**Northern Secondary School**

**School Council Meeting Minutes**

**February 12th, 2018 at 6:30 pm**

**Present**: Gillian Gibbons (Principal), Scott deVeber (Co-Chair), Melissa Durigon (Co-Chair), Steven Sims (Co-Treasurer), Karim Hajj (Co-Treasurer), Jackson Flagal (Student Rep), Yolanda Ricciuti (teacher rep), Behzad Jazizadeh (Community Representative), Cynthia Hamlin (NSS Foundation), Julia Schindeler, Samir Fahs, Kaan Yigit, Melissa Rosen, Peggy Judge, Shellie Suter, Helen Aubrey, Christina Muller Lawrence, Gail Agensky, Joanna Strong, Nancy Lee, Tanya Goldberg

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Principal’s Report – Gillian Gibbons
3. Four DECA students have qualified to travel to Atlanta for a competition.
4. The volleyball seniors have just won and are on their way to the finals.
5. Report Cards are forthcoming. The Credit Counselling Summary is being distributed with the report card marks on it. It gives more information and will help with course selection. It is important that Grade 12 students return their course selection forms even if not returning.

Gillian also clarified that there are three official report cards and one non-official report card in a school year.

1. Course Selection Deadline is February 20th. A request was made to provide a longer window for course selection and not have the deadline after the Family Day weekend. Gillian will inquire as to whether or not it is possible to extend the deadline.
2. Optional Attendance for Regular Program – any students who have applied for Grade 9 studies at Northern will be accepted. No lottery in place.

Grade 10 is closed to optional attendance.

For grades 11 and 12, no lottery will take place.

The school’s boundaries have not changed recently.

1. Staff Changes – the school’s lifeguard has retired after 37 years.

Laura Trenton has a contract position elsewhere and has been replaced by Silvio Altomare. There are currently seven student teachers.

1. Africa Heritage Month – an assembly will take place with speakers and cultural demonstrations; celebration of African Heritage continues all month with a number of activities planned.
2. PISA – some 15 year olds may/may not be writing the test. A random sampling of our 15 year old students will take place.
3. Director’s Visit was positive. He visited eight classes. He also met with SAC and other student club heads to hear the student perspective. The Director is running an online blog.
4. Teacher’s Report – Yolanda Ricciuti
5. Friday, February 16th is a PD Day. Students will be off school but teachers will be engaged in a variety of professional learning workshops.
6. Parent Teacher Interviews take place on February 15th between 1:30 to 3 pm and 6 to 8:30 pm. With five months remaining in the school year, it is important for parents to attend especially in courses where students’ performance is not optimal.
7. Inquired about funding request put forth by Ms. Kinclova and Ms. Signorile. Informed that both funding requests have been approved.
8. Community Member Report
9. Fix Our Schools

This group has decided to expand its base throughout Ontario.

One of its goals is to reach parents and contact School Council Chairs.

Emails may be sent soon.

If any parents are interested, please bring it up at future meeting.

Group is currently reaching out to MPPs of all three parties.

Hope that all candidates and MPPs sign pledge.

1. PIAC Conference was on November 2nd.

A vacancy is available in this ward; a rep and an alternate are needed.

The job of the PIAC member is to act as a liaison and attend monthly meetings.

He hopes to find out more at the PIAC Appreciation Dinner.

Anyone can attend the dinner and ask questions.

1. Student Report – Jackson Flagal
2. Having student teachers in classes is fun for students as they can relate well with them.
3. Course Selection is important. Grade 12s should indicate on their forms that they will not be returning.
4. There will be a budget meeting on February 13th.
5. Co-Chair Report
6. School council meeting minutes from January meeting were approved.
7. Additional SC Meeting

The budget should be set by April 25th.

It was decided and agreed upon that the last official meeting for this school year will be on Thursday, May 24th. In June, School Council will hold a social meeting.

1. Suggestion was made to have the Welcoming Committee finalized by the end of the school year so that it is up and running for September.

It was also suggested to have a Welcome and Volunteer Table at the Grade 9 Evening. Good idea to collect parent email lists early on.

1. Role of Committees and Communications

Due to alleged significant contentious miscommunication on a number of issues this year, the suggestion to strike a committee to examine communications was presented.

Discussion included the following comments/questions:

-erroneous to believe that subcommittees need approval of chairs

-if there is a contentious issue of public policy, shouldn’t it be discussed before sending out an email with an opinion?

-are committees autonomous or is there any council oversite?

-tradition has been that each subcommittee communicates on its own

-suggestion offered to have subcommittees copy school council on emails so that there are no surprises

-Principal Awareness Piece – it is important to run a balance between strong advocacy and messaging. How do we do good work without causing controversy?

-role of committees and subcommittees is to provide evidence and fact based communication which allows people to make up their own minds

A motion was put forth and voted upon to strike a subcommittee to hold a one-time meeting to look at this issue and examine the role / communications in committees/subcommittees and make recommendations.

Motion was passed.

1. Committee Reports
2. **Budget – Funding Requests**

i. The budget was distributed. Approximately $12,000 has been spent thus far.

ii. Budget request to cover ICDC Conference – four students were selected from a larger pool to travel to Atlanta to compete. These students would return and speak to other students to build interest, would speak to Grade 9 students about DECA and recruit female students in business studies. This budget request will be looked at and a recommendation will be communicated.

iii. Pending requests are in the amounts of $2,000 (ICDC Conferences) and $950 (NEMO and Green Northern).

1. **GAC**

A return to status quo for gifted students….

There may be changes throughout the coming years that could be viewed as reducing access.

There is a social event coming up.

There are also presentations with speakers for all parents.

1. **LD**

There will be a presentation for parents tomorrow night on course selection.

The week of April 23rd, there will be a session on anxiety and tips to manage stress for students. It is being led by the school social worker. It includes a cross section of parents and kids. More details to come.

1. **School Survey**

It should be removed from the list. It is not done every year and it is based on needs.

1. **Welcome & Volunteer Committee**

June 6th is the Grade 8 Welcome for Parents & Families.

A couple of members of School Council have historically attended and set up a table as an opportunity to engage with the incoming grade 9 parents.

1. **Caring and Safe Schools**

There will be a meeting on February 27th.

1. **Wellness / Breakfast**

On Tuesday, March 27th at 7 pm in the Resource Centre, there will be a panel presentation/discussion on Teens and Technology. The panel speakers will include Neil Anderson, Michelle Solomon and a CAMH Social Worker.

Would like to email parent body and solicit parent questions – Gillian could prepare a google document.

Gillian will extend invitation for interested parents to attend in her weekly newsletter – two weeks ahead of time for questions, March 2nd –will email a Hold the Date and then a reminder on March 16th.

1. Other Business

i.Cynthia Hamlin spoke about the NSS Foundation.

 On February 20th, there will be a Foundation Meeting in the Heritage Room.

For parent teacher interviews, there will be a table set up in the hallway for families who want to participate in Thank a Teacher.

Application deadline for scholarship/grant applications is April 21, 2018.

Students should apply for as many as they are eligible.

Northern will relaunch grants in the fall, will re-evaluate awards criteria and would like to target alumni more, would like to do a Northern Wish List – what is needed at Northern?

ii. Board Members are needed.

 There are a total of 14 members. It is a two year commitment with monthly meetings from September to June.

Meeting adjourned.