School Connection Committee Minutes

BRUCE TRAIL PUBLIC SCHOOL

November 2, 2026

In Attendance

Margaret N., Tanya P., Nancy L., Puja M., Sadaf C., Sarah Z., Farah K., Aman S., Biljana K., Monica H., Jess. L, Ghadah Q., Yamam J., Jen B., Amna M., Jess., B, Amy. R (virtually)

Welcome and Land Acknowledgement

- Puja leads the Land Acknowledgement
- Puja volunteered to lead after a conversation with a parent about why we read the Land Acknowledgement each day and discussed on the importance of reflecting on our commitment to Indigenous rights and what it means to be Canadian and how it ties into all our cultures
- A step forward for one minority is a step forward for all minorities

Action Item Updates

PIC Conference

- Conference was promoted on Socials and in BT Blast
- Congrats PIC team!

Big Box of Cards

- Fundraiser has launched
- Candles are new this year in addition to cards
- 2 weeks less (Nov. 13 is the last date to purchase)
- Sales are less than we hoped for so spread the word to BT families you know
- Margaret wonders why we couldn't extend the deadline to perhaps after interviews so we can display them at the interviews for families to see
- **ACTION - Sadaf and Puja** will connect with **Admin.** to determine if extending the deadline makes sense

BT Constitution

- Sadaf and Puja are currently reviewing it
- **ACTION - Sadaf and Puja** will follow up with council about this at a later date

Danceathon

- Monica has offered to be the lead
- Stay tuned for more information

Doors

- It was brought up last meeting that certain doors were locking before students could arrive
- The situation has been resolved

Adoption of October Minutes (incl Action Items Status):
First - Sarah
Second - Farah
Minutes have been adopted

Treasurer's Report

Fund Allocation Summary

- Funds from last meeting have been allocated
- **$6,426.05** (from Danceathon last year) has been allocated for 21 Chromebooks
    - PO #159534
    - Remainder of expenses to be covered by Pizza Funds
- **$1,385.89** (from last year's Pita Pit/Cookie sales) will be applied to 2026/2027 field trip funding
    - Portion of various field trips will be subsidized

Council Updates

PIC Conference Update

- Several members of council attended PIC Conference and it was a success!
- Variety of sessions for parents to choose from (key themes being AI, screens, mental health, outdoor learning, fundraising, literacy, Indigenous Rights, etc)
- Sessions available for each age group (separate sessions for elementary, middle school and high school)
- Goal moving forward is to get more families from BT to participate
    - Reminders that it is not a full day commitment
    - Reminders of all that is offered (transportation, food and child minding provided)
    - **ACTION - Amna** will explore effective ways to get this message across to BT Families
- Sarah wonders if Amna will have access to attendee feedback from the Conference
    - Amna says they are unsure if they can connect her with BT specific feedback but once all the responses are in, she will be able to view the general feedback
    - Sarah is wondering if we can use this information to guide us in our Pro Grant topic (see below for more details)

Pro Grant

- Pro grant deadline Nov. 20
- Options include family event, learning event, speaker series
- Goal is to increase participation

- This year we are thinking of taking more feedback from BT families on what kind of event they would like
    - **ACTION - Amna** will create google form to send out to BT Families
- Last year was a speaker (Ali Chaudry) on conflict resolution skills and those who attended found it very helpful
- **ACTION - Council** will connect with **Amna** if they have any ideas
- Amna has reached out to Carrie from the board to get some ideas about what has worked well in other schools
- She has also reached out to council members who said they were interested in PIC Committee

Food Programs

- Things are going smoothly
- Food programs run from Tues-Fri
- We think we're finding more volunteers for certain days (Thurs. and Fri.)
- Amna says she knows people who may be interested so hopefully they will connect with Margaret!
- First Term Food was allocated to Chromebooks
- We need to be proactive and vote about where funds will be going for next 3 terms
- Specific information on fund allocation will be on the food program forms sent home to families
- Can we donate 1 term's profit to Halton Learning Foundation?
- We need to be specific about where the funds are going
    - In previous years, major needs have been musical instruments and Grade 8 Grad
    - Council agrees to vote

Food Program Funding Votes

- Term 2 food program funds to Halton Learning Foundation
    - First: Farah
    - Second: Sarah
    - **Majority votes yes to Term 2 funds to be donated to Halton Learning Foundation**

- Term 3 food program funds to purchase musical instruments
    - First: Yamam
    - Second: Monica
    - **Majority votes yes to Term 3 funds purchasing musical instruments**

- Term 4 food program funds to be given to Grade 8 Graduation
    - First: Ghada
    - Second: Yamam
    - **Majority votes yes to Term 4 funds being given to Grade 8 Graduation**

Giving Tree

- We collect **new** Winter items (scarves, mittens, hats, socks) for HDSB Welcome Centre who work with anyone new to the country or new to HDSB and help them get settled and offer necessary resources

- We usually launch before interviews/Scholastic Book Fair (week of Nov. 23)
- **ACTION - Sadaf** will send a note to Jess Bekar who will distribute info to teachers to share with their class

Danceathon

- Last year's date clashes with Ramadan
- Hoping to do **Feb. 4** this year
- Might conflict with rentals
- **ACTION: Margaret** will check to see if this date works and connect with **Monica**
    - Perhaps a group can come in evening before or morning before school
    - Volunteers can organize in the staff room evening before
    - Jess Bekar wonders if intermediates or high school students could volunteer as well?
- Could we extend the Danceathon and invite families to join in the evening?
- **ACTION - Monica** will discuss logistics with **Admin.** in separate meeting (capacity, DJ costs, putting out call for volunteers in the BT Blast, etc)
- **ACTION - Council** should email **Monica** if you would like to volunteer to be part of the committee BTschoolcouncil@gmail.com

Teacher's Report

Teacher Reps

- Jess Bekar (junior)
- Amy Richetti (intermediate)
- How can staff be communicating and connecting with families more?
    - Each teacher does what works for them
    - So much is happening that it is hard to effectively communicate it all
    - Parents are more likely to read communication from teacher
    - Email Jess or Amy with suggestions
    - bekarj@hdsb.ca
    - ricchettia@hdsb.ca
- **ACTION - Monica** will connect with **Teacher Reps** re: communication from council

Principal's Report

Pumpkins

- BT students worked on to turn donated pumpkins from Freshco into characters
- Grade 1 students created thank you cards and letters for Freshco and Sadaf and Farah (for picking up delivering the pumpkins)

Things You Need to Know

- What's up with the Gazebo?
    - Admin. Has reached out to facilities in regards to what we can do to make better use of the Gazebo
    - Since pavement was being done, nothing could be done as of now

- Facilities may be able to provide some funds to add to the Gazebo and create a space around the Gazebo, amount TBD

- BT Budget
  - This year's budget is around $99,000, which is about $20-30,000 less of what we are normally allocated
  - This will impact what we are able to purchase
- Outdoor Ed
  - Margaret attended a conference on Outdoor Education and is excited about all the prospects!
  - Staff reps have attended Outdoor Learning workshops as well and will be supporting BT Staff
  - Sarah can provide materials if there is anything that can be done in the tech classes to support

Fundraising Requests (Danceathon)

- Staff have provided their input
- Some smaller item requests can likely be purchased at a school level
- Equipment shed outside has had a positive impact during recess
- ASK: Could we purchase a primary shed for Grade 1s and 2s?
  - **Approx. $1500**
  - Equipment for shed **(approx. $500)** would need to be purchased as well
  - Equipment is a consumable

- ASK: Friendship Foyer
- Space in the kindergarten foyer, can we make that space more engaging?
- shelves or cabinets for storage, comfortable seating, etc
- Provide a space for students who find recess challenging to make some friends, play some games
- Also could be used as a teaching space
- **$4000 approx.**
- Important to have staff voice on how to make it useable for them
- Could we ask for donations for this space (games, etc)?
- Furniture cannot be donated and must be purchased from approved vendors
- Perhaps we can purchase for an upstairs space (for older grades) as well?
- **ACTION - Margaret** will check with other schools who have done something similar to gain more information re: pricing and providing some visuals for parents

Danceathon Fundraising Votes

- Shed and equipment for primary students
  - First: Sadaf
  - Second: Monica
  - **Majority votes yes to fundraise for shed and equipment for primary**

- Friendship Foyer (furniture, storage, etc)
  - First: Jess
  - Second: Monica
  - **Majority votes yes to fundraise for Friendship Foyer**

Station Work

Deferred to next meeting due to time

Other Items Discussed/Parking Lot

Danceathon Student Involvement

- Can't raffle anything that has a resale value
- Sadaf says they learned at the PIC Conference that you can raffle experiences - teachers offer special things (tie dye, baking, dunk tank, etc)
- Margaret isn't sure if this is accurate **ACTION - Margaret** will check and get back to us
- Suggestion for Margaret to (temporarily) dye hair if enough money is raised
    - Perhaps put images around school of Margaret with different hair colours?
- Suggestion for staff to do a dance if enough money is raised
- How else can we engage students and give incentive for them to donate?
- Could classes set classroom goals and what they're working towards?

Action Items & Who is Responsible

- **Big Box of Cards**
    - **Sadaf and Puja** will connect with **Admin.** to determine if extending deadline is feasible

- **BT Constitution**
    - **Sadaf and Puja** will continue to review and follow up with council about this at a later date

- **PIC Conference**
    - **Amna** will look into ways to communicate details of PIC Conference to parents to increase BT attendance

- **Pro Grant**
    - **Amna** will create google form to send out to BT Families for suggestions on how to use the grant
    - **Council** will connect with **Amna** if they have any program ideas

- **Giving Tree**
    - **Sadaf** will send a note to Jess Bekar who will distribute info to teachers to share with their class

- **Danceathon**
    - **Margaret and Monica** will connect for a separate meeting to discuss:
    - New Feb. 4 date
    - Logistics (capacity, DJ costs, putting out call for volunteers in BT Blast)
    - Evening danceathon for families
    - **Council** will email **Monica** if they would like to be part of committee
    - **Margaret** will look into whether or not we can hold raffles for experiences as long as they don't have any monetary value

- **Teacher Communication**
    - **Monica** will connect with **Jess and Amy** with any important council communication

- **Friendship Foyer**
    - **Margaret** will check with other schools who have a similar space to gain information on pricing
    - Provide visuals for families so they can see our vision

Thank You!

- Thanks for coming!

Next Meetings

Next Meeting(s) : January 11, 2027, March 1, 2027, May 3, 2027, June 7, 2027