

# Northern School Council Meeting

## October 29 2019, 6:30 - 9:00 pm

### Northern SS Library

**Attendees:** Gail A, Andy A, Janice B, Rita C, Stephanie C, Abby D, Diana G, John I, Christina M L, Tania O, Max R, Melissa R, Steve S, Mary Ann S, Kristina T, Adam Marshall, Jenn Marr, Helen A

**Regrets:** Sohinee R, Kasi K, Andrea F, Karri P, Nancy L

**Invited:** Jennifer McPhee (Guidance), Dale Callender (Psychotherapist with Skylark), Dara Siegel (English)

**Meeting called to order:** 6:35 pm

## Welcome & Introductions:

Tania Osmond, Co-Chair welcomed the guest speakers Jennifer, Dale and Dara to speak about “Everything You Wanted to Know About Northern”

### Jennifer McPhee, Guidance

- Goal of the department is to “lead, encourage, inform and support”
- Guidance counsellors spend the most time with students on course selection counselling - via class visits, assemblies, and individual meetings
- Second biggest focus is post- secondary planning
- Guidance also provides support referrals for both physical and mental health needs

### Dale Callender, Skylark - FULL NOTES ATTACHED

- Skylark provides an early intervention model for support services to students in collaboration with TDSB Support
- Full network of services
- Goal is reducing barriers to access/stigma around seeking services
- Support is confidential - parents are only involved if student (over age 12) consents

### Dara Siegel, Curriculum Leader in English Department

- Encouraged parents to let kids figure it out for themselves, not rewrite students’ work for them
- In order to see areas of weakness, English teachers need to see actual work by students; they lose that opportunity when work coming back from home is highly edited
- Anxiety about getting into post-secondary is very high for the higher grades. Dara believes the focus should be on the process of learning and improving vs the goal of grades and university

## Q and A with Guests

### 1) Top mental health issue?

**JM** - anxiety, stress, time management issues. Guidance works on goal setting, mindfulness practices, time management best practices. Important that kids build a life skills toolkit

**DC** - There are different levels of support depending on what the student is looking for/needs: just info, 6-12 sessions, ongoing counselling, those who want support but can't articulate what they are feeling, and those who refuse to meet at all

**DS** - If a student is struggling, the teacher is often the first person to see it in assignments, in classroom behaviour. Once identified, teachers can then reach out to guidance and Skylark

## **2) Thoughts on bullying?**

**DC** - Northern is a safe school, but like all schools there is some bullying. Kids today have to deal with new ways to be bullied (i.e. technology). Bullying is dealt with very quickly and taken seriously

**JM** - The main barrier to bullying is relationships. If kids have solid relationships with other adults - teachers, coaches, guidance counsellors, relatives, etc - they know they have support if they need help. Parents should encourage kids to form relationships with other caring adults so they have options if they need advice

**Adam Marshall** (Principal) - The "pipeline of information" is very important. Stuff happens, but but having information helps keep us ahead of problems

## **3) Do parents have access to support at NSS as well?**

**JM**- YES! Guidance and Skylark will provide support and give advice to parents. It is confidential: guidance can find a way to reach out and explore parental concerns with students without disclosing that the parent spoke to guidance

**DS**- If a student is struggling at home, parents are encouraged to reach out to teachers and give them the heads up! This helps teachers support kids more effectively

## **4) Role of grammar in the English Dept**

**DS** - Teachers needs to assess the needs of the students, and if someone is not meeting the guidelines for grammar etc, it will be addressed. There is no need for the parents to be correcting the student's writing

# **Principal's Report - Adam Marshall**

## **Staffing**

- Received an 0.5 teacher addition. Tina Teng (bio/math/science) was bumped from part-time to full-time
- Additional staffing allowed crowded ESL classes to be split, and create another grade 9 geography class

## **Department Heads**

- Northern is in the final year of a 3 year department head cycle
- Previous funding for 14.5 positions is now reduced to 12.5 for next 3 years
- The job position outlines will be submitted in November

## **Budget and Timelines**

- Timelines are compressed this year, still working on budget and PRO model, next four weeks will be key
- Budget is down 13% (\$100K) from last year, some program funding is still in question (eg. Student Success, Specialist High School Major program)

- Extra-curricular costs have always been covered for staff, this may change (field trip costs may go up)
- Do have some prior year's funds to use, but would rather spend those funds otherwise

### **Academic /Applied Pathways**

- The TDSB Multi Year Strategic Plan suggests the majority of students are able to handle the academic pathway in grades 9 and 10 and benefit from delaying the choice between applied (college) or academic (university) streams until Grade 11 and 12
- The TDSB believes it can increase student options and success by eliminating the option to take all subjects on the applied level in Grades 9 and 10
- Therefore, in September 2020, applied level courses in all subjects will be eliminated as options for almost all Grade 9 students, and it will be eliminated for all Grade 10 subjects in September 2021
- Without the applied stream, the only alternative to the academic pathway will be "locally developed programming". However, it is not seen as a good alternative to the applied pathway, as it does not qualify as a prerequisite for college level courses in Grades 11 and 12, or for post-secondary programs. Academic Resource Committee (ARC) may need to intervene to express parental concerns over this limitation. (see Committee Updates)
- Deaf & Hard of Hearing (DHH) and LD core programs were also proposed to be cut, but will go through a consulting process

### **DHH**

- DHH population is shrinking and needs are changing
- Over the next 5-10 years, it is anticipated that these students will also be added to mainstream classes with ASL support, instead of having its existing program

### **Cafeteria**

- There is no lunch program this year
- Looking to work with local businesses to provide food at a discount, possibly 3 days a week to start
- Student and staff volunteers needed to make this work

### **Elevator Update**

- Elevator is still out of commission; a part has been missing since August
- Injured and needy students are encountering additional inconvenience
- Possible safety concern
- Parent council may be called in to help escalate this

### **New Caretaker**

- NSS has a new head caretaker this year who is working with a smaller staff
- There have been some challenges and things left undone that had been previously well serviced (light-bulbs not replaced, recycling bins not emptied, etc)

### **Holocaust Education Week**

- Holocaust education week is Nov 3-10
- NSS normally has survivors as presenters, this is becoming more difficult given their age
- This year, Rainer Hoess, grandson of Commander Rudolf Hess of Auschwitz and anti-neo Nazi speaker, will address students on Nov 4

- This will be the first place in North America he has spoken, there will be media coverage

## **Tania Osmond, Co-Chair**

### **Operational Matters**

- Looking for help to “go green” with the refreshments at the meetings
- Website is now working and is being updated ([www.nsscouncil.com](http://www.nsscouncil.com))
- Extra-curricular list is being updated and will be added to the site
- Parent enrichment
  - Study Skills A-Z Nov 12
  - Dyslexia webinar Nov 28
  - School Council Conference Nov 16th
- Minutes from September 24th meeting approved
- School Statement Of Needs was approved

### **Committees - FULL COMMITTEE LIST ATTACHED**

- More efficient for each group to work on their own
- Any NSS parent or guardian can be on a committee, it doesn't have to just be voting members
- There will be ‘think tank’ meetings to leverage cross-efforts between committees
- Discussion was held over the committees with people asking to be added to certain ones
  - Catherine Wong was added to Fundraising and WellNSS
  - Max Rosen added to Education
  - Joyce Jing added to Green
  - Stephanie Curtis and Mary Carrino added to ARC

## **Committee Updates**

### **WellNSS**

- Looking into licensing screenings of “Screenagers 2”
- \$950 to screen for both students and parents
- Suggestions were made to offset cost by inviting other schools or looking into grants
- Max gave feedback that after the screening of the first movie a few years ago, students had negative reactions because of the way it was presented by teachers and admin. He suggested that this time, related classroom activities be presented in a more positive and constructive light.

### **Gifted Advisory Committee (GAC)**

- Have arranged for the Study Skills from A-Z presentation on Nov 12, open to everyone at NSS
- Looking into booking a speaker on substance abuse

### **Academic Resource Committee (ARC)**

- Looking into increasing awareness on the intended removal of the applied, LD and Core programs, have about 6 weeks to work on a response for the TDSB
- Aside from training teachers in “differentiated instruction”, no other supports are being offered to help cover gaps in understanding and ensure success of students with learning differences in academic classes

- There is a lack of information as to what remedial paths are available in case a student does not pass an academic level class, so that the ability to graduate is not compromised
- ARC is concerned this will demotivate this vulnerable sector as well as jeopardize their ability to graduate with a high school diploma
- Suggestion by members to look into contacting the Ontario Human Rights Commission to see if they can be resource

### **Budget**

- \$21,500 was raised in the annual fundraiser ask
- Planned to spend about \$29k so reductions may be needed
- Funding requests - discussion on how to make clubs and teams aware they can make a funding request. Max will post the funding form on the NSS Facebook group to help increase awareness and access.
- Reminder for new members that funding requests are discussed by the subcommittee, who can vote on requests under \$1000
- School Council must discuss and vote on all requests of \$1000 and higher
- 3 requests were up for discussion tonight and were approved:
  - Breakfast Club requested and will receive \$2000 (request was reduced by Dale from the \$3000 that was originally allocated for them in the budget)
  - SmartRisk program requested and will receive \$2500 for training
  - Girls Volleyball team requested \$2000 to fund a tour of three cities. Previous two years they were allocated \$1500. Subcommittee suggests funding them \$1500 which was approved.

### **NSS Foundation update -NOTES ATTACHED**

Next Meeting: December 4 2019

## **Northern Secondary School Council Committees for 2019-2020**

(committee members can be any parent or guardian of a student at Northern)

**Budget-** Steve Sims and Janice Barnett- co-chairs, Catherine Wong, Kasi Kugapalan, Andy Anderson, Abby Dwosh

**Education-** Andrea Fowler- chair, Melissa Rosen, Sohinee Ray, Tania Osmond, John Inglis, Gail Agensky, Max Rosen

**Wellness-** Diana Goldie- chair, Stephanie Curtis, Joyce Jing, Cathy Miller, Gail Agensky, Sohinee Ray, Catherine Wong

**Green-** Andrea Stephens and Nancy Lee- co-chairs, Andrea Fowler, Karri Paradi, Gail Agensky, Joyce Jing

**Gifted Advisory Committee (GAC)-** Melissa Rosen- chair, Tania Osmond, Karri Paradi, Gail Agensky, Sohinee Ray

**Academic Resource Committee (ARC)/LD-** Rita Czarnecki and Mary Carrino- co-chairs, Nancy Lee, Diana Goldie, Janice Barnett, Kristina Teixeira, Stephanie Curtis

**Website-** Janice Barnett, Mary Ann Stewart, Karri Paradi

**Fundraising-** Christina Mueller-Lawrence- chair, Diana Goldie, Kristina Teixeira, Andy Anderson, Catherine Wong

**Caring and Safe-** Julia Schindeler

**Breakfast-** Sue Fisher

## **NSS Foundation - Christina Muller Lawrence**

### **The Northern Secondary School Foundation Needs Your Help!**

We are a charitable organization, registered in 1999 to raise funds to enrich the academic experiences of students and staff at Northern. We give out **\$17,000 in Scholarships and awards** each year at Commencements and Awards assembly...and plan on \$1000 plus in Grants.

We are currently looking for alumni, parents and/or former staff who would be interested in serving a two-year term on our Board of Directors.

We would welcome your participation:

- To join our **Board of Directors** or become a member of one of our committees.
- To bring **fresh ideas** as to how we might continue to serve the school and alumni.
- To assist with governance, investment and accounting needs of the Foundation.
- To reach out to alumni to build connections with current students.
- To assist in maintaining **our website** [WordPress].
- To write articles for an **alumni newsletter**.

If you would like more information, please send expressions of interest to [president@nssf.ca](mailto:president@nssf.ca) . We will contact you immediately.

### **GRANTS applications now open**

The Northern Secondary School Foundation provides Grants to enrich school programs, clubs and activities. In the past, the Foundation has provided funding for the annual co-op breakfast, mental health programs, guest speakers, artist in the school, student travel stipend, the purchase of equipment for the drama club, stage crew and Physics department and DECA. Students need to go to [NSSF.ca](http://NSSF.ca) for an application to apply for a grant. Contact the Northern Foundation Senator Minisa Kane [minisakane@gmail.com](mailto:minisakane@gmail.com) for more information about applying for Foundation Grants. Get your Grant application in early before the Foundation runs out of money. Students will have to present to the NSSF Board Jan 14<sup>th</sup>. Currently, the Foundation can provide two \$500 grants.

### **Thank a Teacher!**

Foundation will have a table set up in the front foyer for Parent Teacher Interviews, Nov 27, where parents can thank a teacher by making a donation.

This initiative enables parents to recognize, in a special way, a teacher who has made a positive difference in their child's experience at school.

In purchasing a **Thank a Teacher** card, their donation will help support student grants and scholarships that enrich the **education experience** and **reward excellence**.

Teachers will receive a thank you note with their personal message of appreciation and know that a donation has been made to the Northern Secondary School Foundation in their name.

### **NSS Air Announcements**

As a FYI, our student senator will be making NSS air announcements about the Foundation. This "Did you know ..." campaign information is to raise awareness of the foundation among student body so they will apply for grants and scholarships.

**Follow NSS Foundation on Instagram:** [northernssfoundation](https://www.instagram.com/northernssfoundation)

**Dale Callender, Registered Psychotherapist,  
SKYLARK Children, Youth & Families at  
Northern Secondary School In School Support  
Dale.Callendar@skylarkyouth.org  
Tel: Confidential Direct line 416-489-9586  
Fax: 416-393-0294  
Twitter: @DaleatSKYLARK**

- A partnership since 1989 – formerly with Delisle Youth Services
- Dale Callender has been at Northern in the role since 1998
- 3 years ago Oolagen Youth Services and Delilse Youth Services merged – now Skylark
- April 2020 –Skylark, Griffin Centre, Adventure Place, Etobicoke Children’s Centre will be merging
- Located directly in the school, full time Room 312A
- Accredited Member Agency June 2019 -CCA

### **Dale Callender:**

- Registered Psychotherapist-RP –with the College of Psychotherapy of Ontario
- Member of Delisle/Skylark since 1998
- Former Camp Director
- Former Student Northern Secondary
- Former staff at Aisling Discoveries Child/Family Centre, Covenant House Toronto
- Roles at a residential group home, day treatment school programs, group work
- Trained in Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, Family therapy, Motivational interviewing, solution focused therapy
- Published author Talking about Sexual orientation and Gender Diversity in Education, The Impact of Violence on Learning for Youth
- Krista Sepp Memorial Award for Mentoring – outstanding contributions to the field of Child Youth Work in Ontario

### **What’s unique about Skylark being in Northern**

- Early intervention model
- Working in collaboration with TDSB/existing school support services
- As a Skylark representative, has access/referral to all their services; walk ins, psychiatrist/NP referrals, residential group homes, day treatment school programs, intensive, ongoing counselling, network of community services
- Helping to reduce barriers of access/stigma, Dale is involved in the fabric of activities at the school; a daily breakfast for learning /snacks program during day, football program, rugby program, staff advisor to Student Council, fashion show, mainstage drama producer

### **Need to know- Parents/Youth**

Areas typically addressed:

- Anxiety
- Mood

- Stress
- Family Conflict
- Substance usage
- Homelessness/risk of homelessness
- Sexuality/identity
- Conduct
- School performance
- Self harm
- Education/access to community resources

- Counselling/support work assists to help identify goal areas and an individualized plan
- Students are usually reluctant to make access to service when forced/coerced
- Dale is a trained therapist with many years of experience and follows ethical, legal and therapeutic standards and guidelines in areas of assessment, documentation/recording and reporting. He has a supervisor who meets with Dale every 2 weeks, and he attends clinical consultation meetings with his colleagues at Skylark every 2 weeks, and attends Family Therapy consultations 1 x month

## Myths/misunderstandings

- That Dale works for the TDSB
- That Dale only sees athletes/male students
- That Dale will share information with others
- That Dale will force someone to tell them something they don't want to talk about/share
- I can never get into Dale's office/an appointment
- There is a cost to the service
- That he'll talk/tell my parents
- That other students will know I see Dale

## Skylark school-based services

- Classroom based workshops
- Regular meetings with School Administration and Support Services
- Parent, caregiver, educator and community consultations
- Referrals to community resources
- Consultations
- Walk in counselling
- Assessment
- Ongoing psychotherapy
- Advocacy
- Consultation with community professionals as requested

