

Lord Tennyson Elementary School
Quebec 2021 - Parent Meeting
Wed Oct 9,2019

Meeting called to order at 7:10pm by Karen Davies

Outlined Agenda for Meeting;

- Activities while in Quebec
- Benefits of Participation
- Fundraising
- Next Steps

Introduction of Quebec 2021 Executive

- Nana Yenson and Karen Davies - Co-Chairs
- Junko O'Hanley and Tam Cummings - Co-Vice Chairs
- Nasser Esfahani and Eric Rallison - Co-Treasurers
- Karen Barron - Secretary
- Hisaoka Thompson - Volunteer Co-ordinator
- Angel Gaudet and Makiko Tomilson, Nana Yenson and Karen Davies and Melanie Pasemko and Kuniko Goto - Lunch Co-ordinators

Karen Davies reviewed Quebec trip and the Quebec students visit to Vancouver

- Our children travel to Quebec and stay with a French speaking family when they are in grade 7 (2021) usually in February
- Usually for 7 nights
- Quebec students then come here to Vancouver, usually in May and stay with a Tennyson family
- The expectation is that our kids will speak entirely in French while in Quebec and the Quebec kids will speak entirely in English while in Vancouver
- They participate in a variety of activities while in Quebec - sometimes the trip falls during Carnaval - examples from previous years are; sugar shack, Cirque school, University of Laval, indoor rock climbing
- Activities in Vancouver could include dragon boating, Britannia Mining Museum, Grouse Mountain, BBQ on the Beach and/or biking around the seawall

Benefits of having your family participate

- Our kids experience French as a real, living language
- Make new friends/bonding
- Gain independence
- Push their boundaries outside of what they normally do

Pairing/Twinning

- Exchange is undertaken through the organization "Experiences Canada" (formerly known as SEVEC)
- They pair Lord Tennyson with a school in Quebec of a similar size
- Kids and parents fill out questionnaires, based on the responses and teacher input, our kids are paired with a student from the other school

- As a group the two schools introduce themselves, usually through Skype or Facetime
- The kids then make personal contact with their twin through email, Skype, Facetime or a phone call
- Families may also connect with each other before the trip occurs
- Each family in Quebec and Vancouver must provide 3 references and have a criminal record check
- Experiences Canada stipulates that each visiting student must have their own bed to sleep in

Cost

- Each family pays \$450 and agrees to undertake 20 hours of volunteer work towards fundraising
- If you are not inclined to fundraise you can buy out your volunteer commitment and pay \$2285.00
- We need to fundraise \$1000.00 per child and our class now is 59 kids
- Fundraising must cover the supervising teacher's airfare and accommodations, substitute teachers to fill in while they're away, activities in Vancouver (busses, admission to attractions)
- If possible we buy gifts for the host families in Quebec and provide spending money to the travelling children
- If a child does not want to go to Quebec they can still participate in all the Vancouver activities, the cost for this is \$200.00

Parent Agreement

- A parent agreement was distributed to all parents present
- It outlines the 4 payment options and gives deadlines for payment
- Option 1 - \$450 + 20 volunteer hours (plus 3 hours at Winterfest)
- Option 2 - \$2285 and no volunteering
- Option 3 - \$200 + 10 volunteer hours - Child will not go to Quebec but will participate in Vancouver activities
- Option 4 - My child will not participate in either portion of the trip
- \$450 due on Nov along with parent agreement - or payment can be made with 3 postdated cheques of \$150 each due Nov 1 2019, Feb 3 2020 and May 4 2020
- Or, if the 2nd option is chosen \$765 is due Nov 1, \$760 on Feb 3 2020 and \$760 on May 4 2020
- Cheques should be written to Quebec 2021

Grant

- We will apply for a grant from Experiences Canada in the Spring of 2020
- The grant pays for return airfare to Quebec and the pairing process with a school in Quebec
- We won't know if we are awarded a grant until the fall of 2020
- Tennyson has been awarded a grant for at least the past 10 years
- If we don't get a grant our trip would look very different, we would have to decide what to do at this time
- Lord Tennyson has a "Quebec Futures Fund" which has enough money in it to pay for 2 non-grant trips, but these trips would not have the twinning aspect, kids would stay in hotels and it would be more of a cultural trip to Quebec
- Excess money raised in previous years goes into this fund

Fundraising

- Our fundraising goal is \$40-50K
- Sports Day at the end of last year raised \$2450
- Back to School BBQ raised \$2300
- Hot Lunches for this school year on Mon, Tues and Wed expect to raise \$20-\$25K

- Winterfest will raise \$20K hopefully
- Purdy's Chocolate sales raise \$1500 hopefully
- Spring Fling - hopefully our fundraising will be complete by Christmas, but if necessary we can take on the Spring Fling as a Quebec 2021 fundraiser

Winterfest

- This is our largest single fundraiser and participation from all families is mandatory!
- Winterfest co-ordinator is needed as well as champions for the various activities
- Talent Show - MC, AV tech, kid wrangler
- Silent Auction - 3 items per family have to be donated, at least \$50 per item
- Wine Raffle - sell tickets, co-ordinate with wine shop to have great selection to win
- Bake Sale
- Used Book Sale - could be spearheaded by the kids
- Food concession - usually food provided by c'est mon cafe, but doesn't have to be
- 50/50 draw

Nana provided a sign up sheet for people interested in spearheading these various aspects of Winterfest. Many hands make light work, all families can help before the event and are expected to be there on the night of.

Nana Yenson reviewed the parent agreement and due dates for payments and post dated cheques. Completed forms can be dropped off in the lobby in the Quebec 2021 slot

Timeline

- Nov 1 2019 - Parent agreements due, plus payment and/or postdated cheques
- Spring 2020 - apply for Experiences Canada grant
- Fall 2020 - find out if we get the grant
- Fall 2020 - school and twin pairing
- Feb 2021 - Our children go to Quebec
- May 2021 - Quebec kids come to Vancouver

Question and Answer Session

- Chiara Longhi let us know that she set up a Poinsettia and Christmas wreath sale through Growing Smiles fundraising. It was decided that we could do this in conjunction with the Purdy's chocolate sales. Thanks to Chiara for setting this up

Q - Some families were concerned that their dietary and religious preferences wouldn't be accommodated while their children are in Quebec.

A - Though the questionnaire and teacher input, families are paired as best as possible

Q - What is expected of us as a family in Vancouver while we are hosting our twin?

A - During school days the kids participate in activities planned by the teachers. Evenings and weekends are up to the families to plan, some people go to Whistler or the Island, some stick in Vancouver and go up Grouse Mountain or to Playland. It is entirely up to the family what they do in their spare time.

Q - How do I know my child will be safe while in another person's home?

A - Each family in both Quebec and Vancouver fill out an Experiences Canada questionnaire, including 3 references and a criminal record check. If a pairing is really not working out between your child and their host family, the teachers are able to move a child from one family to another. Teachers have their cell phones on 24/7 should the children have a need to contact them

Q - Will there be more meetings in the coming months

A - The next meeting will be after we know about the status of our grant application and the finer details fo the trip are finalized. Another meeting is held closer to departure time when the kids are given packing lists, itineraries and behavioural expectations are reviews

Meeting adjourned at 8:20pm