



**Jockey Club Sarah Roe School  
The 121st School Council Meeting  
5:00pm, 9 March 2021, via Zoom**

**Present:** Linda Csellak (LC)                                 Sudesh Thevasenabathy (ST)  
Anna Smakowska (AS)                                     Vivian Cheung (VC)  
Nigel R. Merritt (NRM)                                   Karen Carmody (KC)  
Michelle McEwan (MM)                                   Cheryl Lam (CL)  
Marie-Clarie Slama (MCS)

**Apologies:** Holly Manning (HM)

**In Attendance:** Belinda McLaughlin (BM)                         Queenie Au (QA)

<b><u>Minutes:</u></b>	<b><u>Action:</u></b>
<p>1. Apologies and Welcome new council member</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of new council member – Nigel R. Merritt</li> <li>• Apologies - HM</li> </ul>	
<p>2. Approval of Minutes from 1 Dec 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minutes approved, proposed by MM and seconded by KC</li> </ul>	
<p>3. Matters Arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terms of reference – AS shared the updated Terms of Reference. LC asked where to find the financial operating manual. QA advised it is available in the meeting papers of the 119<sup>th</sup> school council meeting papers.</li> <li>• Student council meeting – AS advised students only in school in the last few weeks and there was no student council meeting. LC checked on the leadership of student council as some students left or graduated. AS replied if we will continue to be back in school in term 3, we will hold election for student council for next year.</li> </ul>	<p>QA to upload updated Terms of Reference to Boardvantage after meeting.</p>
<p>4. Principal’s Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AS presented the principal’s report.</li> <li>• MM asked about vacancy in secondary classes and all the new students next year will be in primary. AS explained school is trying to have a balance between primary and secondary. Thus, we are moving students up to secondary so there are more spaces available in primary. MM questioned if those vacancies are students graduating. AS answered two students are graduating and one is transferring to another school.</li> <li>• NRM queried how admission works between school and ESF. AS clarified that ESF handles the admission for special needs placement across all ESF schools.</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MCS asked updates on the school's waiting list. AS confirmed around 80 on waiting list but there is priority for ESF staff children, students from another ESF and siblings of students.</li> <li>• NRM also asked about the student who was admitted in hospital in Sep 2020. AS replied student is now back to school and settling well.</li> <li>• Parents surveys – LC checked if the survey was an improvement from the last survey. AS clarified there were some drops. Increase for communication from 80% in previous survey to 100%. AS reiterated the survey sample was really small (9) and it is difficult for parents to reflect on learning experience of students while students not in school.</li> <li>• AS further explained in the future school will be focusing on feedback on students learning which is in line with school improvement priority. Tools to be in place to share feedback on learning, like consistent marking scheme, using the same language and evaluation for students works. Also looking into SeeSaw which will be used to share feedbacks or assessments with parents.</li> <li>• IEP meetings – MCS raised questions on the low signup rate for IEP meetings. KC clarified that the mid-year review was optional. Usually parents attend the start and end year parent consultation. NRM checked if respond rate to Zoom or face-to-face meetings different. CL confirmed that attendance for zoom meetings was in fact higher on Zoom as time was more flexible for parents. MCS suggested to continue offering online meeting. AS replied school is already exploring to offer both options in the future.</li> </ul>	
<p>5. Reports from Committees</p> <p>5.1 Learning &amp; HR Committee Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LC commented the link councillor meetings were very helpful in understanding various aspects of the school improvements and how school council members can be more involved.</li> <li>• MM brought up enhanced alumni communication with current students. BM provided an update on action item re: Alumni from the LHR meeting. School will be included in the ESF Alumni website and there will be a feature on JCSRS alumni later in the school year. MCS also commented stories on leavers in the recent newsletter was inspiring.</li> <li>• NRM was keen to have the online training for safeguarding/child protection. BM updated that ESF suggested school council members to attend a one-session (around 30 mins) safeguarding training which is the same one offered to support staff. All council members showed interest and BM will arrange.</li> </ul> <p>5.2 Finance &amp; Facilities Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ST presented summary of meeting.</li> <li>• School facility development plan - AS asked if NRM would be interested to support us in the project to bring in his expertise in</li> </ul>	<p>Action: BM to arrange safeguarding training for all school council members</p>

<p>facility and finance. AS will share more info with NRM before next meeting with ESF project team and arrange on-site visit for NRM.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MCS added on ST's comment re: marketing pack for vocational placement. The importance is to raise awareness. BM added the final pack should be ready in a week.</li> </ul> <p>5.3 Update on School Council Terms of Reference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussed in agenda item 3 Matters Arising</li> </ul>	
<p>6. Safeguarding report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BM added since report shared, there was a case reported in result of an allegation around a member of staff. Case has been under investigation by AS and BM and result in actions with the community and colleagues at ESFC. AS also added the case is considered an unsubstantiated allegation based on information presented. Unless more new information is available or parents would like to proceed further, there will be no further actions. AS thanked ESF for their support and their lead in safeguarding. AS reinforced that policies in safeguarding/ intimate care are in place to protect students as well as staff.</li> </ul>	
<p>7. PTA report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Due to distance learning and difficulties to arrange in person meeting, PTA organized online farewells/Karaoke for leaving students.</li> <li>Donation for PT equipment – most orders arrived and the outstanding ones are going through customs. Waiting on feedback on needs for other equipment e.g. OT.</li> <li>Bus management transition – regular meetings on bus operations due to changes in school schedule in accordance with EDB requirements.</li> <li>PTA has been sending in baked items/thank you notes to teachers to show appreciation.</li> <li>PTA has also approved to buy gift vouchers for each class and will arrange more online events in Easter for the community.</li> <li>AS thanked PTA for their support in spite of all the challenges we faced.</li> <li>MCS added there will be more communication to parents regarding the bus transition from PTA to ESFC. Also, regarding transition of PTA from limited company to association, PTA is trying to connect with PTA of other ESF schools in order to learn and share best practices. Already in contact with Christine Meaney and invited her to the last PTA meeting.</li> <li>Government grants – PTA did not apply for the Govt grants for bus operators due to the transition. With challenge of COVID, the cost of bus operation has increased substantially. Instead of passing the additional cost to parents, PTA is working with AS closely for solution and may have to reach out to ESF for support.</li> </ul>	

<p>8. ESF report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VC clarified the report presented dated February was a summary version of the CEO report which was presented in the board meetings.</li> <li>• School calendar survey – in light of COVID situation, lots of staff, parents and families have not been able to go home to see their families. Result of surveys indicated still fairly large portion of staff/parents’ preference in keeping the normal calendar. No decision has been made yet. Further discussion is needed.</li> <li>• Budget - In process of working on budget for next year. Looking at another year of fee freeze and thus likely resources for next year will stay the same as with budget last year.</li> <li>• Brand refresh – website revamp for ESF as well as school in the coming year.</li> <li>• Resume to School - Working on full resumption of schools in accordance with EDB’s requirements on staff getting COVID tests every 14 days. Targeting to have all schools back to 100% by Monday 15 March.</li> <li>• LC raised the question if EDB’s clarification for international schools regarding national laws have any impacts on enrolments. VC explained schools have been conservative in enrolment estimate and in fact some schools esp. secondary schools are short in wait list for some cohorts. Communication team is working closely with secondary schools on marketing to target those applications of students from local schools or even other international schools.</li> <li>• NRM queried if school is likely to be affected by budget freeze next year. VC explained that is the overall basis but with understanding that some cost will increase inevitably e.g. insurance premium. However, there are still some projects that will go ahead as they have long term benefits and impact on education. Trying to streamline resources and reduce costs to fund areas that need extra funding. Taking a detail approach in terms of what school needs are.</li> </ul>	
<p>9. AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization of School Day – AS would like feedback from school council on pros and cons of having four classes in the morning and four classes in the afternoon. Great impact on bus costs as having double amount of buses and may have to charge parents additional financial costs. MM asked the approximate additional costs would be as that is a crucial factor for parents. AS explained we are only having estimates as we are using Rehab bus and not all figures are available yet. Current bus fee for one way is \$55 which may have to increase to \$80 per trip, \$110 a day to \$160 a day.</li> <li>• MCS added comments that additional costs have incurred from Jan to Mar (which is now still an estimate). PTA, as a support to</li> </ul>	



<p>parent community, is considering to absorb the extra cost. Decision to be made when actual figures is available.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• AS confirmed if go back to 100% in half days at the same time, there won't be the additional financial costs for bus fees but will lost the benefits of the current schedule of 4 AM classes and 4 PM classes.</li><li>• MM asked if there will be any difference with 8 classes at the same time vs 4 AM classes and 4 PM classes if there is a confirmed case. AS explained there is no straight forward answer to that as there could be too many different scenarios.</li><li>• MCS questioned if going back to full day is possible. AS confirmed that is not an option at the moment.</li><li>• AS reinforced the discussion is to get feedback/comment to help school makes the final decision. Will reach out to LC as council chair to further discussion after gathering staff's feedback.</li><li>• MCS mentioned since PTA is absorbing the extra cost on bus operation for term 2, it will be helpful if ESFC can extend their exceptional help to support for the increased cost. VC will discuss with AS in details and come back with a response.</li><li>• Art exhibition 12-17 May – more details to follow. Save the dates.</li><li>• MCS mentioned minutes of school council meetings on school website was not updated. QA replied the minutes were to be approved in this meeting before posting on the website.</li><li>• Next council meeting 5pm, 1 Jun 2021</li></ul>	<p>QA to upload the approved minutes to the website after meeting</p>
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Meeting adjourned at 6:18pm