



Annual Report
for the 2015/2016 School Year

Dear Parents and School Community:

Welcome to Brown and welcome back to returning parents and caregivers. We hope you had a safe and happy summer. The Brown School Council had a very rewarding 2015/2016. The school council held nine meetings on the following dates:

- September 18th 2015;
- October 28th 2015;
- November 24th 2015;
- January 14th 2016;
- February 22nd 2016;
- March 29th 2016;
- April 26th 2016;
- June 1st 2016; and
- June 15th 2016.

These meetings were open to the public to encourage input from parents and other members of the school community. Minutes of the meetings are available at the school office for the general public to review.

Some of the topics we addressed last year were:

- We tackled the labour dispute, which was thankfully resolved with very little effect on Brown. In fact we were contacted by the media regarding the negative effect it had on the school and we were able to report that because we have such a great team of administration, staff, caretakers and teachers, everyone did what they could and Brown really didn't feel the issues that this caused at many other schools. High praise was warranted for the Brown team in very difficult circumstances;

- Traffic & Safety in the community – we made excellent progress with the city regarding safety measures to be implemented in the Brown community. The speed restriction lights were placed on Avenue Road and plans were made for further safety measures, including possible lane changes on Avenue Road, possible barriers etc. The team are still working on many of these current issues;
- Eco – After previously having platinum status with the TDSB in years gone by, eco slipped through the net for a few years. Last year with the help of some amazing teachers and Jen Lockwood, who is no longer at the school, we were able to regain status. We went straight from nothing to Silver. This year we are aiming to regain platinum – aim for the stars!;
- Pool – there were a few weeks of unrest and concern about what would be happening to our school pool, after the city pulled funding for this without prior notice. The TDSB was on it as soon as the issue was raised and our trustee Shelley Laskin notified us immediately. We attended a TDSB board meeting and spoke on behalf of the school about the importance of the pool to our school and community, particularly since we have such limited space. This was well received. The pool is certainly safe for the time being. The TDSB has approved funding until the issue of contract renewal for all school pools with the city is addressed later this year. Even then, the Board has been proactive in seeking alternative funding ideas. There are a number of private companies expressing an interest to lease the pool. We will be given plenty of warning if this is an issue we need to address again in the future and Denise, our facilities chair is ready to do whatever we need to do to address if and when the time comes;
- Treats in school – some parents raised concerns about the level of treats being brought into the school for special occasions, such as birthdays. These concerns were taken on board and the school now has the new policy of no treats – the teachers celebrate in their own way;
- Parent Engagement – this is unsurprisingly on the agenda every year and some years have had more interest than others. This past year was considered a real success, because there was lots of engagement towards the back end of the year. This resulted in more brainstorming about procedures, communications – led to drafting and approval of our bi-laws and the creation of some new roles on parent council that between us we thought could make a difference to the school. Hanna Steenland has taken on the new role of parent engagement. You may have seen her meeting and greeting new parents and old on the playground. Denise Tobey has taken on facilities improvement and is busy brainstorming facilities issues we may be able to try to resolve. A new fundraising chair role was created, to consider whether we need some fresh fundraising ideas, although I believe this post is currently vacant; and

- Fundraising – We held our annual fall fling last November and that was another great success. Also, although the Garden fete is run really as a community get together, it is always a bonus if we are able to make a small profit for the school, which we did again this past year, despite not having a designated co-chair. It really couldn't have been the great day out it was without the time and effort put in by the small group of parents who came together and volunteered their time to run the day without a chair. We also held an experimental end of year get together, which we ran as a small fundraiser. This also achieved additional funds for the school and we thank Darby Burger for this idea and the time put in to running this. It really was a lovely way for parents to get together and say goodbye to the 2015/2016 year! Norman Brownstein will provide a summary of the 2015/2016 year from a financial perspective at the AGM and financial records are available for public inspection at the school office.

We wish to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the many individuals who volunteered their time to contribute. All in all, 2015/2016 was another successful year. None of the things we achieved can be done without the endless hours, commitment and reliability of the parent council members. I would like to say a great big thank you again to our parent council members of 2015/2016:

Secretary – Denise Tobey

Treasurer - Norm Brownstein

World Changers - Laura Finch and Allison Fortier

QSP - Lily Chow and Sarah Banquier

Apparel – Lorrie Nisbett and Jessica Seed and Joanna Track

After 4 Programs - Lily McMillan

Communications - Monique Taylor (website), Amanda Demers (eblasts)

Garden Fete – Wynn Theriault, Dimitra, Marlys Brothers, Christy Kaiser, Claire Kilgour

Hervey, Jen Lockwood

School Event Co-ordinator – Kelly Trainor, Christy Kaiser

Technology – Jamie Ryan

Fall Fling – Darby Burger

Giving Tree – MC Sutton

Junior Rep – Jamie Ryan

Volunteer Co-ordinator – Martha McCall

Teacher Rep – Chris MacDonald

Non-teaching staff member rep – Lily McMillan

Kiss and Ride – Mary Ann Stewart

Lunch Mom Program – MC Sutton

Speaker Series – Ann Watson

Grad Committee – Jenifer Glover

Eco Committee – Jennifer Lockwood

Finally, we would like to wish the best of luck to the new School Council Team for 2016/2017. The new members and their positions are on the website and will be outlined in the first meeting of the year. If anyone is interested in any of the vacant positions on parent council, or even just attending and sharing ideas, we are always looking for more parents to help.

Sincerely yours,

Toni Wharton & Lisa Bernstein
Co-Chairs