

**ST. ALBERT
COGITO
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**

The role of the St. Albert Cogito Steering Committee is to support and enhance the experience of the students in the programme. The committee is advisory in nature, providing input to the principal. The membership in the committee includes all parents of students registered in the programme. A District Office representative is also identified to work with the committee on a needs basis.

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD OCTOBER 18, 2005

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- Our Steering Committee still has vacancies.
- Helpful notes regarding uniform orders.
- 106 registered Cogito students (K to 7).
- AB Education mandates 30 minutes of daily physical activity for every student (grades 1 – 9).
- Used Uniform sales nets a profit – a process is established to allocate funds such as these.
- Social events for Cogito families proposed.
- Cogito Parent newsletter proposed.
- Principal's Report overviews the Cogito Program and discusses how parents can support their child's success in the program.

Attendees at Meeting:

Principal and Assistant Principal: Ardyth Garrison, Erin Steele
Cogito Parents: Kathleen Smith, Mike and Ramonde Maxfield, Sherri Koziol, Karla Brophy, Sheryl Beuerlein, Jay Calahasen, Karey McClure, Sandy Reid, Wanda Lai, Marilyn Blacklock

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Sheryl B.

Sheryl Beuerlein welcomed all attendees and lead introductions around the table. Sheryl informed the members that Cheryl Joseph, our intended chair for this meeting, was unexpectedly unable to attend this evening's meeting. Sheryl B. was asked to chair in her place.

REVIEW OF LAST MEETING MINUTES DATED MAY 16, 2005

All

The minutes of the meeting held May 16, 2005 were accepted by the committee.

ACTION: Ramonde to forward an electronic copy of the minutes to the executive committee for their records.

FORMATION OF 2005/2006 COGITO STEERING COMMITTEE

Sheryl B./Ardyth

Sheryl B. described the previous make-up of the Cogito Steering Committee. As some of our executive members were unable to attend this meeting, Sheryl was able to provide updates as to their interests and desires for this year’s committee membership.

Ardyth provided an overview of the mandate of the committee. A Steering Committee may be formed at the discretion of a school principal. The purpose of the committee would be to enhance and support the experience of the students in a particular program. The committee provides input to the principal to be used as background for the principal’s decision-making. As Principal of Elmer S. Gish School, Ardyth formally invited the attendees to form the committee for the year.

At this time in the meeting, and during ensuing discussion throughout the evening, the following appointments were made. Remaining vacancies will be addressed at the next meeting, allowing more time for member consideration. A document outlining the position descriptions will be made available in the office for those wanting more information on specific roles.

ACTION: Committee Formation is to be included in next meeting’s agenda.

Chairperson	<i>Vacant</i>	
Co-Chairperson	<i>Vacant</i>	
Secretary:	Ramonde Maxfield	460-6701
Akinsdale Parents Association Representatives:	Sherrri Koziol	458-6979
	Karey McClure (backup)	458-6148
School Council Representatives:	Kathleen Smith	418-1715
	<i>Vacant (backup)</i>	
Media/Promotions Coordinator:	<i>Vacant</i>	
Uniform Committee Coordinator (New Uniforms):	Tracey Minaker	460-7374
Uniform Committee Coordinator (Used Uniforms):	Sheryl Beuerlein	459-6272
Uniform Committee Treasurer:	Cheryl Joseph	459-7795
Uniform Committee Secretary:	Shelene Hlus	459-5737
Classroom Representative, Kindergarten	<i>Vacant</i>	
Classroom Representative, Grade 1:	Marilyn Blacklock	973-3114
Classroom Representative, Grade 2/3:	<i>Vacant</i>	
Classroom Representative, Grade 4/5:	<i>Vacant</i>	
Classroom Representative, Grade 6/7:	<i>Vacant</i>	
Member-at-Large:	Karey McClure	458-6148
Member-at-Large:	<i>Vacant</i>	
Member-at-Large:	<i>Vacant</i>	

UNIFORMS

Sheryl B.

NEW UNIFORMS

All September orders, and any recent exchanges, will be mailed out by Neat Uniforms tomorrow (Oct. 19th). As well, all returns have now been processed.

Any on-going orders received by Neat Uniforms by mid month will be mailed out for month-end. Anyone wanting to order garments are advised to get their order processed in the first half of the month to expedite delivery.

Head bands, and ties are back-ordered due to a shortage of fabric that Neat Uniforms is experiencing. They hope to have these out as soon as possible.

The only grey, girl pants available right now are the grey jean style pant available from Uniform & Co. (style TWCL320806, or (Husky) TWCL32552). Orders can be made on-line at www.uniformandco.com or by phoning 1-866-753-9686. During the temporary unavailability of dress pants, these casual girls pants will be accepted as formal wear.

USED UNIFORMS

The used uniform sale that was run in September went very well, netting a profit of \$100.00 for the one day/evening. As this is the third year in the program, the committee has seen the inventory grow more substantially. Intended sales throughout this school year are September (complete), February and May (coinciding with the spring new uniform fitting days).

2005-2006 COGITO PHONE DIRECTORY

Sheryl B.

Cheryl Joseph asked Sheryl B. to relay to the committee her concern over the form used by the administration, which was missing key information such as grade, e-mail address, and a "yes/no" box for participation. This, along with an injury in her family, contributed to the directory being late.

ACTION: Sheryl B. to work with Cheryl J. to finalize publication.

DISTRIBUTION OF MINUTES AND AGENDAS

Sheryl B./Ramonde

After consideration of electronic and hardcopy distribution of minutes and agendas, the committee decided to continue supplying these documents in hardcopy format in the Friday envelopes. Notification of meetings are to be included in the Glimpse of Gish at least two weeks ahead of the intended date, with the draft agenda as close to that as possible. It was noted that the new agenda format that provides a brief description of the topics is beneficial.

NEW REGISTRATIONS IN COGITO FOR 2005/2006

Ardyth

This year's final numbers show 106 registered Cogito students (K to 7), 22 of whom are in kindergarten.

This is up from last year's count of 85 students, 27 of whom were in kindergarten.

It is interesting to note that 23 of our current 106 students come from the Akinsdale/Pineview area, showing that the majority of students travel in from other subdivisions. Records indicate that 11 students are from outside of St. Albert.

Analysis of the kindergarten students shows us that the bulk of these 22 students are new families joining the program, as was the experience last year. These new families typically cite word-of-mouth as the means of their learning of the program. Most of them also attended the Cogito Information Night held last February, followed up with personal meetings and tours with Ardyth. Due to this correlation between the Information Night and new registrants, promotional ideas became the focus of the discussion. These covered a Kindergarten Open House, relocation/real estate contacts, and the suggested expansion of our involvement at the Lots for Tots Fair held in February each year (eg, uniform on display, our own booth, presentation/overview of Cogito).

ACTION: Ardyth offered to explore our Lots for Tots ideas with Lois Gluck, our event contact.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION POLICY

Sheryl B.

New Alberta Education policy has mandated 30 minutes of daily physical activity for every student in grades 1 through to 9. In order to implement this policy, it has been decided to incorporate 5 minutes of classroom based, daily activity, building up monthly to 30 minutes per day on non-phys. ed. days. (eg, Sept = 5 minutes, Oct = 10 min. and so on). This method of implementation is supported at the district school level. With no reduction in times for other activities/subjects, this physical activity time must overlap other class content. For example, a neighborhood walk may be planned as part of a topic in Social Studies. The Cogito program faces the challenge of building this into our specific style of learning along with the addition of French beginning in grade 1.

PARENT INFORMATION SESSIONS

All

The idea was raised to develop a parent information session for all Cogito grade levels outlining classroom rules, expectations, procedures, daily schedule, etc. The timing for this would be best in the 2nd week of September each year. This scenario seemed to be popular with the attendees, seeing it as helpful for new Cogito parents as well as those with students moving on to a new teacher.

Ardyth updated the committee with the activities of the staff, outlining a school start-up debrief they have recently had. Their discussions generated ideas for next year's information/communication to parents. One of the ideas was to hold a Literacy MAP information session for parents, likely up to grade 3 level. The committee agreed this would be very beneficial.

ACTION: Ardyth will add the parent information session idea to the list of ideas for consideration next year.

EXPENDITURE OF USED UNIFORM SALES PROCEEDS

Sheryl B.

The Used Uniform sales generated a surplus, beginning to make way for this committee to contemplate expenditures to benefit the Cogito program. Sheryl learned of a need in Mrs. MacQueen's grade 2/3 class for a 2nd set of books (24 classics) that was available at Costco for the very reasonable price of \$34.23. The committee supported Sheryl's proposal to utilize some of the Used Uniform Sales proceeds for this purpose.

This new access to potential funding generated discussion about how to become aware of, and access, program needs and priorities. Ardyth and Erin suggested to the committee that the teaching staff are likely best able to determine and prioritize program needs. Ardyth praised their ability to work well together as a team, and noted that we could trust them to, competently and fairly, apply any additional funding to the benefit of all grades. The committee agreed with this observation and the following process was decided upon for any future expenditures by the committee:

Expenditure Process

At any time the Cogito Steering Committee determines that it has accumulated funds that are available for program expenditures, they will inform Ardyth, who will then inform the teaching staff. The staff will review program needs in light of the dollar amounts available and deliver their ideas back to the committee. The committee can then discuss and vote on any spending decisions.

SOCIAL EVENTS FOR COGITO FAMILIES

Karla B.

Karla B. suggested that some social events throughout the year would be a welcome way for parents to meet and for families to get to know each other. Events could be structured to provide entertainment and fun for the children, while at the same time allowing parents the time to socialize and get to know one another. The committee supported Karla's event suggestions and Sandy Reid and Kathleen Smith volunteered to assist Karla in planning an upcoming event.

COGITO PARENT NEWSLETTER

Karla B.

Karla B. suggested the possibility of a Cogito Parent Newsletter, produced by the parents, for the parents. The intent would be a bi-monthly newsletter, covering topics of interest to St. Albert Cogito families. Karla felt that the newsletter would help to build community amongst the Cogito parents. Many of the committee members saw this as a positive and helpful addition. Discussion at the table included ideas surrounding distribution of the newsletter as well as overall school connectedness. The decision was made not to have a separate Cogito parent newsletter, but rather to prepare Cogito information for publication in the Gish Gazette.

ACTION: Karla will work with school staff on Cogito write-ups for the Gish Gazette.

COGITO FUNDRAISING

All

Agenda read: Introduce possible fundraising needs, procedures and options for the benefit of Cogito.
This item was deferred to our next meeting.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Ardyth

Ardyth provided a brief presentation of a document entitled, "Overview of the Cogito Alternative Program". This one page document was prepared with the intent to aid parents in communication they may have with other people about the program. It covers the following four points:

- What is an "Alternative Program"?
- What is the philosophy of teaching set out for the Cogito Alternative Program?
- What is a Cogito classroom like?
- What is a Cogito student like?

Ardyth expanded the overview to discuss the expectations on parents in support of student success in the Cogito Program.

- Assistance with homework is an important and integral part.
- The students are expected to develop personal responsibility and effectively manage their time. Parents can support their child in this growth area by encouraging and fostering independence as well as respecting their responsibility for daily communication between the classroom and home.
- In addition, Ardyth relies on the input and feedback she receives from parents via personal contact or attendance at committee meetings. She encourages and welcomes open communication from all parents.

NEXT MEETING

Invitation to all Cogito parents to attend the next Cogito Steering Committee Meeting to be held on November 15th at 7:00pm.

PARENT'S CORNER

All Cogito parents are always welcome to attend any meetings of the Cogito Steering Committee. Your input of topics, and contribution to the discussion and decision-making is valued and appreciated.

Issues can be raised any time at the meetings, however it is helpful if you can provide advance notice by way of submitting an agenda item directly to the Committee Chair or Co-Chair.

If you prefer, you may use the space below to note down your item. This form will be forwarded by your homeroom teacher to Mrs. Garrison.

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STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**

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MINUTES OF MEETING HELD NOVEMBER 15, 2005

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- Committee Membership finalized. We still need Classroom Representatives for Grade 4/5 and Grade 6/7.
- Uniform pants continue to present challenges with fit, fabric and delivery.
- Your ideas and suggestions for Cogito family social events are welcome.
- The Elmer Gish “wish-list” is on its way to the next APA meeting.
- Fundraising for the benefit of Cogito is a viable option. How should this money be spent?
- The committee analyzed current problems and opportunities in Cogito program promotion.
- Please join us Jan. 10th for our next meeting.

Attendees at Meeting:

Principal and Assistant Principal: Ardyth Garrison, Erin Steele
Cogito Parents: Kathleen Smith, Ramonde Maxfield, Karla Brophy, Sheryl Beuerlein, Wanda Lai, Marilyn Blacklock, Colleen Holzer, Cheryl Joseph

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Cheryl J.

REVIEW OF LAST MEETING MINUTES DATED OCTOBER 18, 2005

All

The minutes of the meeting held October 18th, 2005 were accepted by the committee.

ACTION: Ramonde to forward an electronic copy of the minutes to the executive committee for their records.

FORMATION OF 2005/2006 COGITO STEERING COMMITTEE

Cheryl J.

The membership of this year’s Steering Committee was finalized with only a few vacancies remaining. The Chair position will be shared this year, giving us two co-chairs along with a vice-chair incumbent.

Co-Chairperson	Cheryl Joseph	459-7795
Co-Chairperson	Colleen Holzer	418-7272
Vice-Chairperson	Sheryl Beuerlein	459-6272
Secretary:	Ramonde Maxfield	460-6701
Akinsdale Parents Association Representatives:	Sherri Koziol	458-6979
	Karey McClure (backup)	458-6148
School Council Representatives:	Kathleen Smith	418-1715
	Cheryl Joseph	459-7795
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Uniform Committee Treasurer:	Cheryl Joseph	459-7795
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Classroom Representative, Grade 1:	Marilyn Blacklock	973-3114
Classroom Representative, Grade 2/3:	Karla Brophy	459-8322
Classroom Representative, Grade 4/5:	<i>Vacant</i>	
Classroom Representative, Grade 6/7:	<i>Vacant</i>	
Member-at-Large:	Karey McClure	458-6148
Member-at-Large:	Karla Brophy	459-8322
Member-at-Large:	Wanda Lai	458-1926
Member-at-Large:	Marilyn Blacklock	973-3114

UNIFORMS

Sheryl B./Cheryl J.

USED UNIFORMS

The Used Uniform bank account now shows a balance of \$274.58, with \$12.00 in outstanding cheques. Intended sales throughout this school year are September (complete), February and May (coinciding with the spring new uniform fitting days).

NEW UNIFORMS

Sheryl B, Tracey, Erin and Ardyth met with Sam and Yasmin of Neat Uniforms. Several supply-related topics were discussed. It was discovered that Neat Uniforms supplies two different brands of pants when filling uniform orders. The two brands (School Apparel and Rifle Official Schoolwear) are sized very differently. This explains why many pants received by parents have been a lot smaller or larger than expected, based on the sizing charts provided and even after attending our sample uniform fittings. ***Sheryl suggests that parents, if able, indicate the brand they want when ordering new pants.*** The attendees further discussed the troubles experienced with the pants. Many feel the fabric used for the boy's and girl's pants are not durable and warm enough, including the Uniform & Co. product. Marilyn suggested we take a look at corduroys for added warmth.

With the above confusion and various other examples of organization and delivery mishaps experienced, the committee again questions the competency of Neat Uniforms to supply us our school uniform. Discussion of other suppliers determined that, perhaps, there is not a supplier without problems or difficulties. Progressive Academy and Stratford School both have challenges with Up Market Images and Uniform & Co., so far, has not alleviated our pant concerns. Cheryl J. suggested we find out what the Traditional Learning Centre (TLC) in Calgary and Tempo in Edmonton does regarding their uniforms. Calgary has many uniformed schools and it would be helpful to hear how they have managed.

ACTION: Cheryl J. to contact the TLC principal to find out more about their supplier. As well, Cheryl will contact someone regarding Tempo.

In the meantime, we'd like to focus our efforts on finding some solutions for our supply of uniform pants. **ACTION:** Sheryl B. will contact Neat Uniforms and Colin of Uniform & Co. to find out if they have alternate fabric choices for the pants (eg, heavier and more durable).

PHYSICAL EDUCATION POLICY

Cheryl J.

(Background) New Alberta Education policy has mandated 30 minutes of daily physical activity for every student in grades 1 through to 9. With no reduction in times for other activities/subjects, this physical activity time must overlap other class content. The Cogito program faces the challenge of building this into our specific style of learning along with the addition of French beginning in grade 1.

An example provided in the last meeting minutes referred to a neighborhood walk as part of a social studies class. After reading this, Cheryl was concerned at the possibility of too many classes being conducted as "outdoor field trips" and distracting from core instruction. Ardyth clarified that it was only one example, while there are many more of teachers providing creative ways to achieve physical activity in the classroom. Cheryl recognized the importance and benefits of these breaks and opportunities for activity and offered a suggestion that may be of interest to the staff. She suggested that, perhaps for non-gym days, use of intramurals at the lunch hour could make up where the classroom may leave off. The activity choices offered for intramurals could be extensively broadened (to include skipping, soccer, tobogganing, among others) to appeal to a wide array of students. Students need only sign-up on non-gym days for a period of about 20 minutes, considering the classroom activity already engaged. This would leave plenty of time for free play. Ardyth and Erin both considered the suggestion alongside the benefits of unstructured leisure time for the students. Erin noted that this is not a struggle for Cogito alone, as the rest of the ESG teaching staff are also finding it a challenge. In fact, the efforts to implement this policy has been a topic with many of the St. Albert Schools at various meetings. It is something that will need to evolve and grow over time.

SOCIAL EVENTS FOR COGITO FAMILIES

Karla B.

Karla has received some positive feedback surrounding plans for some Cogito social events. The overall structure of the events are intended to provide some entertainment and fun for the children, while parents have the time to socialize and get to know one another. Plans for the first event were discussed and confirmed to be an event held in our own gym on a Friday evening (likely Jan 20th or 27th), perhaps with a magician for entertainment. Ideas for future events were tabled by committee members such as; a swimming party, bowling, movie night and gymnastics.

ACTION: All Cogito families are requested to forward any event ideas and suggestions they have to Karla via phone or e-mail. All input is welcome.

APA WISH LIST

Cheryl J.

Cheryl began with an update for the committee on the discussions at the last Akinsdale Parents' Association (APA) meeting. The next APA meeting will focus on Ardyth's presentation of the school's "wish list". This is a listing of desired items that Ardyth develops based on input from the staff, including our Cogito teachers. Cheryl opened the floor for any further input to be put forth by committee members. It was noted that the math and reading program needs have already been discussed with Ardyth and there were no additional items brought forward.

COGITO FUNDRAISING

Cheryl J.

Cheryl raised the topic of fundraising for the benefit of the Cogito program. Cheryl reported that only one group within a school's operating budget may apply for and run a bingo/casino, and that the group which rightfully holds that position at ESG is the APA. The Cogito Steering Committee, however, may apply for

permits to hold fundraising events that realize revenue of less than \$10,000 per event. Colleen provided a few ideas for fundraising such as a movie night, or 50/50 draws at Cogito social events. Ardyth asked what the intentions for the funds would be and Cheryl provided the following samples of options that may be open for use of any funds raised:

- Materials for the classrooms.
- Funding for social events.
- Uniform subsidies for families in need.
- Promotion of the program.

The current process for the Steering Committee spending of surplus funds is to provide all Cogito parents with written notification of the Committee's proposal to make an expenditure prior to the meeting for which such discussion is planned. All Cogito parents are welcome to attend the meeting to take part in the discussions.

COGITO PROGRAM PROMOTION

Cheryl J.

Ardyth informed the committee of the promotional program discussions currently underway at the district level. The campaigns are grouped into three categories; Elementary, Junior High, and High School. Ardyth and Erin are currently involved with both the Elementary and Junior High discussions. Once finalized, there is a communications person at the district office who will action the decisions made.

Currently, the planning is:

- To have the following alternative programs (IB, Cogito, Logos) provide program information session in February. Similar to what we have done in the past, this is not an open house with tours and is not kindergarten specific. It is intended only to provide information on the alternative programs themselves. Beginning last year, French Immersion moved their information session from February to April, as it was decided that the entry points into that program are usually kindergarten or junior high.
- To host school open houses in April and provide opportunities to meet kindergarten teachers.

District advertisements are typically scheduled as follows:

- Early February – advertise kindergarten registration (which begins Feb. 1st in all schools) and provide contact information.
- Mid-March and early April – advertise the April school-based open houses and a series of ads related to District programs.
- To further promote our programs, our school allocates funds to produce leaflets, posters, brochures and program information packages that are provided at the school and are informally distributed by Cogito parents as is possible.

Ardyth and Erin wished to collect input from the committee to bring with them to the district program promotion meetings.

Cheryl highlighted to the committee many opportunities she sees to improve upon promotion of Cogito. She stressed that so much more could be done to improve awareness of the Cogito program within St. Albert and even the teaching community itself. The lack of awareness of what the Cogito program is all about, and even its existence in our community, has been discussed at numerous meetings in the past. Cheryl stated that, based on her marketing background and past experiences, we need to get our name out there and ensure that more members of the community are aware of us. The opportunities for promotional improvements that Cheryl noted, as well as others raised by committee members at the table are listed below:

- Advertisements for the Cogito program, containing Cogito logos, pictures of students in uniform and specific/detailed Cogito information, do not appear at the time many consider prime. This refers to March and April when parents are out looking for school options. In a sense, our program is a “no-

show” at that prime time for those looking towards advertisements to let them know what’s available for their children.

- We have a very good Cogito information brochure that the committee feels is an excellent communication tool about Cogito. Although it is displayed/available in the foyer at the District Office and can be distributed by our school on its own, Cheryl expressed the following shortcomings that she sees in the distribution of the brochure:
 - When parents phone into the District Office for information about what’s available in the district, it is their practice to send out only the District’s own brochure. They do not send out the alternative programs’ brochures unless the caller specifically asks about district programs or they physically drop by the District office.
 - Recently, we have not been able to send our Cogito brochure to pre-schools or grade six students in favour of the District’s own brochure.
 - Some organizations such as Welcome Wagon and Newcomers will not distribute Cogito brochures in favour of the District’s own brochure.
- The District brochures, “Get Ready for Life – Registration Guide”, (which describes all of the District’s programs) and especially the “Come Grow with Us – Kindergarten Programs” do not provide sufficient information to adequately describe the positive attributes of Cogito. Cheryl feels that in the absence of a larger distribution of the very informative Cogito brochure, it is necessary to improve the description of the Cogito program within these two District brochures. In addition, Cheryl notes that the sections relating to busing availability, by its omission of alternative program students does not reflect or imply that busing is available for Cogito students.
- Although the February information evening is very well-run, there was no kindergarten specific session provided at this time, nor at the April open house. As well, advertisements for the Cogito kindergarten do not appear on their own with Cogito’s own image (ie, Cogito logo, picture of student in uniform or detailed program information) to draw attention and interest.
- The district web-site is sadly lacking with its current presentation of the Cogito program. For example, this being our third year into the program, the District’s web-page, about District Kindergarten choices, contains specific information about French Immersion, Logos and English Kindergarten. There is no mention of Cogito. Considering that our program, like others, grows most at the Kindergarten level, this is a huge concern. We have experienced a very slow response to our very reasonable requests for improvements. Due to St. Albert’s known comfort and use of technology, information contained on websites becomes quite valuable, raising the need for its accuracy.
- Lots for Tots is a very effective forum for parents to find out about available options. An information session at this event would be quite effective, as it has been for French Immersion, but is not available to us. Also the visibility of Cogito is not high at all, with many attendees not even noticing it or being aware of it.
- Areas outside our jurisdiction, Morinville for example, may contain many interested families, however, our ability to reach them is restricted.

In concert with the above points, Cheryl J. posed the following three questions to Ardyth:

- What are the exact parameters/rules of the district promotional campaign surrounding alternative programs?
- Can we, in addition to our February information session, have a Cogito information session at the April ESG open house, and advertise specifically for that?
 - If not, can we try what French Immersion started doing last year and switch Cogito’s information session to April?
- Can Cogito advertise its program late in March/April for the ESG open house, or, in the absence of a Cogito information session, just to provide program information in advertisements devoted exclusively to Cogito during this time?

ACTION: Ardyth noted the questions and will pursue them.

Ardyth pointed out that in the past few years the advertising has been effective in getting parents to call in for more information. She was positive about the significant growth Cogito has experienced thus far. In addition, Ardyth informed the committee that the Cogito Program showed the greatest growth of any program at the elementary level this school year. With the addition of a strong kindergarten class in the second year and the retention of students with the addition of Grade 7 in the third year, our growth statistics are noteworthy.

Supplementary data provided by Ardyth subsequent to the meeting:

The St. Albert Cogito program grew by almost 24% Sept/05 over Sept/04. It grew by 60% Sept/04 over Sept/03. Total growth Sept/03 to Sept/05, the program had almost doubled, or grown by over 98% by the beginning of its 3rd year. Another District alternative program had increased by slightly less than 90% by the beginning of its fifth year.

Ardyth and Erin wanted to gather some advertising content input from the committee. They wanted to arrive at three distinct characteristics to consistently use in all Cogito promotions. Ardyth lead a brainstorming session, gathering all the main characteristics. Then she had the group choose the three they felt best characterized the main thrust of the program. The result was the following four points, followed by a very close fifth: (subsequent wordsmithing is pending).

- A structured, uniformed environment, teacher directed instruction.
- Academic: basic program expanded.
- Early literacy through explicit phonics.
- Willing to work hard, pride in their work, high level of academic success.
- Homework and parent involvement.

The remaining items that were listed are as follows: (in random order)

- French in Grade 1.
- Public speaking.
- Handwriting/penmanship.
- High standards for student conduct and behaviour.
- Uniforms dressed for success.
- Strong work ethic.

It was agreed that all promotions are best served by having a picture clearly showing uniformed student(s), the logo and the name highly visible.

Cheryl advised the Committee that her recent request for Cogito brochures for parents' use has resulted in the opportunity for any parent wishing to retain a small amount of Cogito brochures being able to obtain these by calling the school office (459-7766). The brochures can be sent home in your child's backpack for you to personally hand out to people you come in contact with. Word-of-mouth remains a very effective means of promoting our program.

Ardyth was hoping to lead the committee in the development of a statement of goals for the promotions campaign, however we ran out of time.

ACTION: Cheryl J. to consult with Ardyth to determine if a statement of goals should be added to the next meeting's agenda.

NEXT MEETING

Invitation to all Cogito parents to attend the next Cogito Steering Committee Meeting to be held on January 10th at 7:00pm.

PARENT'S CORNER

All Cogito parents are always welcome to attend any meetings of the Cogito Steering Committee. Your input of topics, and contribution to the discussion and decision making is valued and appreciated.

Issues can be raised any time at the meetings, however it is helpful if you can provide advance notice by way of submitting an agenda item directly to any of the Chairpersons listed on these minutes.

If you prefer, you may use the space below to note down your item. This form will be forwarded by your homeroom teacher to Ardyth Garrison.

**ST. ALBERT
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STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**

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MINUTES OF MEETING HELD JANUARY 10, 2006

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- Potential new supplier of uniform pants has been found.
- Cogito Family Fun Night Planned for January 27th.
- Classroom Representative positions for Grade 4/5 and Grade 6/7 remain vacant.
- The District wide registration promotion campaign has been decided. Our Cogito information evening moves forward into the April registration timeframe.
- Please join us February 21st for our next meeting.

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Attendees at Meeting:

Principal and Assistant Principal: Ardyth Garrison, Erin Steele
 Cogito Parents: Cheryl Joseph, Karla Brophy, Marilyn Blacklock, Karey McClure, Ramonde Maxfield

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Cheryl J.

REVIEW OF LAST MEETING MINUTES DATED NOVEMBER 15, 2005

All

The minutes of the meeting held November 15th, 2005 were accepted by the committee.

ACTION: Ramonde to forward an electronic copy of the minutes to the executive committee for their records.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

UNIFORMS (NEW)

Cheryl J.

As some members may already know, Uniform & Company has discontinued supplying uniform products, due to profitability concerns. Although we were using their services for the provision of uniform pants, we were still experiencing difficulty addressing our pant needs. As discussed in November's meeting, Cheryl was able to contact the Principal at the Traditional Learning Centre in Calgary. As a result, she was put in contact with a uniform supply company named Halpern's. This company has a retail distribution centre in Calgary and services over 40,000 students across Canada. Ardyth reviewed some of her research on the company, which revealed strong community and ethical business practices. Cheryl was able to obtain some sample pants from Anita Schiltz of Halpern's for the committee to view. The young boys grey twill pants were well made of extremely durable fabric (19" to 30" waist) with double knees. The junior boys black pants were also well made in good fabric choices. There was one sample of junior girls black casual pants that were very well liked also. The general consensus of the committee was to pursue Halpern's as supplier for our pants. We liked the idea of remaining with Neat Uniforms for the other items especially as it relates to the known difficulty obtaining our plaid fabric. We are waiting to hear from Neat Uniforms regarding the availability of cord pants and have not heard of any extenuating problems regarding their servicing our other uniform needs.

ACTION: Tracey to talk with Halpern's to explore pant options for all our student needs.

Looking forward to the new registrations and spring bulk orders, Cheryl has begun drafting up a new version of the uniform brochure including the pictorial description of uniform specifications. Once completed, this brochure will contain all the information relative to *new* uniforms.

As we move forward in the way we manage the uniforms, Tracey Minaker's role will be one of a liaison between the uniform supplier(s) and the parents/committee at large, fielding any *extenuating concerns or handling new garment additions or changes*. Individual families will continue to place and reconcile their normal, ongoing uniform orders directly with the supplier between uniform sale events.

Neat Uniforms: On-line at www.neatuniforms.ca (password is g1sh)

Phone at 1-888-909-6328

Parents are asked to let Tracey know of any irreconcilable concerns or ongoing delivery issues so that she can identify any trends or multiple problems of the same type. Tracey will continue to coordinate the bulk spring and fall orders including the sample try-on days.

UNIFORMS (USED)

Cheryl J.

The committee has received the rebate cheque from our spring 2004 Neat Uniform order. The balance in the Used Uniform account now shows a profit of \$595.87. The next Used Uniform sale is scheduled for Thursday Feb. 2nd. Detail will be sent in the Friday Envelope.

Cheryl reported that she is updating the Uniform Committee Overview document to reflect only the used uniform information, as the new uniform information will be included in the upcoming, newly revised, uniform brochure.

Karey tabled the suggestion of having a small supply of ties and sweaters on hand for parents to purchase in the event their child's gets lost. Rather than wait the 4-6 weeks for delivery, they could immediately purchase the required item from the Used Uniform Committee to enable their child to be properly attired.

(Information supplied following the meeting – Tracey has a few clip ties on hand – if parents want to buy them outright, feel free to contact her).

ACTION: Tracey and Sheryl to consider and report back.

SOCIAL EVENTS

Karla B.

The January 27th Cogito Family Fun night has been communicated to all families. Notification of the event and the response deadline will be noted in this week's Glimpse of Gish. Once confirmed, Karla will contact committee members with volunteer needs to run the event.

AKINSDALE PARENTS ASSOCIATION UPDATE

Cheryl J.

Some initial spending decisions were made at the last APA meeting. Up to \$3000.00 will be spent on a series of leveled reading books for the classrooms, a demonstration microscope will be purchased as well as a new overhead projector calculator.

OUTSTANDING BUSINESS

FORMATION OF 2005/2006 COGITO STEERING COMMITTEE

Cheryl J.

Two positions remain vacant: Classroom Representatives for Grade 4/5 and Grade 6/7. We continue to look for volunteers for these positions.

COGITO PROGRAM PROMOTION

Ardyth G.

Further to our November meeting, Ardyth updated the committee on the following:

- Ardyth presented a variety of wordings and formats that were has been drafted incorporating the input provided by this committee at the November meeting. One redraft pertains to a paragraph in a district brochure regarding busing availability. After some discussion about terminology and its interpretation by the public at large, Ardyth will further work on the wording. The committee members can take some additional time to review the drafts, forwarding comments to Ardyth for the evolution of consistent and clear communication documents.
- The Lots for Tots fair is planned for Jan. 28th. The district will have a double sized booth, holding one section for each program. This will give us a whole section for our panel, pictures, and brochures. Ardyth will be at the event, which runs from 10am to 2pm. Again this year, the presentations provided by the district will be the Kindergarten Preparation (including Cogito information), and French Immersion.
- The district website concerns raised at our last meeting have been addressed. A Cogito link has been added to the district programs portion and we are now listed in the kindergarten section. All text and verbage reflects our current brochures that are now under revision. Once they are finalized, the website will be updated to reflect the changes, hopefully ahead of the registration prime time.

Ardyth was able to relay to the committee the district registration campaign that was decided upon at recent administrative council meetings.

- A change has been made to the timing of the information evenings for the alternative programs. Instead of holding these sessions in February, a decision has been made to try offering them just ahead of the open houses in April. As a result, our information evening for Cogito will be on April 4th with the Elmer S. Gish open house following on April 12th. It is hoped that more attention will be garnered with hosting this event alongside the timelines for school open houses.
- Newspaper ads will be run as follows:

- Late January – Ads will appear that overview district wide registration and notification of all the dates for information evenings as well as open houses. This ad will also promote the Lots for Tots event.
 - Each week up to April, there will be presence in the papers. Each week the ads will focus on a different area or topic as follows:
 - ❖ Kindergarten registration ads,
 - ❖ District wide ads,
 - ❖ Full page ads outlining all the registration dates,
 - ❖ Half page ads for the alternative programs. One program will be featured each week.
 - The first two weeks of April will see more generic, district wide ads in the papers.
 - In Mid March and again in May/June Elmer Gish flyers will be distributed in the papers in the Elmer Gish catchment area. As well flyers featuring the alternative programs (including Cogito) will be distributed city-wide.
- Cogito specific posters can once again be utilized to advertise the program information evening.. Input into the look and content of the posters is welcome. Discussion at the table generated the idea of having a reusable poster with a “take-one” or “rip-off” component that allows the reader to take away pertinent, dated information. The budget is unknown for the development of this poster. We will continue work on this promotion.
 - A district information package will be distributed to the preschools and daycares that will include more emphasis on alternative program information. This new approach will alleviate the distribution that we have attempted on our own in the past.

Cheryl raised the thought of somehow alluding to the Cogito program in promotions for extra challenge options within the district. Ardyth noted that some discussions have taken place on this topic and that in the District brochure, under the section entitled “programs offering extra challenge,” that a reference to the Cogito program in the Alternative Programs section would be made. Ramonde asked if there was any information about Cogito presented to the educators within the district itself for their awareness and potential referrals. Ardyth noted that there has been in the past through e-mail to all staff and in the *News @ 6 for staff*. The alternative programs will be described in upcoming presentations to grade 6 students in the district and perhaps some communication to the parents as well.

COGITO FUNDRAISING

This topic was deferred to our next meeting.

Cheryl J.

NEW BUSINESS

Ardyth informed the committee of recent Cogito staff discussions surrounding compliance with the school uniform specifications. It has been duly noted that many deviations from the uniform policy has been observed. A letter has been drafted that will be sent home to families regarding the issue and restating the policy and the associated follow-up action that can be expected to enable a renewed commitment. It is realized that the problems we have experienced with obtaining uniform garments that are usable, practical and available are likely the basis of the growing deviations. This will be addressed in the letter, noting where the allowances lie and where they do not. The committee understood the need and supported the communication.

Ardyth G.

NEXT MEETING

Invitation to all Cogito parents to attend the next Cogito Steering Committee Meeting to be held on Feb. 21st at 7:00pm.

PARENT'S CORNER

All Cogito parents are always welcome to attend any meetings of the Cogito Steering Committee. Your input of topics, and contribution to the discussion and decision making is valued and appreciated.

Issues can be raised any time at the meetings, however it is helpful if you can provide advance notice by way of submitting an agenda item directly to any of the Chairpersons listed on these minutes. If you prefer, you may use the space below to note down your item. This form will be forwarded by your homeroom teacher to Ardyth Garrison.

ST. ALBERT
COGITO
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

The role of the St. Albert Cogito Steering Committee is to support and enhance the experience of the students in the programme. The committee is advisory in nature, providing input to the principal. The membership in the committee includes all parents of students registered in the programme. A District Office representative is also identified to work with the committee on a needs basis.

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD FEBRUARY 21, 2006

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- Plans begin for our next Cogito social event.
- A new slogan is adopted for our St. Albert Cogito Program.
- Volunteers are needed to distribute posters and new Cogito business cards throughout St. Albert.
- Literacy and Learning Day provides excellent learning opportunity for parents.
- Please join us April 25th for our next meeting.

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Attendees at Meeting:

Principal and Assistant Principal: Ardyth Garrison, Erin Steele
 Cogito Parents: Cheryl Joseph, Karla Brophy, Marilyn Blacklock, Karey McClure, Ramonde Maxfield, Sherrri Koziol, Colleen Holzer

REVIEW OF LAST MEETING MINUTES DATED JANUARY 10, 2006

All

The minutes of the meeting held January 10th, 2006 were accepted by the committee.

ACTION: Ramonde to forward an electronic copy of the minutes to the executive committee for their records.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

UNIFORMS (USED)

Cheryl J.

The current balance in the Used Uniform account is \$571.42. This includes the \$479.19 rebate cheque that we received from Neat Uniforms, representing 7.5% of the new spring/fall uniform orders.

The used uniform sale that was held Feb. 2nd had very low attendance. Although our inventory is growing, the Used Uniform Committee is questioning the timing of the sale and may avoid a Feb. sale next year, offering just the spring and fall sales. The discussion at the table highlighted that the price of some of the used garments may be too high considering the condition of the pieces or in comparison to the price of buying them new. Cheryl noted that the new price guideline that was recently sent out reflected slightly lower prices for items in "like new" condition (75% of retail). Cheryl suggested that maybe the uniform committee could look into contacting some of the parents to see if they would like to consider reducing their prices, however it was noted that price-setting is ultimately the decision of the parents. This idea was endorsed by the members at the table.

SOCIAL EVENTS FOR COGITO FAMILIES

Karla B.

The January 27th Cogito Family Fun night was a success and Karla has received lots of positive feedback on the event. Unfortunately some of the families could not make it due to the flu that was prevalent at that time. The magician was a big hit with the kids and everyone had a good time. The financials of the event netted a loss of \$18.00 due to the number of families who signed up (27 instead of 30). As Karla personally fronted the shortfall, the committee unanimously agreed to refund the \$18.00 to Karla from our Used Uniform account.

Karla is now looking towards our next event to take place in April/May, and is scouting around for ideas. All input is welcome.

AKINSDALE PARENTS ASSOCIATION UPDATE

Cheryl J.

- The APA approximate reported profits from the recent hot lunches as follows: \$162.00 in December, \$134.00 for Feb. KFC lunch and \$130.00 for the Feb. DQ lunch.
- In the plans is a Donut Day on March 21st.
- They are looking to change the "spell-a-thon" to a "learn-a-thon" that would include a math component.
- Another movie night is being planned.
- The school front yard landscaping development has been the subject of study for a class of NAIT landscaping students. They have been working to prepare some development options and will be presenting their plans to ESG on March 2nd.
- The idea of registering the APA as a registered charity is being considered.

SCHOOL COUNCIL UPDATE

Ardyth G.

- The district has begun proposing school operational dates for next year (i.e. dates classes will start in the fall). No decisions have been made yet.
- The next School Council meeting is next week (Feb. 28th). The agenda will include discussion of the Ever Active 3 year plan and school fees.

OUTSTANDING BUSINESS

FORMATION OF 2005/2006 COGITO STEERING COMMITTEE

Cheryl J.

Two positions remain vacant: Classroom Representatives for Grade 4/5 and Grade 6/7. We continue to look for volunteers for these positions.

COGITO PROGRAM PROMOTION

Cheryl J.

Cheryl reported to the committee on the following **promotional materials**:

- The busing statement has been revised and reads in a much more positive light.
- The junior high brochure looks really good, with much improved coverage of the Cogito alternative.
- The kindergarten brochure also reads well and is much improved.
- Our ESG website provides a well written, informative and thorough description of our program.
- The district brochure is not yet available for review.

Ardyth commented on the **Lots for Tots** event held on January 28th. It was a very good promotional opportunity providing the ability to display Cogito information in a very visible way (the new photos of students in uniform were used). Both Ardyth and Erin represented ESG at the event, and did speak to several interested parents about our program.

In an effort to increase the association of the word “academic” with our Cogito program (so that potential parents more readily understand the nature of the program, Cheryl J. and Karey McClure had previously looked into the possibility of changing our name to “Cogito Academic Program.” Ardyth had advised them that a name change proposal would be presented to the district board of trustees only in the manner wherein our committee would put forth several alternative name suggestions for the district’s consideration and decision making. The Board is decision-making body related to such an item. Since Cheryl strongly feels that the word “Academic” is the only appropriate alternative, she suggested we elect to use an idea put forth at an earlier meeting by Ardyth. Ardyth had suggested the **program incorporates the use of the slogan, “Focused on Academics”**, in our promotional materials instead of a name change. This was unanimously supported by the committee. Cheryl requested that all upcoming advertisements, and any promotional material not yet printed, include the new slogan. Cheryl also suggested that written advertising materials should include mention of art/music/drama/phys.ed./intramural and other opportunities, to reflect the balance that exists within the program.

Cheryl J. produced some draft **Cogito business cards** that may be useful in having available to Cogito parents for handing out, or as a take-away item to go along with our posters. The business cards were printed in black and white on glossy card stock and included a picture of two students in uniform, a brief description of the program and contact information. The committee liked the cards and Cheryl reported a cost of only \$.03 per card. Ardyth agreed that the school could produce these cards for upcoming use in promotions, subject to revising the wording. Once complete, the cards and brochures will be made available to all Cogito parents for their use.

Next week we will see **newspaper advertisements** outlining the Cogito Program. Mid-march will be ads for our Cogito Information Evening on April 4th. During spring break we will see more generic ads for all the alternative program information sessions and open houses (ESG open house is April 12th). There are also St. Albert wide distribution plans for a flyer newspaper insert outlining all three alternative programs.

In response to Cheryl’s request for more advertising than what the district is providing, Ardyth outlined some of the thinking that has gone into the campaign decisions made to date. She indicated much effort has gone into doing a better job of describing the alternative programs, with excellent results. She said it is so often heard that there is so much information/advertisements put out during this timeframe that there becomes a bit

of information overload as well as dilution of interest and readership Ardyth noted that this year's campaign is designed to streamline what is presented and when. She indicated the district is trying to provide more information on the alternative programs early on, then following with school and district information. Ardyth said it is important to give this approach a chance. In support of the campaign philosophy, Ardyth indicated that she cannot see her way clear to approve any additional newspaper advertisements for Cogito, even if our committee were able to provide the funding. Strong efforts on the school's behalf will be made to produce posters, any necessary brochures and the business cards. The committee's effort in the distribution of these items is very valuable in getting some visibility and word-of-mouth promotion going. Ardyth noted that she is more than willing to allocate funds for promotional materials that provide good value for the benefit derived, for example, the business cards, professional posters and brochures.

The committee agreed to place their efforts in the **distribution of posters, Cogito brochures and business cards** throughout St. Albert. The idea of using the newspaper advertisement copy for our posters surfaced and was supported depending on how they look. Karla offered that she could produce full color copies for \$.10 a piece.

ACTION: Cheryl will provide Ramonde with a list of locations for posting and Ramonde will coordinate volunteers via e-mail.

ACTION: Ramonde to contact the City of St. Albert to see if there is a possibility of posting our posters in the change shacks at the outdoor rinks/parks.

Plans are underway for the **Cogito Information Evening**. Ardyth asked the committee for any input regarding the evening. Members endorsed last year's format, highlighting that the displays, writing samples, parent testimonials, and visible childcare were very effective. Ramonde quickly reviewed the comments made at the committee debrief of last year's session. The only item to be brought forward from the Feb. 28/05 debrief is:

- At the Cogito Information Evening, there seemed to be a lot of interest in the question/discussion portion of the presentation with many people staying to talk and ask questions. The evening ran quite late for some. It was noted that it would have been desirable to either begin earlier or alter the format in some way to allow more time for group discussion and one-on-one conversations.

The committee briefly discussed the **ESG Open House**. The following suggestions were made for consideration:

- Directional signage on Akinsdale Road to help new visitors to the school.
- Clear direction to Cogito locations/information should be provided in the "passport".
- Student greeters, some Cogito in uniform, to greet and direct visitors.

COGITO FUNDRAISING

Cheryl J.

Initially, the intent for this topic was to develop initiatives to generate additional funds to augment the advertising and promotional efforts of the district. In light of Ardyth's comments above that she would not approve use of this committee's funds for additional newspaper advertising and that she *is* willing to fund promotional materials that she decides effective (eg, posters/brochures/business cards), the need to continue efforts in this area are not required at this time. The idea of a Cogito fundraising movie night will be set aside for now.

The discussion around the table rested on a forward plan of continued strong support of the APA in their fundraising efforts, noting that, in the absence of our own ability to fundraise, Cogito could look to the APA, of which several Cogito parents represent a strong contingent, for their support when required.

NEW BUSINESS

HOMEWORK AGENDAS

Marilyn B.

Different teachers utilize different approaches in communicating homework expectations to parents. Ardyth assured the committee that the staff meet regularly to discuss all aspects of the learning environment, including this one. In the development of our Cogito program, we have placed strong emphasis on our desire to ensure that families can achieve balance between school commitments and outside interests. As always, if homework becomes an issue, parents should discuss this with the teacher, and if, on some given night, homework expectations cannot be met, parents should simply note it in the agenda so that the teacher is aware of the situation.

COGITO FOR 2006/2007

Ardyth G.

People can register for the Cogito Program for grades K to 8. So far our registrations are down from this time last year, but that is due to our information evening being moved from February to early April.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Ardyth G.

Ardyth highlighted the Literacy and Learning Day 2006 that is put on by NAIT each year. It is a seminar based day covering many topics that may interest parents, featuring Barbara Coloroso as the keynote speaker. The date of the seminars is Saturday, April 22nd, with a registration deadline of March 25th. Visit www.literacyday.ca for more information.

The Medic Alert Program is looking for program feedback that they can use as quotes for informational materials. Any users of the program can contact Ardyth if they wish to contribute.

NEXT MEETING

Invitation to all Cogito parents to attend the next Cogito Steering Committee Meeting to be held on April 25th at 7:00pm.

PARENT'S CORNER

All Cogito parents are always welcome to attend any meetings of the Cogito Steering Committee. Your input of topics, and contribution to the discussion and decision making is valued and appreciated.

Issues can be raised any time at the meetings, however it is helpful if you can provide advance notice by way of submitting an agenda item directly to any of the Chairpersons listed on these minutes. If you prefer, you may use the space below to note down your item. This form will be forwarded by your homeroom teacher to Ardyth Garrison.

**ST. ALBERT
COGITO
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**

The role of the St. Albert Cogito Steering Committee is to support and enhance the experience of the students in the programme. The committee is advisory in nature, providing input to the principal. The membership in the committee includes all parents of students registered in the programme. A District Office representative is also identified to work with the committee on a needs basis.

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD APRIL 25, 2006

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- New and Used Uniform Sale planned for June 1st – volunteers needed.
- The Uniform Committee keeps a stock of new ties for immediate purchase.
- Ardyth provides early report of registration numbers for fall enrollment.
- Ardyth announces her retirement.
- Please join us June 5th for our next meeting.

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Attendees at Meeting:

Principal and Assistant Principal: Ardyth Garrison, Erin Steele
 Cogito Parents: Cheryl Joseph, Marilyn Blacklock, Sheryl Beuerlein, Tracey Minaker, Ramonde Maxfield

REVIEW OF LAST MEETING MINUTES DATED FEBRUARY 21, 2006

All

The minutes of the meeting held February 21st, 2006 were accepted by the committee.

ACTION: Ramonde to forward an electronic copy of the minutes to the executive committee for their records.

NEW UNIFORMS

Tracey

We have not received conclusive feedback on the new boy's pants we were trying out. Cheryl and Tracey to check back with the two families we are aware of that purchased them. Grey pants for girls remain an outstanding issue.

Volunteer parents will be needed for the spring sale planned for June 1st from 2:00-8:00pm. As done in the past, the used uniforms will be available for sale during this time.

ACTION: Tracey will send out an e-mail requesting volunteer help.

USED UNIFORMS

Sheryl B.

The current balance in the Used Uniform account is \$589.92.

In preparation for the upcoming sale June 1st, the committee will be sending out packages for parents to provide garments they want to sell. As the new price guideline reflects slightly lower prices for items in "like new" condition (75% of retail), the uniform committee will highlight this fact to parents with items still for sale to see if they would like to revise their original prices.

As we are winding up the school year, it is likely that many families would like to take advantage of the June 1st sale to sell garment items that their children are currently wearing, but will grow out of over the summer. The used uniform committee requested that the school consider allowing students to be without their sweaters and/or tunics for the formal days following our uniform packages going out. This would likely enhance the used uniform inventory for the larger spring sale event.

ACTION: Ardyth will take up this idea for consideration with the staff.

Tracey has a tunic that she will donate to the used uniform committee. It is a garment that she had received a refund for due to problems with its construction. As she is able to correct the problems on her own, she stated she would like to donate it for sale, with the proceeds going to the committee. The attendees thanked Tracey for this action that will provide us with additional funds.

Ardyth informed the committee that when a new student recently joined the kindergarten class, Sheryl B. was able to very quickly outfit the student from the used uniform inventory. Ardyth thanked Sheryl for her efforts to ensure this happened quickly and conveniently for the family.

A reminder note to all Cogito families that Tracey keeps a full selection of new ties (straight and crisscross) available at all times. If a family needs to replace a lost tie, simply contact Tracey to purchase a new one without waiting for delivery from Neat Uniforms in Burnaby.

AKINSDALE PARENTS ASSOCIATION UPDATE

Cheryl J.

- Front yard landscaping development – the NAIT landscaping students have presented the options and they have been posted in the school for some time. The APA will now be developing a committee to move forward in this project.
- The playground repairs are tentatively planned for the May long week-end.

FORMATION OF 2005/2006 COGITO STEERING COMMITTEE

Cheryl J.

Our two positions for classroom representatives (grades 4/5 and 6/7) remained vacant throughout the year. It was noted that we did not utilize the classroom representatives at all this year as well as last year. We would like to note this so that the necessity of these positions can be reviewed when forming the committee next year.

COGITO REGISTRATIONS FOR 2005/2006

Ardyth

Ardyth reported our Cogito registrations since the program began:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Students</u>
2003	53
2004	83
2005	103
2006	133

We have 24 students registered for kindergarten in the fall, 10 of whom are siblings of current Cogito students. So far it looks like our classrooms will be as follows:

K – full class	Gr 3/4 – combo class
Gr1 – full class	Gr 5/6 – combo class
Gr2 – full class	Gr 7/8 – combo junior high class

COGITO PROGRAM PROMOTION

Cheryl J./Ardyth

APRIL INFORMATION NIGHT

This evening attracted a similar number of attendees to last year and feedback received was that it was well run and very informative. More attendees at this evening registered than we experienced from our attendees last year. Comments were made around the table that the start time of 6:00pm was perhaps a bit early for many families. Ardyth said that that point could be reviewed for next year.

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

Cheryl provided attendees with copies of the new district brochures, citing how much improved they are. Only the transportation portion of the District wide Registration Guide remains of concern. Ardyth encouraged the committee to keep bringing this up in the next school year.

LOTS FOR TOTS

Ardyth and Erin noted that the people they spoke with at this event did not follow through this year with registrations. Many of the parents at this event had children not yet old enough for kindergarten, so are hopeful that efforts at this venue will foster future enrollments.

BUSINESS CARDS

Ahead of our business cards being distributed to Cogito parents for their use, Cheryl J. would like to reduce the size to standard business card size. Once done, they can be printed up and distributed. The committee discussed the timing of providing these to Cogito parents and it was agreed that September would be our target month.

INSERTS IN THE GAZETTE

The insert that was distributed St. Albert wide did a good job describing the alternative programs available. Ardyth noted that a picture was not included because the quality of paper and print did not produce image well.

DISTRIBUTION OF POSTERS

Ardyth thanked the committee and all the volunteers who posted our posters/brochures/cards throughout St. Albert. We asked all those helping to keep track of which businesses accepted and which declined so that we don't bother those that are not able/interested year after year. Cheryl would like to see if we could get a small supply of generic posters (without information evening dates, etc.) for posting throughout the year.

ACTION: Ramonde to update the location listing with volunteers results (accepted/declined).

COGITO SCHOOL SUPPLY LISTS

Sheryl B.

In preparation for last year's school season, Sheryl noted that the school supply lists provided by the school, by Write-On Stationery Supplies Inc., by District Office, and by Staples were all different from one another.

Some of the inconsistencies were quite significant. Ardyth agreed that the information provided was inconsistent and resulted in much confusion. She assured the committee that all efforts are being made to ensure there is only one version of the list available for the upcoming year. As an additional note, Ardyth informed us that Write-On will not be utilized this year due to small number of orders that have been experienced.

PAINTING DAYS

Sheryl B.

Sheryl asked if it is possible to have the teachers let parents know which days the students would be doing painting activities. Even a quick note in the agenda the night before would be fine to avoid long sleeved shirts from being worn on those days. Although paint shirts are used, often the cuffs of long sleeved shirts come home stained. Ardyth noted that she would discuss this point with the staff.

ST. ALBERT RAINMAKER RODEO PARADE

Marilyn B./Cheryl

The thought of having a presence in this year's rodeo parade was tabled. The committee definitely has an interest and can see the value. Sigis is sometimes involved and we were thinking that we could perhaps participate with them. Ardyth informed us that Sigis tries to participate every two years and this year is the year they are not involved. As none of the attendees had experience organizing a parade, Ardyth noted the following components that must be addressed if we were to take on this parade:

- access to a trailer of some sort (Marilyn stated that she can get a truck with trailer attached)
- crew to spend the Friday evening decorating
- overnight storage of the trailer (Marilyn may be able to address this)
- parade set-up begins early on Saturday morning, followed by the parade itself, then the dismantling of the trailer during the afternoon

Cheryl noted that we could use the Cogito Mascots that she is working on, in the parade. In addition we could attach candies to the backs of our business cards to be handed out. The committee discussed some ideas and themes and felt that an ESG 25th Anniversary theme could work well. As this would be an ESG initiative, Ardyth will bring the idea forward to the Parent Council Meeting.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Ardyth G.

Ardyth announced her pending retirement to the committee. She let the committee know that Barry Wowk will be attending the Parent Council Meeting (May 2nd) to discuss the recruitment of the new principal and collect input from the parents in attendance. The attendees expressed their congratulations as well as their sadness at hearing the news. Her dedication, commitment and support for our program and committee will be dearly missed.

NEXT MEETING

Invitation to all Cogito parents to attend the next Cogito Steering Committee Meeting to be held on June 5th at 7:00pm.

PARENT'S CORNER

All Cogito parents are always welcome to attend any meetings of the Cogito Steering Committee. Your input of topics, and contribution to the discussion and decision making is valued and appreciated.

Issues can be raised any time at the meetings, however it is helpful if you can provide advance notice by way of submitting an agenda item directly to any of the Chairpersons listed on these minutes. If you prefer, you may use the space below to note down your item. This form will be forwarded by your homeroom teacher to Ardyth Garrison.

ST. ALBERT
COGITO
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

The role of the St. Albert Cogito Steering Committee is to support and enhance the experience of the students in the programme. The committee is advisory in nature, providing input to the principal. The membership in the committee includes all parents of students registered in the programme. A District Office representative is also identified to work with the committee on a needs basis.

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD JUNE 8, 2006

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- Results of the New and Used Uniform Sale of June 1st.
- Impact of enrollment on Cogito Junior High classroom.
- A look at classroom make-up for the fall.
- Summary of this year's Steering Committee activities.

Co-Chairperson	Cheryl Joseph	459-7795
Co-Chairperson	Colleen Holzer	418-7272
Vice-Chairperson	Sheryl Beuerlein	459-6272
Secretary:	Ramonde Maxfield	460-6701
Akinsdale Parents Association Representatives:	Sherry Koziol	458-6979
	Karey McClure (backup)	458-6148
School Council Representatives:	Kathleen Smith	418-1715
	Cheryl Joseph	459-7795
Media/Promotions Coordinator:	Cheryl Joseph	459-7795
Uniform Committee Coordinator (New Uniforms):	Tracey Minaker	460-7374
Uniform Committee Coordinator (Used Uniforms):	Sheryl Beuerlein	459-6272
Uniform Committee Treasurer:	Cheryl Joseph	459-7795
Uniform Committee Secretary:	Shelene Hlus	459-5737
Classroom Representative, Kindergarten	Colleen Holzer	418-7272
Classroom Representative, Grade 1:	Marilyn Blacklock	973-3114
Classroom Representative, Grade 2/3:	Karla Brophy	459-8322
Classroom Representative, Grade 4/5:	<i>Vacant</i>	
Classroom Representative, Grade 6/7:	<i>Vacant</i>	
Member-at-Large:	Karey McClure	458-6148
Member-at-Large:	Karla Brophy	459-8322
Member-at-Large:	Wanda Lai	458-1926
Member-at-Large:	Marilyn Blacklock	973-3114

Attendees at Meeting:

Principal: Ardyth Garrison
Cogito Parents: Cheryl Joseph, Sheryl Beuerlein, Tracey Minaker, Ramonde Maxfield

REVIEW OF LAST MEETING MINUTES DATED APRIL 25, 2006

All

The minutes of the meeting held April 25th, 2006 were accepted by the committee.

ACTION: Ramonde to forward an electronic copy of the minutes to the executive committee for their records.

NEW UNIFORMS

Tracey

The sale of June 1st was well attended and the volunteers were very busy.

Halpern's sales came to approximately \$1700.00, with 37 boys pants and 2 girls pants being sold. Tracey is still negotiating some of the shipping fees, but delivery is expected as early as next week.

Neat Uniforms sales came to \$7,246.00. The committee can look forward to the 7 ½% rebate cheque again this fall. Neat Uniforms had purchased some garment items from Please Mum when they discontinued their uniform line. They wanted to place these for sale at our June 1st sale date, but were late in getting them to Tracey. The office will store them for the September fall sale date. In the meantime, parents may check at the office if they'd like to make any purchases. The items available are:

- Boys casual pants for \$23 and \$24
- Boys dress pants for \$33
- Oxford shirts, both long and short sleeved for \$14

USED UNIFORMS

Sheryl B.

The Used Uniform sales at the June 1st sale were tremendous. Total sales amounted to \$1435.00 for 70 items, resulting in approximately \$1,080 being paid out to parents. With 8 of those items being either donated to the committee or unclaimed lost and found, the committee will see a profit of \$355.20, the largest experienced to date. Sheryl noted that the committee plans to purchase a self-inking stamp to speed up the cheque and receipt writing process.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Ardyth G.

Ardyth regretfully informed the committee that enrollment has dictated that the intended Cogito Junior High class (grade 7/8 combined) cannot go ahead in the 2006/2007 school session. Several families (approximately 1/3 of the students) have chosen alternate education options for their junior high years, some into accelerated academics or late French immersion. The remaining student numbers would make up a class size that is too small to financially operate, as well as not being conducive to positive student development.

The Cogito classrooms for the fall will likely be as follows:

- K – full class
- Gr 1 – full class
- Gr 2 – full class
- Gr 3/4- combo class
- Gr 5/6- combo class

School start date for the fall will be August 30th, 2006.

In closing the school year and moving into retirement, Ardyth Garrison conveyed her thanks to the members of the Cogito Steering Committee.

Thank you to all members of the Cogito Steering Committee for your many hours of work on the committee. Your efforts over the years made an important contribution to the success of the program. As well, thank you for your thoughtful gifts to mark my retirement. The book and the Cogito "dolls" are things I will cherish.

Sincerely, Ardyth

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

This meeting was the final meeting of the St. Albert Cogito Steering Committee for the 2005/2006 school year. We all look forward to regrouping in the fall. The initial meeting for the 2006/2007 school year will be announced in September. ENJOY THE SUMMER!

SECRETARY SUMMARY OF THE YEAR

Ramonde

The St. Albert Cogito Steering Committee for the 2005/2006 school year met regularly throughout the year. By way of a summary of activities, the following is a high level look provided for general interest purposes.

- Promotions - The committee thoroughly reviewed all St. Albert Cogito Program documents and provided input and assistance into their refinement. The Cogito Information session was moved from January to April, in line with school open houses and the French immersion program information sessions. The addition of a new slogan, "Focused on Academics" was developed and implemented. St. Albert Cogito business cards were developed, printed and made available. Members, once again, took on a poster campaign to help advertise the Cogito information evening.
- Uniforms - The uniform sales and issue resolutions were all handled by the New and Used Uniform Committee, supported by the Steering Committee. A new supplier for pants was found and overlaid into the ordering process. Proceeds from uniform sales saw a marked increase, having grown out of its start-up phases.
- The addition of Cogito social events was endorsed and a Cogito Family Fun Night was hosted in January.
- The Steering Committee has matured to the point of being able to confidently move into the next school year with standard practices now in place and agreed upon processes up and running.