

Northern School Council – Minutes – Oct. 15, 2018

Present: Gillian G., Sue F., Karim H., Scott D., Vlad M., Diba H., Stephanie C., Hemant D., Reuben N., Steve S., Andy A., Stephanie S., Mirela P., Peter P., Tanya G., Peggy J., Nancy L., Edith J., Gail A., Ionut M., Tania O., Njeri R., Bam P., Judy S., John L., Linda R., Silja Y., Cathy M., Rita C., Veronique T., Kaan Y., Maria J., Charles K., Helen A., Melissa R.

1. Welcome and Introduction

The Principal, Gillian Gibbons, is chairing this first meeting of the new school year, since the new Parent Members and officers of School Council have not yet been elected. She made introductory remarks and suggested that parents and teaching staff in attendance present themselves.

2. Principal's Report (Gillian Gibbons)

i) PA day staff meeting on Friday, October 5

- Worked on the Achievement focus of the TDSB core values (Achievement, Well-being and Equity)
- Worked on enhanced pathways for students and how to support students to become successful in Academic and Applied programs.
- At the moment, de-streaming is not happening; Applied level classes are likely to continue
- Instead, there are plans for more coaches in elementary schools in literacy and numeracy to support students achieving higher academic levels earlier
- Focused on global competency, which includes these skills: problem solving, creativity, global citizenship, collaboration, and communication
- Trying to include these skills in any lesson, classroom, or level

ii) Cellphone remarks

- Continued discussion on how to deal with cellphones in classroom
- Principal Gibbons circulated a feedback form (*see Figure 1 at bottom of Minutes*) with various approaches in dealing with cell-phones in classroom

iii) October 18- Breakfast for breakfast

- Sell breakfasts in the morning to raise money for the Toronto Foundation for Student Success
- Happened last year at around same time and got news recognition; working on getting news coverage again this year

iv) Ministry of Education Feedback

- Parents and students are requested to give feedback to the Ministry of Education before the deadline of December 15.
- Parents are encouraged to give their thoughts on the following topics:

- improving student performance in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)
- preparing students with needed job skills, such as skilled trades and coding
- improving provincial standardized testing
- ensuring students graduate with important life skills, including financial literacy
- managing the use of technology in classrooms, such as cell phones
- building a new age-appropriate Health and Physical Education curriculum that includes subjects like mental health, sexual health education and the legalization of cannabis
- developing the first-ever Parents' Bill of Rights
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- More information about the consultation and feedback form can be found at: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/for-the-parents>.
- Submissions can also be sent to the ministry by emailing fortheparents@ontario.ca or ausedparentparents@ontario.ca.

3. SC Election (Karim, Elections Committee)

i) School Council Election

- Sent instructions for the election process and links for participation in Principal Gibbons' weekly bulletin on Sept 28th
- Oct 9th was the deadline for submitting names for parent representatives, leadership, or committees; Oct 13 was the deadline for confirming submissions.
- According to the constitution (https://www.nsscouncil.com/uploads/7/7/5/0/77505964/nss_constitution__2015_.pdf), the council can have 19 Parent Members (in addition to the Principal, Teacher Representative, Non-Teaching Staff Representative, Student Representative, and Community Representative). If more than 19 people would like to be Parent Members (voting parent representatives), an election should be held school-wide. More than 19 names were submitted, some were not clearly confirmed by the election committee.
- Discussion noted that no aspect of the constitutional requirements for holding elections had been followed so far, including being months behind on forming an Election Committee, and a full month's meeting behind on holding elections. As a result, it did not make sense to rigidly adhere to some limited parts of the constitution while not adhering to other significant parts.
- Further discussion indicated wide consensus for including all parents as Parent Members on School Council who had indicated interest in participating.
- A review of the number of parents interested in becoming Parent Members of School Council counted 25 parents as having indicated interest. [Note to draft: on further more careful checking, the number of parents who had indicated interest was 26, not 25].
- Discussion suggested that the most expedient path forward may be to ask enough people to withdraw their names from the election to allow 19 parents to be acclaimed as parent representatives.

- Further discussion noted that the number of 19 parents was randomly chosen a few years ago when the constitution was drafted, and since that time this has not been an issue, since not more than 19 parents per year were interested in pursuing a Parent Member role.
- Following further discussion, a motion was made to expand the voting for leadership positions for this School Council, to accommodate all acclaimed and all potential parent representatives, so that all could be included in the vote for leadership positions (motion made by Scott, seconded by Gail).
- Additionally, a motion was made to make an amendment to the constitution in the next 60 days to allow the number of Parent Member representatives on School Council to be increased, so that all parents interested in being voting Parent Members would be included. It was thought that this would involve a change from 19 to 25 Parent Members (motion made by Melissa, seconded by Tania O.).

SCHOOL COUNCIL PARENT MEMBERS (acclaimed and to be added by amendment)

- 1) Helen Aubrey
- 2) Tania Osmond
- 3) Gail Agensky
- 4) Andy Anderson
- 5) Shital Desai
- 6) Peggy Judge
- 7) Tanya Goldberg
- 8) Nancy Lee
- 9) Linda Rose
- 10) Rita Czarnecki
- 11) Bam Perak
- 12) Susan Blackburn
- 13) Melissa Rosen
- 14) Brian Burke
- 15) Shellie Suter
- 16) Njeri Rionge
- 17) Kasi Kugapalan
- 18) Sue Fisher
- 19) Scott deVeber
- 20) Cathy Merkley
- 21) John Laufer
- 22) Reuben Nelson
- 23) Judy Steiner
- 24) Stephanie Curtis
- 25) Samir Fahs
- 26) Steve Sims

Interest was sought for leadership positions, and all candidates were acclaimed as follows:

- Njeri Rionge, Co-Secretary
- Steve Sims, Kasi Kugapalan, Co-Treasurers
- Tania Osmond, Rita Czarnecki, Co-Chairs

Tania and Rita each gave short speeches identifying themselves and stating their goals and approach to School Council as Co-Chairs.

Karim indicated that he would continue supporting the NSS School Council website for now, but he'd like to phase in someone new to take over the website IT responsibilities.

ii) New working committee (Melissa)

- A motion was passed to strike a Working Committee to work on amendments and expand the constitution wording to be more flexible in the future (motion made by Melissa, seconded by Scott),

4. **Teacher report (Stephanie Signorile)**

- Stephanie Signorile and Jenn Marr will share the SC 'Teacher Representative' role, and look forward to having a strong relationship between staff and School Council;
- Fans purchased by School Council over the last two years have provided significant, welcome relief in classrooms in warmer weather
- Staff will be happy to have the "Comments on cell phone" sheet to use on future report cards

5. **Student report (Vlad, Diba)**

- Vlad listed the new School Council leaders: Ethan Kibbel (President); [Jack Schwartz (Vice President)]; Joey Hotz (Treasurer); 36 Senators, and 61 Class Reps;
- Carnival Day (October 16);
- NSS University Fair (October 17);
- School Council has a new, streamlined email form for making requests for funding by School Council;
- Those who receive funds from School Council will also be asked to submit a year-end report on how the funds were used;
- Request to clarify how to get funding for new clubs (should be on the SAC Facebook page)
- Student Council Budget Meeting - Oct 29

6. **Committee reports**

a) Budget Committee & Treasurer's report (Steve)

- have \$28K available from this year's fundraising and last year's residual funds

- have 4 meetings annually, by phone; new members welcome

b) LD Committee (Rita)

- have renamed their committee: NSS Academic Resource Committee
- next meeting Monday November 5 at 6 pm in the NSS Library

c) GAC (Melissa)

- This past weekend ABC Ontario co-hosted a conference with the SENG organization from the US
- Many needs and issues were highlighted and discussed
- Excellent speaker about diverse students from distressed communities- hoping to bring him to Toronto again
- Waiting to get TDSB action plans for the 2018-19 school year; promised many times, but likely not to be revealed until after the municipal elections
- Encouraged parents to write to your trustees to express concerns about education, before and after election
- School trustee meeting for Ward 8, October 18 at 6:30 at Lawrence Park Collegiate
- Next GAC meeting November 14th

d) Caring and Safe Schools (Gillian Gibbons)

- One lock-down before school day end. No student or staff affected.
- Cannabis will be legalized for adult use on Oct. 17. School rules for marijuana use will be the same as alcohol use and vaping (prohibited to use or be intoxicated on school property). If student attends school impaired, he/she will be sent home.

e) Wellness/Mental Health (Tanya G)

- Wellness was created to provide any youth with fast, simple and confidential support in Toronto
- Has a list of free mental health resources for youth to access
- Is expanding annually, hoping for a grant to bring in a speaker
- Tanya's son is organizing a gently used sports equipment drive this week (donations of hockey equipment, running shoes, and baseball equipment are requested)
- New members are welcome

f) School Statement of Needs

- Will be addressed at next meeting

7. Motion to adjourn (Scott, Judy) at 8:10 pm.

FIGURE 1

Comment on cell phone feedback

Like	Dislike	Comment
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<<NAME>> is encouraged to improve their focus and engagement in class, and leave their cell phone in their bag.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<<NAME>> should continue to be a self-directed, lifelong learner and avoid distractions on their cell phone during class.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<<NAME>> should increase their effort on assignments and leave their cell phone in their bag.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<<NAME>> needs to stay away from using their cell phone in class.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<<NAME>> needs help in learning to stay focussed in class and not use their cell phone.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<<NAME>> needs to stay away from using their cell phone in the classroom.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cell phone is a distraction in class.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cell phone is interfering with participation in class.

Other ideas: