**Northern School Council Meeting**

**February 25, 2020, 6:30 - 9:00 pm**

**Northern SS Library**

**Attendees:** Andy A, Helen A, Janice B, Rita C, Abby D, Diana G, John I, Nancy L, Christina ML, Tania O, Sohinee R, Melissa R, Mary Ann S, Jenn M, Adam Marshall, Stephanie S

**Regrets:** Gail A, Stephanie C, Andrea F, Kasi K, Karri P, Steve S, Kristina T, Max R

**Meeting called to order at 6:40 pm by Tania O, co-chair**

**Student Guests**

The meeting began with students speaking to the group. The jr/sr girls volleyball team thanked the Council for the funds provided which helped them go to Kingston, Ottawa and Montreal in November to play tournaments and tour universities.

Students from DECA spoke to give context to their request for funds to allow 6 qualifying members to travel to Nashville for an international business competition April 20-28th. See Operational Matters/Funding requests below for more details.

**Changes to education - What We Have Learned and What’s Next**

* The Council had an informal discussion about the proposed changes to education by the TDSB.
* On the issue of de-streaming, it is not clear whether it is a TDSB-wide final decision or if some schools can keep their applied programs.
* Trustees, parents, and teachers have been consulted by Council in their research.
* It is recognized by some council members there is a problem with some students being mis-labeled but there is also a need for some students to continue to have the applied stream available. Concern is there will be a   a lack of teacher resource supports for the capable but struggling students with divergent learning styles. There is concern that vulnerable students will become disengaged and become more disadvantaged.
* Other council members feel that the option of having applied only for grade 11 & 12 is acceptable.
* Some questions still remain as to whether the support being promised for both teachers and students will be in place.
* Rita said there is a history of insufficient supports for students with special learning needs, citing Ontario Human Rights investigation into experiences of dyslexic students.
* Tania would like to pursue the issue further with delegations and is also wondering if there is any opportunity for local changes i.e. can NSS be allowed to keep applied programming.
* Tania feels it is important for the TDSB to be aware that parents are continuing to keep an eye on both the process and the results.
* Jenn and Stephanie were asked for their feedback as teachers - they acknowledged teachers are concerned, and feel that the teachers were told about destreaming but not consulted. There is a lack of training and information at this point.
* Adam Marshall was asked about any extra support that would be provided by NSS. He said at this point he cannot give any teacher numbers as it’s too early in the process of staffing and budgets are yet undetermined by the Ministry and TDSB.
* He believes the classroom teachers have the competencies to handle the changes and doesn’t feel destreaming will put grade 9 & 10 students in academic peril.
* There is the possibility of having teachers who currently teach open courses share strategies to help, but unfortunately any professional development is on hold due to the strike action by the teachers union.
* Currently the only mechanism for teachers to give feedback is via the Secondary School review email address, as in-person consultations have been cancelled.

**Principal’s Report - Adam Marshall**

**Teachers’ job action**

* There is a potential for an escalation beyond rotating strike days after winter sports wrap up which means things like trips, sports, prom, and grad could all be affected.
* OSSLT is a question mark for this year and contingency plans are being discussed.
* Positions of Responsibility (POR) - interviews for department heads, etc are now ongoing, again affected by the strike action which is limiting time available to do these.

**2020-21 School Year**

* Optional Attendance offers have gone out
* Currently projecting 414 grade 9 students for September 2020
* Course selection is wrapping up and teacher allocation will follow, anticipating multiple rounds to figure out staffing for 20-21 school year
* Supporting academic pathways will play a huge part in the allocation this year

**General Updates**

* There is a new grand piano in the auditorium.
* There have been swastikas found in and around the male washroom on the first floor in areas where there are no cameras. Police have been contacted. NSS will be having an author to come speak on Holocaust Remembrance and we are looking at other ways to deal with the situation including having student leaders go into the Grade 9 classes to speak about “saying no to hate”.
* 25 new cameras will be installed around the school by September

**Agendas**

* Given the delays and expense of printing the student agendas, NSS is looking at options for phone app agendas. Some other schools currently use an app. Some paper agendas will still be printed for teacher use and for any students without phone access.

**Update from Committees**

**WellNSS - Catherine Wong**

* Screenagers: Next Chapter will be shown on Thursday March 5th (with a backup date of Wednesday March 11 in case of strike action)
* Currently have 320 reservations for it and hope to reach 400 by the screening date
* Grade 9 and 10 students will have a screening the same week

**Teachers Report - Stephanie Signorile**

* Morale is low and no progress is being made with the contract talks
* Teachers would appreciate parent support- showing up on picket lines or just sending an email to a teacher.

**Budget - Janice Barnett**

4 items to be voted on by the council:

* NSS Mates - asking for $1500 for student retreat which is refundable if strike action prevents any trips from happening - PASSED
* NSS Newspaper - asking for $1000 so they can publish paper monthly. Kasi K recommended giving them $600 now and $400 to follow later in the year if still required. - PASSED
* Black NSS - asking for $2000 for March multi-school, student conference. Rita recommended $1500 - PASSED
* DECA - asking for $1500 which is non-refundable if the trip is cancelled due to strike action. Council passed a motion to reimburse them $1500 if the trip does happen.

**Northern Secondary School Foundation (NSSF) - Christina Muller Lawrence**

* The grant application period closed at the end of January. Grants have been dispersed to the Bike, Music Council and Model UN clubs
* A new scholarship has been created for graduating students - the James M McCarron Change Maker Award. Mr McCarron was a highly respected Principal at NSS from 1991-1996
* Scholarship applications are now open on the [NSSF website.](http://nssf.ca/scholarships/)
* There are also Awards of Recognition scholarships for students in grades 9 through 12 as well which will be presented at Commencement or the Awards Assembly in October.
* Currently working on some new events to connect current students with alumni. One event is called Nor/Talk.
* The Foundation is looking for new directors to join the Board for a 2 year term. If you have experience on non-profit boards, finance, fund-raising or writing we would like to hear from you! We meet monthly at the school from September to June. Please contact Jackie Scroggie at president@nssf.ca for more information.
* The next NSSF meeting is on March 10th @ 6:30pm.
* For more information, contact us at info@nssf.ca or follow us on Instagram @northernssfoundation

**GAC - Melissa Rosen**

* 150 attended the Parent & Student info evening focusing on AP, Scholarships and Enrichment held earlier this month. This is a great foundation to build upon for next year.
* On Feb 27 GAC is presenting an information evening on teen substance use (vaping, nicotine, alcohol etc) and what it does to brain development and mental health. This will feature a speaker from CAMH.

**Caring and Safe Schools - Julia Schindeler**

* Washrooms will be painted and potentially upgraded where required (soap dispensers etc)
* Roof repair has been delayed
* Gym lights will be fixed over the March break
* There will be a lockdown drill next week
* Pests are an ongoing issue

**Other Operational Matters**

* The minutes from the January 16 2020 meeting were approved.
* The next Council meetings are scheduled for April 1 and May 12 in the NSS Library.