

AJ & OBK School Council Meeting # 1

Date:	Tuesday, 21 st November, 2017
Time:	6:00 PM – 7:30 PM
Place:	Upper Floor in the open space of CIS OBK Campus 225 – 28 th Street SE, Calgary
Participants:	School Council Members and School Parents

Name	Positions	Email Addresses
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Minutes:

Meeting commenced at 6:13pm with opening Duaa

Introductions

Agenda Items Discussed:

- **Healthy Hunger**

AJ coordinated with OBK and just signed up for healthy hunger. OBK have been using it for several years.

Dec 8 will not be on healthy hunger for OBK because there are so much food sales going on. Poutine sale will be that day instead. AJ will still do a hot lunch that day on Healthy Hunger.

We want to coordinate hot lunch dates with both schools. That way parents who have children in both campuses will have hot lunch for all their kids on the same day.

OBK has booked dates for the whole year and will share the dates with AJ. We could switch vendors between both schools to keep the load lighter and be organized.

Healthy Hunger forms need to be sent out in advance to give the parents enough time to register. Deadline to order hot lunch is 5 days before the hot lunch date.

- **BC Muslim Soccer Tournament**

Mohammed Jenief is a board member of the Muslim Board of Education in BC and the Chair of Muslim Schools Sports Committee, and he is organizing a soccer tournament for Islamic schools. He has invited us to take part in this tournament, which will be held on May 14 in Surrey, BC. There will be three games for each team, and then a final game. The teams will be playing at the same time. They have two divisions, and they want a girls' team and a boys' team to participate in each division (Gr. 4/5 and Gr.6/7). Each team should consist of ten to twelve students. We have to decide whether we want to participate or not.

The day of the event transportation to the event and food will be covered. We will need to cover transportation to BC and accommodations.

We can go by bus or plane. By bus it would be a very long trip but it is cheaper. If we take bus we cannot come back the same day and students have school the next day. Flying would be about \$500 per student, and it would be quicker.

It is on Monday, May 14, right before Ramadan. That Monday we have a PD day.

If we look at flying maybe the airline can give us their best rate. It is too much effort to take the bus.

They have invited Edmonton and Fort McMurray and many other schools in the Vancouver area.

It's a good opportunity for the kids. We should make a weekend out of it. They need to be back the next day because they have school. But it is considered a field trip so they will not be considered absent.

The superintendent needs to be notified four months in advance. For safety everyone has to go and come back at the same time with a 1 to 5 ratio. Mohammad said we need two volunteers per team.

We need to decide if we submit it and get approved, how will we fund it. AJ is doing a couple of trips out of province. It will cost \$1400 per student. Ten students are going. Leadership cost the same. They are three or four day trips. The major cost is the flight. Many kids want to go and are willing to pay the full amount for both trips.

There is a hotel called the River Rock Hotel in Richmond, which we can try to get a discount of 50% as this is a rate they offer to people joining the local auction. We are waiting on a response to see if this can be honoured for our schools.

If everything is in place we need to do tryouts. We need to be clear from the beginning what it will cost so they will let their kids participate if they can pay for it.

There is a conduct form before starting with a team. Kids have to have good conduct to be able to go on the trip. A lot of the kids that play soccer are coming in with an attitude. We need to come in with the right attitude. We want to build their confidence and show leadership. We can spend the time building and bridging the gap between AJ and OBK.

We don't get the opportunity to participate with other Muslim teams. It's the opportunity to go on a trip.

Action steps:

Ahlam can call West Jet and see what is the best offer they can give us on plane tickets.

It seems that both campuses are interested. We should set up a sub committee to deal with

this subject. Ahlam, Omar, Nada, and Fatimah Rakie will be involved.

If this doesn't work out we can do our own tournament. We don't want AJ vs. OBK. We can merge the teams.

Suggestion: Someone that has a lot of time and wants to make the school a lot of money can make a Muslim sports committee. They can organize a bunch of sports for the community.

If we go to the soccer tournament we can invite them back.

Sub committee will work on the cost and come back to Raiha and Ramy.

- **Islamic Department Professional Development Opportunity**

Hajar Masry worked closely with Musleh Khan, and has talked with him about providing some professional development for our Islamic Studies teachers. He works closely on professional development for Islamic schools. He gives a weeklong course that can be condensed into two days. Some of the topics that he covers are the prophetic way of teaching, oldest most useful methods, teaching students in the west, ways to council students who may be disconnected from their faith, and more. He will compose a final program proposal and send it to the administration to choose what topics they would like covered. He has offered to come give this two-day workshop free of charge if we can fund his transportation and accommodation. He usually takes \$3000 for workshops like this, so we said we would give him \$1000 as an honorary fee.

We were planning it for the Islamic Studies teachers, but found that a lot of the Muslim teachers who teach other subjects were interested and may benefit from it. It can be open for all the teachers.

We are looking at the week off: February 20th and 21st.

Would AJ be interested in having their teachers attend the workshop? We can then split the cost over the two schools and increase the honorary fee. Ramy will look into it. These two days have been given to staff as days off. They have to give them sometime off and it may be those two days. Ramy will discuss it with his staff and get back to school council.

OBK will be doing it. It is just open to staff and not parents.
He doesn't have a maximum limit for attendance.

- **Joint Parent Information Sessions**

Last year *Let's Talk* went on at AJ.

We want to do educational sessions for parents in both campuses and invite parents from both campuses.

Alternating between schools and inviting parents from both schools will ensure more parents attend. We want to encourage parents to come.

Division 2 is implementing volunteer opportunities, which will be included in kids' report cards. If parents come to the sessions it will be recorded as volunteering for the child as an incentive.

OBK will try to host two sessions this year at OBK.

We need to advertise on face book, hand out flyers, and target the topics that cover the areas in which we are lacking.

Date of the first session has not been determined yet.

Two topics have been chosen for OBK: How to discipline their child in an Islamic way and Disabilities.

Some parents discipline their child in an incorrect way, which causes problems with child services. WEP team, child services, and an imam will have a chance to present the topic from different perspectives.

Parents might not show up. They might not be interested in such a topic. Parents might be reluctant to come when they hear child services will be there.

School will have had the chance to explain to parents how and when child services get involved through this session. We need to break down that barrier. Some parents think they can discipline the way they were disciplined. The school is obligated to report these problems.

Send a letter with students to be signed by parents to confirm if they are attending.

We need to brainstorm why people do not attend these sessions. School council members can talk to parents at drop off and get some ideas of why they are not coming. Parents can fill out surveys why they don't come.

Possible ideas/suggestions:

- Only kids can motivate their parents to attend.
- Any thought about doing a face book live session? The problem is that it will be recorded and some people may not agree to speak on face book.
- Send an invite to all the parents. Then it will be automatically put in their calendar, and they will get a reminder for it.
- We can organize the movie night for the kids at the same time as the session.
- When awards are given to students they keep it and it is something they take care of and honour. Can we make certificates for students because their parents attend?
- Parents do not have to look at everything as an incentive. They need to know that it is important and they need to be educated.

Parents just drop kids off and run off. They don't want to put an effort. There is a lot of work on us to fix this problem.

This year Muzzaffar attended open house. All parents show up, and then no one shows up for volunteering. Parents come because they see their kids and teachers. Only kids can bring in their parents.

Can student led conferences be done at AJ? OBK did it last year. But that isn't a good time to educate parents in these sessions.

We want to shed light on another aspect, which is disabilities. There is a stigma around this topic and a lot of parents are in denial. We want to bring light to the services and resources that are available. Also we want to present what Islam says about it. We are looking at Jan. 24th, which is a Wednesday. We can do that jointly. WEP is involved in getting someone from AHS.

It's important that WEP is involved in AJ. They have a bad reputation at AJ. We had three or four child services interventions a couple of years ago, and the WEP team were blamed. Parents need to know that the schools are mandated to report these things.

Let's focus on doing a little at a time. Let's focus on bringing them. Ask parents what they want to learn about. It should come from school council.

We were talking about doing a session about volunteering.

Last years sessions at AJ targeted people with older children. Last year at AJ we would meet with administration, and they would get feedback from staff to know what were the issues they were dealing with. Maybe we should get feedback from the parents about the topics they are interested in.

The two topics discussed, if given the right title, we can get a lot of people to attend.

We need to designate one person from each council to plan and work on these sessions. Nada Merhi and Fatema Itani will work together to plan them.

Muslim families from other schools will also be included in the discipline session.

We should announce these events at Friday prayer.

We should have something for the kids during sessions.

We need to book imams ahead of time, as they get busy and get booked for other events. For each session we should have an administrator to give the academic side and an imam to give the Islamic perspective on the topic.

Parents should have volunteer hours and they have to pay if they don't volunteer. CIS wanted to implement it several years ago but were faced with some challenges. The school fee was increased that year, and any money collected would go to the society.

Attending school council meetings would be considered as volunteering. It could be 10 hours per family.

Edmonton Islamic School has 20 hours mandatory volunteering per family. Parents have to provide a cheque of \$150 at the beginning of the year, and once the 20 hours of volunteering are completed, the cheque is returned. If the required hours are not completed by the end of the year, the school cashes the cheque.

You need someone to manage it, if it is implemented in our schools.

There are many ways to volunteer.

Palliser cannot take any fees so society will take the money.

Money does not have to go to society. We can declare we are charging money for volunteer fee. It will go through Palliser. The ministry might question the district.

The second option is to go through the school. After the new year the school will be able to have their own account. The NDP are very weary of schools taking fees. If we decide as a council to do this we have to do our homework and go straight to the minister.

We have to be clear with parents as to where the money will be allocated.

It's a huge solution for our problem.

- **CIS Uniform/ Logo Changes**

Are there plans to have the uniform and logos changed? Administrations from both campuses have wanted to change them for the past several years.

We want to ask parents and find out their thoughts.

We want to change the logo to one, which is more representative and brings school pride, which means a lot to the older students. Our logo is limiting when we are thinking of athletics and brands. It is just a way to give the students pride. It is basically rebranding the school. Another school has sought the help of an organization, which helps in rebranding. Maybe we can do that.

We should sit after the break to start working on it. It will take about six months.

As for us as Muslims we cannot pick something with a face so kids can pray in it.

Christians have a cross; Muslims have the crescent and star, so let's work around that. The star does not have any religious foundation.

If you look at other schools they have a logo for athletics and then have a different school logo. The design of it sorely needs an upgrade.

What do graduates say? I am from CIS.

Take students thoughts into consideration when selecting this. Students want to fit in with

the sports community.

Logo does not have to have an actual face or animal if it is the name.

Uniforms: If we were going to change the logo and the uniform we have to work on the timeline. The goal is to change the uniform for next year.

Is there a team set up working on rebranding? Not yet. We have been given the green light from the society to go ahead.

We can do a survey for students to give their opinion. It will give them a sense of pride that their opinion was taken into consideration.

Parents need to be informed ahead of time. We want to get more than one vendor involved. We want to do it through the council. Also get students input and staff.

This can be a topic for *Let's Talk*. Get parent's feed back. It can be an incentive to take these sessions seriously.

These things need to be in place by January.

OBK will do it through the council.

Maybe use Green Falcons or something that is green.

There is a process to confirm the name.

If you know any parent who does this maybe we can connect with them.

In Islamic schools we don't invest in branding. The hoodies in AJ have given the students pride.

We cannot have anything Islamic: dome, minaret . . . We can't do animals. We need to find something in between which doesn't stand out too much.

If you hire a branding company you can give them your ideas and they will make up something for you.

Administration wants something for the kids to be proud of. It has to be something worth it for the parents to pay more to change all these uniforms.

School council is interested, the administration will look into it, and maybe society will fund to hire someone to help us with it.

It should stick in your brain. It should be something that Muslims will recognize.

Parents are complaining about the fabric of the uniforms and it has to be affordable. Some parents are going overseas and getting the logo put on different pieces of clothing.

- **Recycling Bin Project**

Do we have a recycling system on the main floor at OBK? We have in the offices.

AJ looked into a three-bin system. Once you set up with the company they provide the bins. They are compact and they fit a lot. There is a fee and everything is included.

Can we purchase the bins ourselves and dump them out ourselves?

It is not deposit recyclables. We don't want to do compost. It takes a load off of the cleaners. Fatimah can get back on the rates.

- **Children's Hospital Marathon**

Once we got everyone on board to participate, registration was closed. We didn't have a lot of time. We talked with the coordinator and we want to register once they open registration in February. We would like to get both campuses on board. OBK doesn't do Terry Fox.

We want to do Scotia Bank but it is in Ramadan.

There is an early bird registration of \$15 per student. Anyone can register anytime once the team is registered. Parents will pay the fee and register. It is open for all ages and there are different distances they can run. The run is in September.

1500 is the maximum number of participants.

We think we will get about 50 students to participate across both campuses. Even if we have

30 kids, that would be sufficient. They are still representing CIS.

Both schools want to register. Find out when the fee changes and make it a deadline for students to register. School council can sponsor some students; maybe the leadership students. The coordinator will contact Nada when registration is open. A lot of schools fundraise for the hospital. The charity went to mental health in schools.

- **Date for next collaborative meeting**

Our next collaborative meeting will be some time during February. Raiha and Ramy will collaborate on a date. Should we do it once every second month or once each term? OBK can do it on Feb 27. That date needs to be confirmed with Ramy.

- **ASCA**

Are we doing workshops with ASCA this year? We did one last year: the purpose of school council. Ahlam will connect with them.

Administration did a session on little things make a difference for principals and vice principals. Raiha suggested on doing a workshop on how to conduct meetings effectively. A lot of the times we go over time in our meetings and administration and teachers have to get up early the next morning to go to school.

School council members have attended this topic. They will try to be more effective in the meetings and move on from topic to topic.

CLOSING DUAA at 7:53

Minutes Approved by:

Principal
Raiha Idrees

Chairperson
Ahlam Sadden

Secretary
Anjum Dawood

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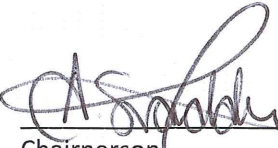
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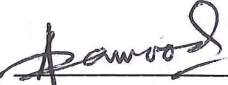
Minutes Approved by:



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Raiha Idrees



Chairperson
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Secretary
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