**Northern Secondary School**

**School Council Meeting**

**September 25, 2017 at 6:30 p.m.**

**Present**: Gillian Gibbons (Principal), Scott deVeber, Bettina Hoar, Stefan Banjevic (teacher), Nancy Matthews (staff rep), Samir Fahs, Lili Zhao, Peggy Judge, Bob Postlethwaite, Karim Hajj, Kasi Kugapalan, Steve Sims, Shellie Suter, Judy Steiner, Silja Yates, Reuben Nelson, Sue Fisher, Melissa Rosen, Dion Durigon, Melissa Durigon, Mehrnaz Sekora, Eva Stanciu, Julia Schindeler, Saeed Timir, Jolanta Vashilko, Joanna Strong, Tanya Goldberg, Dr. Fiona Walsh (visiting Principal), 2 students

1. **Welcome and Introductions**
   * Scott and Bettina (current Co-Chairs) welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.
   * Approximately 24 parents attended as well as Principal Gibbons, visiting Principal Dr. Walsh, 2 teacher reps and 2 students.
2. **Principal’s Report: Gillian Gibbons**

* Principal Gibbons gave an overview of her background, as she is new to Northern Secondary School this year.
* Meet the teacher night was hosted on September 14th and went well, however there were a few teachers missing as all teaching positions had not been filled at that time.
* There were some staffing challenges this year as enrolment stands at 100 students over projection for a total of 1847 students.
* 35 optional attendance spots were offered based on enrolment projection from last year.
* The hiring freeze has now been lifted, and as of this meeting the last position has been filled.
* There will be an avocation round for additional staff done by October 31st (which takes a month to go into fruition).
* This hiring trend is expected to continue, mostly due to upcoming staff retirements.
* Gifted enrolment is lower than expected, presumably due to boundary changes (many students now directed to the program at Don Mills CI).
* The School Resource Officer (SRO) program is on hold this school year, however officers will visit the school if a police issue arises.
* There is a police safety alert in the community regarding parties in parks, police are monitoring the situation.
* Weekly updates will continue to be sent by email, Twitter updates will start being added as well.

1. **Teacher’s Report: Stefan Banjovic**

* Stefan thanked school council for the 67 fans purchased in the spring which are now being used in the classrooms.
* Nancy proposed that more fans be purchased if requested.
* Request that blinds be purchased this year for 20 classrooms (quote was approximately $700 a window). Shellie suggested that a fundraiser be done to raise the money for this purchase. School council can purchase the blinds; however, the installation will be done by the school board.
* Teachers are working on IEP’s which will be distributed to parents by email. Gifted IEP’s were sent on September 22nd.
* There will be a math symposium on the December 1st PD day.
* As per the council decision last year, there will be a plant placed in every classroom this fall to help with air quality.

1. **Staff Report: no staff representative present**
2. **Student Report: no student representative present**
3. **Committee Reports**

* A high level overview of each of the committees was given.

1. **Budget Committee & Treasurer’s Report**

* Kasi handed out copies of 2016-17 budget.
* In summary the bank balance as of September 1st is $11111.90 (carry over) + $21027.80 (parent donations) = **$32139.70** (note: an additional $1000-$2000 will come out of the 2016-17 budget for student awards).
* A draft budget for 2017-18 will be put together in the next couple weeks and will be approved at the next meeting.
* Stefan noted that the budget for the SmartRisk & WellNSS of $2500 did not get spent in the 2016-17 budget. Peggy asked if last year's amount will be taken out of the 2017-18 budget.
* Teachers, staff, students and parents can submit spending requests to council (for special speakers, etc.).

1. **LD Committee**

* Link to LD Committee page now on school council website, page will continue to be populated with information including agenda and meeting dates.
* First meeting is October 2nd at 6:00 p.m.
* Irene Andrianopolitis will be staying on as the teacher representative for the committee.

1. **GAC Committee**

* First meeting will be September 28th at 6:15 p.m.
* Ms. Liko will be present at the meeting.
* The decrease in class size is on the agenda. A discussion is to be had regarding how the decrease in class size will impact students in the program.
* Last year there was a motion by school council to keep the gifted program intake at 120 students (total students in the program has been approximately 1/3 of the school population). This year’s cohort was about 90 students, presumably due to the boundary changes. When the boundary changes were made, we were told that the plan was for 120. For perspective on this decrease, last year’s Grade 12 had approximately 180 students in the gifted program.

1. **Volunteer Committee**

* Nothing to report as committee did not get off the ground.

1. **Communications Committee**

* Committee combined with School Council Website Committee.

1. **Cell Phone Committee**

* A survey was sent to parents, staff and students (see June 1, 2017 minutes for detailed results and findings).
* The current NSS policy states that phones should be off and away at school.
* As a next step the Cell Phone Committee will review and compare the current NSS policy with other schools in the area. The committee will continue to meet and discuss solutions to improve the situation.

1. **Caring and Safe Schools Committee**

* This committee is required by the ministry.
* As of now three parents have signed up for this committee (Reuben, Eva and Julia).

1. **Wellness and Mental Health Committee**

* This committee has been around for a couple of years and provides a list of free, immediate resources which require no Health Card to use.
* Tanya will provide link to list to Principal Gibbons. The link will be included in the weekly update email to parents.
* This year's committee will check that all links are valid and up to date. A list of resources based on this list will be provided to the guidance department.
* Other projects will depend on who is on this year’s committee.

1. **School Statement of Needs (SSON) Committee**

* This is a document which must be done through council, and includes a list of qualities needed in a principal and an outline of the needs of the school.
* The deadline is around October/November. The 2016-17 approved SSON is on the NSS school council website.

1. **School Council Website Committee**

* Karim and Bettina set up an easy to use school council website.
* The website will need to be updated with 2017-18 council information.
* Google calendar needs to be updated with all dates from the TDSB calendar and from the weekly emails distributed by Principal Gibbons.
* The domain is owned by the school; password information will need to be passed on to this year’s committee.
* Suggestion to combine Communications Committee and Website Committee due to overlap in duties.

1. **New Committee Suggestions for 2017**

* Suggestion to have possible committees for Lunch & Learn and Teacher Appreciation.
* Questions were asked about who organizes teacher appreciation events.
* Currently the Lunch and Learn events are organized by the gifted committee.
* There are two events each year, however a committee could be formed to provide additional teacher support as required.
* Scott/Bettina encouraged parents to join committees as a great way to get involved and meet other parents.

1. **Co-Chair Report 2016-17 (on last year’s activities)**
2. **Approval of June minutes**

* June minutes were approved

1. **Accomplishments, challenges, hopes for coming year**

* Bettina did a lot of research on how to officially run a school council in an organized way with adherence to rules set out by the school board. This was accomplished with the 2016-17 council.
* Distinction made that this is a school council not a parent council, as there is involvement from parents, teachers, staff, students and community members.
* School Council’s purpose is through the active participation of parents, to improve student achievement and enhance the accountability of the education system by making recommendations to the Principal and the Board.

1. **Thank the volunteers**

* Melissa R. spoke on behalf of the group to thank Co-Chairs Scott and Bettina for all their hard work and dedication to the school council. Bettina thanked everyone for their contribution to the council. Bettina’s daughter has graduated from NSS, so she will be leaving council. Scott hopes to stay on as Co-Chair.

1. **Overview of ways to get involved**

* Details were provided regarding various levels of involvement opportunities within the school and school board.
* School Council positions: The Principal and 23 voting members including parents (19), student (1), teacher (1), staff (1) and community members (1).
* Positions to be filled by parents are 2 Co-Chairs, 2 Co-Treasurers, 2 Co-Secretaries (the remaining parents will be voting members).
* To date three parents have volunteered to be on council. Bettina did a demo on how to sign up, parents have until October 9th to do this.
* Joanna to collect information and run election if needed.
* New council needs to elect a community member, can invite representative from last year Behzad Jazizadeh.

**Action Items**

* **Tanya/Principal Gibbons** to follow up with PRO Grant office to find out if their submission was approved.
* **Tanya** to provide link to current list of wellness/mental health resources to be added to weekly email updates.
* **Scott/Principal Gibbons** to discuss ways to get the message out to parents regarding the $45 optional donation to school council. There are challenges around asking for money due to strict guidelines. The numbers for this year are still being finalized (last year 1/3 of parents donated). So far this year, more parents of grade 10/11 students donated than parents of grade 9 students. This contribution is important as the school does not do any fundraising through the year.
* **Joanna** to collect information on parents who have signed up for council and run election if needed.

**Upcoming Dates**

1. Safe and Caring Schools - September 26th, 4:00 p.m., room 114
2. Gifted Advisory Committee Meeting - September 28th, 6:15 p.m. in the Library
3. LD Advisory Committee meeting - October 2nd, 6:00 p.m. in the Library
4. Red, Gold and Blue Day - October 5th (special schedule, extended lunch)
5. Awards Assembly - October 5th
6. PA Day (no classes) October 6th. Staff will be working on School Improvement Plan with a focus on achievement, wellness and equity.
7. Thanksgiving (no classes) - October 9th
8. Early Closing/Professional Learning Communities for Staff - October 11th, 1:45 p.m.

**Next School Council Meeting**

**Thursday October 16th, 6:30 p.m. in the Library**