 combined to build relationships and provide more structured sports time. This will begin in January and will be coached by Mr. Loehr. We will also begin intramurals for grades 4 and 5.

Suggestion brought forward:

A parent suggested partnering with an EIPS school where they have a connection — they will follow up and connect with Ms. Vigfusson.

A parent suggested a running club — they will follow up and connect with Ms. Vigfusson.

(B) While many parents have expressed their appreciation for hybrid format meetings, some parents have shared that they may be more inclined to attend meetings if they were shorter. What can be done to minimize the duration of formal meetings to capture a larger audience?

Response: Sometimes the duration is valid due to the Agenda items or welcoming opportunities for engagement, discussion, and Parent Perspectives. The general preference is to hold School Council and FANHS meetings back to back so as to be mindful of schedules; therefore, accommodating the request of one night per month as opposed to two. School Council is generally conversational in nature. Maintaining a digital option post-pandemic has been a high priority and offering all meetings in hybrid format allow those who wish to participate to do so in the capacity and for the duration that best suits them. The intention of forming more committees is to work in between meetings and provide a report at a monthly meeting; therefore, potentially minimizing the duration of a formal meeting. Improved communication has proven to be a useful tool in offering our messaging through meetings, email, and social media channels.

(C) Some parents have questions about sports being taken away for recess. When sports are taken away are students being punished or are they being taught conflict resolution skills? The message received by some parents from their children does not

align with sport conflict resulting in learning opportunities.

Response: At the beginning of the year, all students in each class work with their teacher to collaborate on the development of a sports contract which is then referred to throughout the year if situations arise. In the event of unsafe play, if children are injured, or if conflict disrupts opportunities to learn, the sport is then taken away for a cooling off period.

Teacher's perspective: Recess is meant to be an opportunity to have fun while also being safe while respecting emotional and physical boundaries. During recess, supervisors do their best to help prevent issues and investigate or moderate when required; however, if an adult must be present always or if a sport becomes dangerous, it means the contract has been breached. Sometimes issues are dealt with during recess — other times, the issues come into the classroom and become disruptive and take away from the curricular activities scheduled. We engage in group discussion and problem solve which are important skills and discussions; however, when they're taking place in great frequency, it's not feasible or fair to other students.

Solution: Parents have requested that communication be provided regarding what activities are allowed during cool off periods. A suggestion for Grade 6 teachers to review contracts with students and offer opportunities for reduced group size to participate in some competitive sports and learn better recess skills.

(D) Some parents have questions about if the music curriculum is followed and how curricular outcomes are graded. Report card results and reports from students about the activities that take place in music (ie. Just Dance, making playlists) make some parents question what takes place.

Response: Teachers must provide Administration with year plans that must followed Alberta Education's curriculum. Throughout the year, observations of teachers take place. Parents are welcome to email teachers about their concerns and are always invited to advocate for their children.

Solution: Better general communication regarding the curriculum and monthly goals and outcomes will be provided to homeroom teachers to send to families with their monthly newsletter.

(E) Some parents would like to see additional opportunities for Jr. High students and families to engage in matters that affect these students: i.e. Adventure Trip planning, High School preparation, clubs, Jr. High engagement at the Halloween Dance etc.

Response: Jr. High teachers and students are often in discussion about their Participation; however, this may not be translated to parents and caregivers. As we work

to develop our classroom parent program, there will be more opportunities to engage additional parent voice through all divisions.

8. Future Business

9. Correspondence

KJ Street Consulting emailed to offer 50% off on grant writing services for the [Alberta Foundation for the Arts: Artists and Education fund](#) (deadline May 1, 2024).

With unanimous consent, School Council has determined that the Grant Committee will attempt this grant proposal this year rather than paying a company to do so on behalf of the school.

10. Future Meeting Dates

January 10, 2024

February 7, 2024

March 6, 2024

April 3, 2024

May 1, 2024

June 5, 2024

All meetings are scheduled from 7:00PM - 8:00PM and will be held as Hybrid In-Person (New Horizons School) / Virtual Meetings.

11. Meeting Adjourned

Principal's Report to School Council
December 6, 2023

Lori Vigfusson
Principal
New Horizons School

Report Cards: Report Cards went home on December 1st by email. The next set will go out in April. They will also be delivered by email. The final report card gets sent out as a hardcopy.

Leadership Pool: Lynn Paradis, Superintendent of Suzuki school started an Edmonton and Area Leadership Pool for Charter Schools. School Administration and teachers interested in leadership were nominated and will meet a few times throughout the year to discuss the unique role of leadership within the Charter System. Ms. Stephens and Ms. Sweetman, along with myself and Vice Principal Watson are representatives from NHS.

School Counselling Support: Liam McFarlane, our new counsellor has started. He is at the school on Tuesdays and sometimes joins Ms. Shandra on Thursdays when she is in. His bio will be in the Enews.

EDI team: Our most recent meeting with Dr. Shariff talked about Land Acknowledgements and ways to personalize them and make them active rather than passive.

Computer Science Week: This week is Computer Science Education Week. Students have had speakers and presentations on computer science all week including free coding sessions from Code Ninjas. Thanks to our parent presenters and Ms. Joly for organizing the presentations and thanks to Ms. Joly and Ms. Kooger for organizing coding activities for our students.

Enterprise and Innovation Fair: One of our Junior High options will be hosting their E and I fair next week. Students in the option coe with an item to sell, create a budget and marketing around their item and then sell their wares in the gym at lunch. Students in grades 6 and up may attend to purchase.

School Clubs

- Boys and Girls Basketball tryouts occurred this week. It looks like we will have 2 boys teams and one girls team this season. Thanks to our coaches and teachers for volunteering their time for this!
- D and D club for Grade 6s takes place on Wednesdays. Thanks to Ms. Servold for running this!
- Grade 5 and 6 Intramurals have been running with two of our student teachers hosting 4 weeks of lunch time activity. This was so popular that we will be continuing this in the new year with some changes. We plan to add the grade 6 students to the grade 7 intramurals to build

connection with the junior high students and build their skills in sport. This will be run by Mr. Loehr beginning in January. We will then have intramurals for grades 4 and 5 on another day at lunch in the gym.

Holiday Concert:

Our concerts for Kindergarten and Grades 1-4 will be on December 21. The RSVP has been sent out. There will be a dress rehearsal in the morning where all are welcome to attend. Music Groups will perform at 9:30 and Grades 1-4 will perform at 10:30. We will not have an RSVP for that, caregivers and extended family can just show up. All grades are performing more than one act including French songs. Thanks to Ms. Zelada and Mr. Hofforth for their organization of this.

School Sing-along: On the last day of school before the break (December 22) we will have a sing-along in the gym in the morning before classes start.

Winter Break: I would like to wish everyone a safe and healthy winter break which will begin on December 23rd with students returning on January 8th!