

École Intermédiaire Lawrence Grassi Middle School Council
Wednesday, February 13, 2013 – 6:30 PM
Meeting/Staff Room LGMS
Minutes



LEARNING COMPONENT: Doug Jones - Hearts & Hands Foundation Presentation 6:30 – 7:30pm

Attendees: Betty Mah, Leanne McKeown, Adrienne Lawlor, Brian Wityshyn, Alanna McLeod, Shari Worobey, Alison Carter, Sonja Howatt

Background: The Hearts and Hands Foundation strives to assist indigenous families through programs in health and education. As an organization they assist the Mayan community in Central America to help themselves. Numerous donors provide funds or materials to assist in program implementation.

Programs include:

- 1) Health Programs: These include: stove construction, water filters, dental clinics, nutrition programs
- 2) Education: Several initiatives include: elementary classrooms, playgrounds, kitchens, latrines have been constructed. Scholarships, teacher professional development is also offered.
- 3) Ancillary Programs: Arts Festival in Uspantan is sponsored, reforestation programs, school bands, partnership with USAIS to provide books and school supplies, dental hygiene program with Colgate Palmolive, Guatemalans helping Guatemalans (Chacha)

The stove building project has been very successful. To date, approximately 4000 wood burning stoves have been built in 45 communities. While open fires have been used in the past, the new stoves are 80% more fuel efficient, and are safer as they address carbon monoxide levels, improve respiratory and eye problems, and save trees (families use 1-3 pieces per meal of wood compared to 10 used before). Use of these newer stoves is also life changing as the women of the households don't have to spend time (1-2 weeks) searching for wood. As the open fire has been eliminated, the newer stoves also decrease the incidents of burns on the smaller children in the family.

Over 500 water filters have been installed in the kitchens of homes and in the classrooms of schools. These are basically plastic containers with a sand filter. Most filters have been provided through a partnership with Rotary Club Guatemala Norte. Trainers are travelling in to communities to teach the adults and the kids how to use them and how to service them properly. .

A nutritional pilot program commenced in Los Chivitos in Sept. 2011. This program addressed various issues including: malnutrition, diabetes, and high blood pressure. Participants included women, teachers, a Principal of Los Chivitos, 2 staff, and 2 volunteers.

Once a year, the Foundation tries to include a team of volunteer dentists who pay their own way to travel and to care for patients who would not otherwise receive this attention. At present, six clinics exist, and an average of 130 patients in each clinic are seen. People will wait hours just to see the dentist at these clinics! About 1000 people have been treated. Infection and clean conditions are always an issue. Most of the patients have never seen a dentist in their life!

In Guatemala, many Mayan families cannot afford to send their children to school due to a low income. In partnership with Rotary International, other Rotary Clubs, Canadian and Alberta governments, and the Municipality of Uspantan, education is a major focus of the Hearts and Hands Foundation. So far, 15 schools have been built with the funds raised. In addition, 5 more schools are to be completed by March 2013. All you need to be a teacher in Guatemala is a grade 8 education!

In Guatemala, children have never seen a playground until recently. The kids don't know how to play as they're out in the fields working for the family. The effects of building playgrounds is remarkable. For example, in one area where a playground was erected, the kids came at 7 :00 am and stayed on it until dark!

Enhancing Secondary Education in Guatemala is another goal of the Hearts and Hands Foundation. In 2010, two junior/senior high schools were built in Uspantan and the goal is to provide a complete high school education to kids in grades 7 to 11. Technical schools are also needed to train students after senior high school. It is important to note that most kids don't continue education past grade 6, so providing these kids the chance for education is giving them a wonderful opportunity. Failing school is difficult as the students will be out of school and back into poverty. Many fail as programming is taught in Spanish which is not their mother tongue. This is a difficult task for many and so the curriculum taught is difficult to understand and to comprehend. The cost of for a year of education is \$500 which includes tuition, books, supplies, physical education uniform, shoes, use of computer and library, and the services of a tutor.

Other Education Programs include Junior and Senior high school scholarships: 93 students are in the main schools and 16 are enrolled in University. Funds are also provided for teacher professional development. There is a contract with the Ministry of Education to improve the quality of education in Guatemala, working together to provide quality training for their people.

How can you get involved? Anybody can get involved to help build technical schools through the "Buy a Brick" program. School supplies are also needed and the "Pennies for Pencils" program has been set up for this purpose...\$1100 has been raised so far in the Canmore Community! A program for music has also been developed to raise funds which are needed to buy used instruments. Donations for a general or specific project are always welcome and tax receipts are provided for amounts over \$25. Out of a donation, 90% is put into the program: 10% is used for administration costs for Hearts and Hands Foundation.

Over 500 volunteers have visited from Canada to Guatemala to help the Mayans. A cultural exchange is also available through the Hearts and Hands Foundation. Each trip costs about \$3000 and a tax receipt for \$2400 is given for this life-changing opportunity. This fee covers airfare, hotels, local transportation, accommodation, meals and tours.

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Call to Order & Welcome Any Guests: 7:45 pm

Attendees: Liz Baker, Adrienne Lawlor, Shari Worobey, Brian Wityshyn, Sonja Howatt, Betty Mah, Alison Carter, Leanne McKeown, Alanna McLeod

2. Adoption (Amendment) of Agenda - any items to be added or deleted?

Adrienne Lawlor wished to add: 1 Billion Rising Skate Mob

3. Confirmation/Approval of Past Minutes – approved by email?

4. Reports

- Principal's Report

- Jan 16th Brian went to Rotary Club of Canmore and accepted a cheque for the purchase of the audiovisual equipment. The actual purchase of this equipment is on hold as there were a couple of issues: size and portability. Brian is still checking into some more options.

- Feb. 27 at CCHS is the last meeting for CEN configuration of what is going to happen next year: moving grade 4's to LGMS and grade 8's to CCHS are a possible option.

- Brian is going to meet with parents on Feb. 26 for help with transition with parents at Elizabeth Rummel.

- Robotics club went to Edmonton and had a blast!

- Brian attended an in-service on restorative justice i.e. how to engage in classroom discussions in a restorative process vs. punitive process. Being proactive instead of punitive was encouraged. Positive relationship building was also registered by Brian.

- Beyond the Hurt: students are getting mentored on how to mentor other students with respect to relationship building and conflict resolution.

- Evening monitors are in place for sport teams and other interested parties after hours. They are here for 4:30 pm so that someone is supervising and can open doors (Monday to Thursday)

- Winter madness carnival was a hit! Kids snowshoed and were in costume. Stay tuned for pictures that will be on the monitors.

- The Miss Representation: Brian participated in the dinner discussion about awareness support of education. How do we bring more awareness into the schools and where can we go forward in our community? This is a Grassroots program.

- Support Services: Jeannie Godfrey has been working with ESL kids. She will take them through registration packages, hook them up with mentors, have conversations about culture etc...

- Up and coming: school dance 7-930

- Teacher's Convention will take place at the end of February

- Juggling Club: volunteers for grade 5's are needed

- Japanese Club: Jeannie Godfrey will volunteer to teach kids Japanese

- Teacher parent conferences are on Mar. 14/15

- What does next year really look at? This is on the agenda as well.

Questions:

(Alison Carter) re: jazz band students going to Edmonton. Alison wanted to know if there was anything planned for kids not going to Edmonton? Brian said there are

assemblies in which performances occur. Alanna suggested to go to Valley Winds website.

-Alison also asked about the core French kids going on a trip as the other kids i.e. French Immersion went on a Quebec trip. Brian replied that they are looking into this.

Treasurer's Report (reviewed in Alison's absence) Leanne reported: We have to start spending money. Betty suggested having the children involved in the decision making process. On the list was ski equipment. (about \$2000 was spent on ski equipment) \$825 is set aside for school wishes. Every child in grade 7 and 8 will have the opportunity to ski 1-2 times a week for 6 weeks. Motion to pay the bill for the ski equipment (\$825 was set aside for school wishes and the equipment cost about \$2000): Alanna made the motion to pay for the equipment and Liz Baker seconded.

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Questions and Discussion:

Alanna mentioned that all classrooms have an iPad.

A thank you banner for the Rotary club of Canmore will be erected in the gymnasium (Leanne ordered it online: it is a 3x5, vinyl banner already that cost about \$50)

Online text books were discussed: Copyrighting is an issue and licensing is more expensive than the text book. Alanna mentioned that using the online text books may not be as much a problem as taking it beyond the walls of the school. It may be possible to register a book to a computer so that they know they can't share them...Liz mentioned that this may be a connection and a way around the fee? Brian will look into this. (Action Item)

5. Items for Brian – Hearts and Hands, online textbooks, a-v equipment follow-up
-covered in Principal's report above
6. Council Initiatives – updates (council website, yoga/dance at lunch (letter for review), funds for school wishes to be allocated) – All
 - Allison Carter will put photos and updates on the website.
 - Yoga/ Dance at lunch (Adrienne): Will there be an issue with having yoga in the school as some parents may feel it is a spiritual issue? Brian said that if it's at lunch, it is volunteer based so kids can "sign up". Adrienne also suggested we open it up to teachers. Location as to where they will hold this is to be determined. Kids will need to bring their own mats. Adrienne has written a letter to a yoga studio for expertise/ volunteer. Alison Carter asked, "Do they come as anonymous or do they advertise the studio?" Brian said they could acknowledge their studio if they wanted. Adrienne asked what if nobody shows up? Brian suggested advertising first to see if they are interested so we know how many will attend.
7. CEN Meeting (Jan 16) – All
(Tabled to next meeting)
8. Items outstanding & Action Items from minutes – All
For March meeting: Brian will look into online text books

Leanne has asked to put on our next meeting agenda a discussion about the reconfiguration and what it means for our kids.

9. School Council Meeting with School Board (Jan 30) – Liz & Leanne

Liz encourages everyone to go to the meeting to see why decisions have been made regarding reconfiguration, programming offered, class sizes, funding etc..It will be held on Feb. 27th . Leanne said that Kim Bater encourages the public to email him any questions or concerns.

Leanne has asked to put on our next meeting agenda a discussion about the reconfiguration and what it means for our kids. (Action Item)

10. Review of TELUS results – Ken Riordon : Cell phone towers: Measurement results were available and basically the readings were taken inside and outside the property with Telus equipment. Andre was not in attendance for the readings as asked by the Superintendent who thought it may be a conflict of interest. Two engineers from Telus were present. Liz suggested we haven't really addressed the issue that Andre has brought up with respect to the standards being different.

Ken expressed some of the discussion that took place and informed the council that Telus will still have a meeting with the Town of Canmore. Ken has said that cell phones are the real danger, not the Telus tower. Ken said the more towers, the safer it is. One issue is that people don't believe Health Canada's standards. The location they were going to move to is only 20 m away on top of a business building, so the new location is not really that far away.

*(Please refer to attachment for more information)

11. Roving Council Members Proposal – Alison A (tabled until March meeting)

12. Learning Component – March: The Toolbox Project – Adrienne

- April: Mr. Peter Churchill (Screen Time Addictions, not confirmed as of yet)

- Offer from Junior Achievement program coordinator

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- Meeting adjourned at 9: 20 pm
 - Date and time of next meeting: March 13, 2013 at 7:00 PM