

Northern SS Council Meeting January 23, 2019

Minutes

In attendance: Gillian Gibbons, Edith J., Stephanie C., Sue F., Kaan Y., Karim H., Bam P., Kasi K., Steve S., Shellie S., Sylvia P., Melissa R., Cathy M., Helen A., Vlad M.(student) , Reuben N., Tania O., Rita C., Judy S., Tanya G., Gail A., Jenn M., Scott D., Peggy J., John L., Nancy L., Samir F.

Regrets: Linda R., Susan B., Andy A., Shital D., Njeri R., Brian B., Diba H.

1) Welcome and Introductions

Meeting opened at 6:36pm, agenda was circulated.

Co-Chair Tania thanked everyone for coming. She noted lots of items on the agenda therefore suggested Council please try to adhere to times estimated on the agenda.

Council was asked to hold comments/questions until after item has been fully presented, names will be noted and she will try to allow everyone to speak so their comments can be heard.

2) Special Guests

A: NSS Volleyball Students - Update from the team Sara grade 11 (Sr) Katilin (Jr team)

The students thanked Council for their support. Jr & Sr teams made a 2 day excursion to Guelph and Laurier and they were grateful for the opportunity. The trip provided a chance for positive social interaction and team building. The Students presented the Council with Chocolates!

B: NSS Mates: Teachers Scott Jeffrey and Irene Andiranopolitis.

Launched 2 years ago. NSS Mates was created as a response to seeing kids not connecting. Program started to match a Gr 9 student with older student, to assist them with integration. Goals are 1/ Sense of belonging in this huge school 2/ Concept to have older and younger students connect, share lunch sometimes and go on a once a month excursion (ie Skyzone, Sheldon Outdoor Centre, Skating etc). Provides an opportunity for socializing and kindness to fellow students. Noted that some long term relationships have been maintained after graduation from Northern. Any interested students should be encouraged to contact Ms Andiranopolitis.

3) Parental Concerns

A: The policy of inclusion

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/education/article-educating-grayson-are-inclusive-classrooms-failing-students/>

Co-Chairs Tania & Rita circulated the article and suggested Council read it if interested, before meeting. At the meeting Tania opened the floor for comments and discussion. Several parents commented on the article. The need for greater funding, more staff and increased awareness for specialized needs came up. There are 12 exceptionalities and thousands of students identified within the board and with such a broad range of children and issues, it is incredibly challenging. Gillian commented about gross underfunding for students with special needs.

In general Principals are sending a message to the board about the low levels of staffing and funding for these programs. It's an ongoing challenge to keep the pressure on to get access to staffing and support.

Melissa R. mentioned that any parent can get involved with SEAC (Special Education Advisory Committee). She also attended the TDSB Budget meeting (this afternoon)

B. Student Life - Assembly conduct:

A parent raised the concern about School Assemblies and kids falling asleep -

Gillian noted that she inherited the current schedule of assemblies and will work next year on making more of a connection to class activities. Some assemblies are capturing student attention, others are not. Volume is high and perhaps that is why the students may tend to tune out.

Vlad offered comments on how Students receive assemblies.

Cafeteria microwaves: Tania commented that she heard they are often broken.

Gillian was not aware but will check on that issue.

C. Calendar on the NSS website -

Gillian said that the calendar will be taken down in the future and new one will be put up.

Karim commented that the NSS Council web site has a calendar (which can link to your phone). It requires some data entry to keep it updated.

D. Provincial funding cuts: A community Meeting called "Education Funding Cuts, What Next?" will be held on January 31st 7-9:00 at Earl Haig with Trustee Alexander Brown (TSDB) and Trustee Maria Ruzzo TCDSB to discuss and parents, students, members of the community are invited.

Also PIAC (Parent Involvement Advisory Committee) dinner -Thurs Feb 21st 6:00-9:00 pm @ Montecassino Hotel & Event Centre. There is one more ticket available for a parent

4) New Programs for Students and Parents

Melissa R. (GAC Chair) asked to make Council aware of the following upcoming programs or events in the near future:

A. Enrichment/AP/Scholarship Event to be held on Feb 20th. All parents will be encouraged to come with students for information sessions. Exhibitors will be there from various enrichment programs and presentations will be made regarding the many scholarship options available for students, in addition to a session on Advanced Placement.

B. Study Skills - Will be a program design for full range of kids - from those who may be failing to those wanting to improve their grades. A Network of teachers will be providing study skills, teacher support and follow-up

C. Teen Stress/Anxiety - Lisa Kreindler & Melanie Stassis to present, more information to come.

Note: Both B and C above will be linked through NSS Air and Gillian's announcements

5) Operational Matters

A. Revised budget presentation:

Steve presented a 2 page Treasurer's Report (attached). This year \$26,000 available to spend and we want to leave \$2,000 in the bank. \$5500 is still to be allocated. Two items requiring Council vote today:

NSS Mates budget request for \$1500 -

Motion: That Council support the NSS Mates request by Shellie S., John L. seconded, all approved.

DECA Club - in support of a Business Competition, Vlad is a member.

Motion: Reuben motioned to approve \$1000 for DECA Club, Judy seconded, all approved

B. Further Funding requests - Black NSS Club: Council is learning more about this group in order to consider their request. Encouraging and empowering this part of the school community is important. This club has been around for about a year and had been another related club at NSS in the past.

Motion: Scott - motioned to approve revised Council Budget, Seconded by Melissa, all in favour.

Gillian also thanked Council for sponsoring the translation of a Shakespeare play for The Deaf and HH group.

C. Nov 13th NSS Council Meeting Minutes

Tania presented the minutes from Nov 13th2018 Council Meeting. They were distributed to Council by email some time ago, comments, questions, edits were invited by email, none were received.

Motion: Scott D. motioned to approve the Nov 13th 2018 Council Minutes, seconded by Kasi, all approved.

D. SSON School Statement of Needs (attached):

The Parent section of School Statement of Needs is an annual requirement from council (or another parent group) for the board. This year's SSON was presented to council members by email from Co-Chairs in December.

There was a request for an edit. Discussion around this request resulted in a proposal to add ENSURE in front of implementation on Page 2 of the document.

Motion: Sylvia motioned to approve the SSON as distributed, and with wording added above. Reuben seconded, all approved.

Thanks to those who worked on the SSON.

E: Constitutional discussion:

Co-Chair Tania summarized the activities of the fall; she spoke about the work completed to date on the constitution by a committee struck by motion at the October 2018 Council meeting. The proposed revised Constitution was distributed by email and feedback was requested. At this point, email discussion has taken a great deal of time and energy and many council members are exhausted by it.

Various comments were heard from several council members and a fulsome discussion around the proposed changes to the Council Constitution ensued.

Tania summarized the current position and provided the group with possible options to proceed in order to move forward.

Tania asked the Council to consider 2 possible and different approaches to resolution: Accept the draft today as presented, or, strike another committee to work on the constitution. Based on a vote by show of hands, in considering the 2 approaches council seems divided on direction at this point.

Therefore, Tania presented the option to reject all suggested Constitutional amendments, adhere to the original Constitution, and operate with an out-of-compliance number of parent members for the current year. In addition Tania suggested a move could be made toward ending all Constitutional discussion for the remainder of this academic year. The Members present agreed that they could support the following for the 2018-2019 Council:

Motion 1:

(Operating as 19 but with 27 parent members):

We move to acknowledge that for the 2018-2019 school year, in order to include all parents interested in participating this year as Parent Members on School Council, that School Council for this 2018-2019 school year will have 27 instead of 19 Parent Members, although this is out of compliance with the Constitution, as we acknowledge that we continue to be also out of compliance with other aspects of the Constitution.

Motioned by Melissa, Samir seconded, all in favour

Motion 2:

We move to decide that no more time will be spent by School Council on Constitution review or amendment this 2018-2019 school year

Motioned by Tania, Seconded Judy, all in favour

6) Independent Reports:

A: Principal's Report - Dress code feedback - students are giving feedback.

Suggestion: That School council ask the principal for a copy of the student statement on the Northern Dress Code as drafted last year by SAC. *Motion:* Melissa motioned that School Council should request Northern's Principal send the 2017-2018 Student Dress Code to TDSB as feedback in response to TDSB's request for input for TDSB formulating a new Student Dress Code policy. Seconded by Tania, approved.

Use of electronics: no electronic devices during tests. Model pulled from UofT's process of working with the use of electronics in class

Report Cards to be distributed Feb 7th, Parent Teacher Interviews Feb 13th

Course selection is starting soon.

Question: are the suggestions for cell phone use being used that were provided to Gillian last fall? - Yes.

Jan 16th Grade 8 info night went really well. Seats are open in all grades this year.

Gillian also spoke about the focus for the last PLC: Numeracy vs math - teaching kids how to READ math, how do we look at graphs, etc.

Boilers - 2 of 4 are working (which is good)!

B. Teacher's Report - NONE

C. Community Member Report - NONE

D. Student Report (Vlad) - No students showed up for the student dress code feedback session.

Next meetings: February 11, March 27, April 24 Adjourned 9:15pm