**Northern School Council Meeting**

**January 16, 2020, 6:30 - 8:45 pm**

**Northern SS Library**

**Attendees:** Janice B, Rita C, Abby D, Diana G, John I, Kasi K, Nancy L, Christina ML, Tania O, Karri P, Melissa R, Mary Ann S, Adam Marshall, Stephanie S

**Regrets:** Gail A, Andy A, Stephanie C, Andrea F, Sohinee R, Steve S, Kristina T, Helen A, Jenn M, Max R

**Invited**: Melanie Stassis, Guidance

**Meeting called to order** : 6:30 pm

**Welcome & Introductions:**

Tanis Osmond, Co-Chair, welcomed guest speaker Melanie Stassis to speak about Course Selection for 2020-21

**Melanie Stassis, Guidance**

* [View her presentation slides](https://www.nsscouncil.com/uploads/7/7/5/0/77505964/nss_course_selection_presentation_2020-2021.pdf)
* You can determine a student’s Guidance Counsellor on the NSS website. Students are assigned to counsellors by the first letter of their last name

**TDSB philosophy** - “Creating pathways to success”

* Know yourself
* Explore opportunities
* Set and achieve goals

**What do you need to graduate?**

* 30 course credits (18 compulsory, 12 elective)
  + 40 hours community involvement (begins summer after gr 8)
  + [www.volunteertoronto.ca](http://www.volunteertoronto.ca) is a great resource
  + Spring Volunteer Fair is April 28 at lunch
* Pass Grade 10 Literacy Test
  + Written in gr 10 (March 31 2020)
  + Can be rewritten in gr 11
  + Pass/Fail
  + OLC401 can also be taken to meet the requirement

**To complete Course Selection:**

**Step 1**: Start thinking, talking and researching

* Northern website → Guidance → Selection
* Course Fair - Feb 7 at lunch (extended)

**Step 2**: Access myblueprint.ca to choose courses

* Open Feb 11-Feb 20 (closes Feb 20 at 9 am) for selection
* Confirm your choices
* Get signatures
* Return signed form to homeform by Feb 20

**Step 3**: Receive and check your course verification form given out in homeform Feb 24, return to homeform by Feb 26

**General Reminders**:

* Students can add parents as a family member in myblueprint.ca
* You can contact myblueprint.ca directly with any tech questions
* Seriously consider your alternative courses… you may end up being enrolled in them!
* Students in the tech/business stream must take 1 tech/business course per year
* For Gifted, students in grades 9&10 must take 4 gifted courses per year, and in grades 11 & 12, take 2 gifted courses per year (AP courses count as gifted courses)
* For Core, students in grade 9 must take 4 core classes (English, Math, Science, Geography), grade 10 must take 5 core classes (English, Math, Science, History, Careers/Civics), and 2 core classes per year for Grades 11 & 12 (English, Math, and the option of GLE)
* To find a prerequisite go to Guidance section of the NSS website, select Course Search and type in the course #
* If in doubt, email guidance counsellor and/or make an appointment. Guidance does not automatically initiate one-on-one appointments with students in grades 9-11

**Summer School**

* Taking a summer course DOES NOT guarantee a course change in September, eg the course may be full or no longer offered
* 2 sessions offered, Face to Face in July and e-learn in July-Aug
* More info on Summer School available on TDSB website later this spring

**Moving from Grade 9 to 10**

* You can switch streams for Math, English and Science but you must complete a summer course to change from Applied to Academic Math
* Must meet requirements for Gifted/Core and Business/Tech if required

**Moving from Grade 10 to 11**

***\*\*This is the most important year for course selection!\*\****

* Research CO-OP and SHSM programs:
  + CO-OP provides experiential learning opportunities. Info and application forms are available in the guidance office.
* SHSM is Specialist High Skills Major
  + Currently offering Health & Wellness and Transportation SHSM’s; looking to offer new programs for 2020-21 (see Principal’s Report below)
  + SHSM provides more in depth education in specific areas and some universities will give credit for completing a SHSM
* Must meet requirements for Gifted/Core and Business/Tech if required, but this year it moves to just 2 Gifted/Core classes. Business/tech remains at 1
* Begin to research any post-secondary requirements because many Grade 11 courses are prerequisites for Grade 12

**Moving from Grade 11 to 12**

* Most important thing to consider moving into final year is stress management. Students need to balance work-load, extra-curricular, stress of moving on to post-secondary etc. Parents are advised to check in often, encourage sleep and other healthy habits. Ask your child how you can support them best
* Save spares for this year. Students can take up to two spares over their time at NSS, and it’s advised to save them for Grade 12 if possible. Don’t take 8 courses if you don’t have to!
* Must meet requirements for Gifted/Core and Business/Tech if required

**Great websites for researching post-secondary options:**

[Ontariouniversitiesinfo.ca](https://www.ontariouniversitiesinfo.ca/)

[Ontariocolleges.ca](https://www.ontariocolleges.ca/en/)

* These sites offer unbiased info on programs and are a great place to start your search. You can search by the program your student is interested in, and then find which schools offer it and what courses are required etc.

**Principal’s Report - Adam Marshall**

**Facilities Update**

* North gym is still dark, have been trying to get the lights fixed since September. Currently scheduled for March Break.
* Seeding of the front lawn is not done, no date on this
* Roof requires repair, school has sustained water damage in some areas due to this
* Reduction in caretakers has also taken a toll.
* Not getting response from TDSB which is frustrating.

**Staff Update**

* Next walkout is scheduled for Tuesday Jan 21.
* As of Jan 20 we will have no more on call coverage which means NSS will spend more money on supply teachers. This impacts teams with away games who need teachers to accompany them.
* Extra-curriculars are still going on but field trips are a grey area… still booking them but we may have to start saying no.
* No Professional Development is going on.

**Website**

* The [new website](https://schoolweb.tdsb.on.ca/northernss/) is up and running

**New SHSM**

* There is a proposal for a new SHSM for 2020-21, Manufacturing, which is a Design & Build SHSM. Also looking at including auto classes.

**Grade 8 Open House**

* The annual open house for grade 8 students and parents was Jan 15. There were huge numbers in attendance due to the strike action by the elementary teachers which cancelled the student visits in the afternoon.

**Tania Osmond - Changes in Education - We are More Concerned**

* Please see the information on the NSS Council website that was presented Dec 4 offsite (due to teacher strike), titled  [Are You Concerned?](https://www.nsscouncil.com/uploads/7/7/5/0/77505964/are_you_concerned.pdf).
* What we have learned since then makes us even more concerned about the future of high school education in the TDSB due to the “transformative changes” being planned with very little public consultation.
* Please refer to the new deck of information titled [We are More Concerned](https://www.nsscouncil.com/uploads/7/7/5/0/77505964/we_are_more_concerned.pdf) for full details. To summarize:
* We believe there are some bad policies being proposed and implemented at the TDSB with very limited opportunities being provided for feedback and consultation with parents.
* Equity does not mean “one classroom fits all”. We believe equity is giving everyone an equal opportunity to reach their potential, as stated by provincial law.
* Destreaming without sufficient support is a bad policy that potentially increases harm for some students and actually doesn’t solve at least one of the problems it is trying to address (racial bias).
* TDSB has a pattern of not consulting or engaging the affected people (teachers, students, parents).
* Our only hope is feedback. There are new feedback opportunities that parents are encouraged to make the most of.

**Update from Committees**

**WellNSS**

* We are planning on having two screenings of the film *Screenagers 2* which is focused on mental health and wellness and the impact of smartphones and screen time.
* One screening will be for students during the first week in March with special focus on Grades 9 & 10 since these ages are addressed in the film. Guidance will be leading a discussion with students after the screening. This may be postponed if the strike action continues.
* Parent screening will be March 3 or 5, still to be determined. There will be a panel of experts hosting a discussion afterwards.

**GAC**

* Jan 28 is the next GAC meeting. Agenda includes proposed Changes in Education and we are considering a joint meeting with the Special Education committee.
* Feb 11 is the Parent & Student info evening focusing on AP, Scholarships and Enrichment. There are three time slots so attendees can view presentations and speak with program co-ordinators and exhibitors.
* Feb 27 there will be an info night at NSS featuring a speaker provided by CAMH who will be speaking on teen substance abuse (vaping, nicotine, alcohol etc) and what it does to brain development and mental health.

**Teacher Representative Stephanie Signorile**

* NSS teachers would appreciate an increased show of support from NSS parents.
* We want your kids to succeed and our primary concerns are over e-learning and class size.
* If you can find a way to show support by walking the picket line or providing food or hot coffee it would be appreciated.

**Operational Matters**

Minutes from Oct 26 meeting were passed.

**Next meetings are Feb 25 and April 1, in the NSS library.**