

Northern School Council Meeting (Approved)

October 14, 2021, 6:30 - 7:45 pm (Via Zoom)

Attendees: Andy A, Jen A, Janice B, Diane C, Rita C, Sabina H, Laura M, Tania O, Karri P, Melissa R, Steve S, Rhonda S, Claire S, Monica T, Adam Marshall, Jenn Marr, Leslie Usin-Rojas, Diana Goldie

Regrets: Abby D

Meeting called to order at 6:33 by Janice B

Operational Matters

Approval of Agenda.

Motion to approve: Andy; Seconded: Rhonda. Agenda was approved.

Approval of Sept 21 minutes.

Motion to approve: Sabina; Seconded: Steve. Minutes were approved.

Co-chair Report - Tania O.

It has been a busy fall and I hope we're all settling into routine and feeling a little more oriented in our "new normal". We are seeing signs of healthy engagement from parents with our Council activities - a record turnout for our Sept SC meeting (over 100!), a strong turnout for the first GAC meeting Oct 4, and nominations for six new parent members on Council 21-22. We even have many visits to our website (if you haven't been there, please visit nsscouncil.com! We are continually updating it with news for parents, by parents.)

With our new Council will come change for me. For three years, I have had the pleasure and honour of being chair of a strong group of parents in a very special school. It has been an invaluable learning experience and opportunity to work with administration, staff, parents, and students to make this a smooth running organization that has enriched the student and parent experience at Northern.

Though I love what I do in this role and have thoroughly enjoyed working with Rita and Janice, I am stepping down from being co-chair. I want to invite change -new ideas and perspectives- into our leadership. As well, to be honest, the mental health challenges of COVID were very real for my family, and they need to be my priority now.

I will still be involved as a parent member, and I look forward to working with School Council to continue to support student success at Northern. Thank you to many who have expressed their support and appreciation of my efforts over these years. I am pleased that I now count many whom I have met through this work as personal friends.

2021-22 Council

Introduction of New Council - Mary Ann S & Christina L

Mary Ann and Christina were the Election Committee this year. The election ran smoothly and Google forms were used to submit nominations. There are 15 parent reps on Council and 13 nominations were received by the Oct 11th deadline. The last 2 positions were filled by nominations submitted on Oct 12th on a first-come first-served basis. All positions were acclaimed by TDSB regulations.

The names of the 2021-22 council and each member did a short introduction. A statement was read on behalf of Abby.

Election of New Executive

There are 3 executive positions - Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. Each position will be shared between two people and all six people were acclaimed.

Co-Chair: Janice, Andy

Co-Treasurer; Steve, Sabina

Co-Secretary: Tania, Jen

Thank you Mary Ann and Christina for running such a smooth election.

Introduction of Staff, Community and Student Representatives - Janice B.

Staff: Both Jenn Marr and Leslie-Usin-Rojas have graciously agreed to come back for another year.

Community: This role is to bring information about what is happening in our community that could affect the school - building permits, shelters, community safety etc. Diana Goldie has indicated her interest in this role. She is a former member of Council and has worked on the shelter committee representing the school.

- Motion to put forward for Diana to be community rep: Tania; Seconded: Andy. Diana Goldie was approved to be the community rep.

Student Representative: This role is elected by the student body and the person will be confirmed in the next few days.

Principals Report - Adam

Gave thanks to Tania for all her work as co-chair and looking forward to working with Janice and Andy as well as extending a welcome to all who are joining this year's council.

Parent-submitted Questions:

Can you give us an update on extra curricular clubs, sports? Which ones are running, who to contact, where to look for latest information?

A big thanks to our coaches and teacher reps who have stepped up immediately. We have activities running that are not running elsewhere, and we are adding activities as fast as allowed. We appreciate the personal time they are giving up to help activities run. Things that have started:

- Athletics: football, cross country, intramural flag football & ultimate frisbee, soccer
- Clubs: There are a lot of clubs running as well as plans for the Fashion Show in winter. Keep watch on the bulletin for more information. As well, SAC is working on hosting a club/activity fair in November. It will be held outside and students can see the extra curricular options while on a walk break. It is important to note that students can participate in as many virtual clubs as they want but are limited to participating in 2 in-person clubs. In-person clubs have to have attendance taken and screening completed, just like for class and capacity is limited to 25 people indoors.

For more information, there are QR codes posted around the school that students can scan to see each day's announcements. The QR code will be included in upcoming weekly bulletins.

Where can students or parents seek extra help or get support/bring concerns (IEP, non-IEP)- tutoring, math drop in, teachers, guidance, VP?

If a student is struggling, the first step is to reach out to the classroom teacher. If further conversation is needed or if having trouble reaching someone, then reach out to your VP (organized by last-name alpha)

Additional resources include:

For students with IEPs. The following team is available to help:

Gifted: Monique Cipollone - Monique.Cipollone@tdsb.on.ca

DHH: Eric Larocque - Eric.Larocque@tdsb.on.ca

ARC/LD: Amanda Kearney - Amanda.Kearney@tdsb.on.ca

Note that it is IEP writing season, which is very labour intensive. There are over 800 IEPs being created right now so please be patient if reaching out.

For students without IEPs. Please reach out to your guidance counsellor. The counsellors are organized by alpha and appointments can be booked [online](#). Details have been included regularly in the weekly bulletin.

Peer Tutoring. Details have been included in the weekly bulletin on how to sign up. Once the program is full, the ability to accommodate new requests is reduced.

Math drop-in. It isn't possible to run as in past years due to Covid restrictions to avoid cohort mixing. Teachers are managing this themselves with their own classes in a variety of ways (before, after school, etc.)

What are the latest COVID stats at Northern- any cases reported for students? staff? any quarantining required?

We have thankfully no reported cases at Northern. When students call in sick, there is a return to school process, which the VPs are overseeing.

Will there be a curriculum night this fall to meet teachers/hear about what to expect?

There will not be a curriculum night this fall. With staff volunteering to do extra curricular activities, it was decided to not hold a curriculum night. Parents are asked to reach out to teachers directly with any curriculum questions.

What progress reports can we expect to receive from teachers? are parent-teacher interviews happening? If so, when?

There will be a mark update no later than October 18th. For students achieving less than a certain grade level, parents will need to acknowledge receipt.

We will be having parent teacher interviews Oct 28 2-4, 6-8 pm, and parents can signup through the online system. There will be more information in the weekly bulletin.

Midterm report will be sent out electronically on Nov 19th. Full disclosure date is Nov 26th. The Full-Disclosure deadline is the date after which grades will remain on the permanent student record. Students may drop a course prior to that to avoid it being on their transcript.

Will there be any extra activities organized to help Grade 10 students to get familiarized with Northern? Grade 9/10 parents?

Yes, we want to do something though Covid restrictions have prevented it from being possible. Gatherings cannot be organized nor can we do proper assemblies. We really want to organize activities to help the Grade 10 class feel part of a group. We have earmarked funding for this and will facilitate as soon as we are able.

Any news on reintroducing indoor sports? (My son went to a volleyball tryout and they were informed that indoor sports weren't yet allowed). Or, could we be creative and move some traditionally indoor sports outside?

We currently have approval for girls basketball and boys volleyball. There is a cap of 25 people in attendance and we can hold the tryout and practices indoors. Scrimmages cannot be held in practice and we are still waiting to hear if there will be leagues. Football is considered an indoor activity given the need to change in the locker room. The track and football field are being used to capacity already by many different groups before and after school.

Advocacy for reverting to a "regular" semester schedule for semester 2? The lack of continuity within each subject and the duration of each class are both really challenging.

It seems the vast majority would like to see a return to the regular semester. The best place to voice your opinions/concerns is by reaching out to our Trustee - Rachel Chernos Lin (Rachel.ChernosLin@tdsb.on.ca). She is very responsive and represents our concerns to the Board.

Is it a done deal that exams are not occurring for this school year?

Exams are a TDSB decision, not an individual school decision. The superintendent and we know it is a concern for senior students but we have been told not to run exams and expect that this will continue next semester for equity reasons.

Other news

Parking Lot: Repair was supposed to be done before school started. The current date of completion is November 6th.

Yearbook: For those who purchased a yearbook last year, we are targeting to have the yearbook available the second week of November. For those who did not purchase, there will be limited supply available for purchase. Details will be in weekly bulletin.

Elevator: It has been out of service for a long time and we are working with our Trustee to move it forward. We have been told it will be 6 months to fix it as it is a new build with an entire new machine. Right now the hall monitors are coordinating with students in need to use the freight elevator. Have asked for extra caretaker support to help students move around the building as well as clean high touch services.

Lockers: Unfortunately, we are still not able to use the lockers, as per TPH guidelines.

Student Fees: We haven't had these in a long time and used school operations funds to support what limited activities were allowed during COVID. We would like to reinstate student fees to cover fees for Activity / Yearbook / Printing. The suggested fee would be \$50. Feedback about this fee can be sent to the council co-chairs.

Spirit Wear: Limited supply of last year's spirit wear has been on sale this week and it is nearly sold out. In the next three weeks, new spirit wear will be available through an online SAC store for a limited time. More information to come when available.

EQAO/OSSLT: EQAO is for Grade 9 students. It is a math test and will be conducted in class. It will not count as part of the student's final grade.

OSSLT. For students graduating this year, they do not have to write it. For all non-graduating students it will be completed at school in English class. It is an online test. We are looking into solutions for Grade 11 and non-graduating Grade 12 students who have English in semester 2 to give them the opportunity to write it in Semester 1. This would give them a second

opportunity if needed to rewrite in Semester 2. Not passing the exam in semester 1 for a Grade 11 would impact them in terms of Grade 12 course selection because they would need to add the Ontario Literacy course to their schedule which will reduce their course selection flexibility.

Take Your Kid to Work Day: This is for Grade 9 students and is scheduled for November 3rd. Students do NOT have to participate in the program, and can come to school as usual. However, the same programming material offered by Learning Partnership will be offered in all venues (in school, virtually) that day. There will be more details in the weekly bulletin. We will also follow up with the board on Grade 10 students as they missed out on it last year.

2021 Graduates: Looking to distribute the diplomas, yearbook, awards, graduating class memory book the week before winter break, when students are likely returning home from university.

Subcommittees

If you are interested in joining a subcommittee, please visit our website to learn more or reach out to the school council via email (nss.school.council@gmail.com).

Treasurer's Report - Steve S

Oct 15th is the last day for voluntary contribution campaign. This campaign is the primary source of funding for the year. That funding is used to support four main categories - Student Enrichment; Parent Enrichment; Teacher Engagement and Environmental.

We will be putting together a budget committee which is responsible for creating the budget, getting it approved, reaching out to the school community to make them aware there is funding, and evaluating new funding requests. Generally there are 6 people on the committee, including the co-Treasurers.

If interested in joining the committee, please reach out to School Council. The first meeting will be in the next week and the budget will be presented at the next council meeting.

Upcoming events- see website for more info and link information

Academic Resource Committee (ARC) - Nov 2 at 7:00 pm

Speaker Sarvie Riahi, "Self-Care: Recognizing the Signs of Burnout & How to Take Care of Yourself" followed by a Q and A time with Amanda Kearney, SpecEd/LD Curriculum Leader

Gifted Advisory Council (GAC) - Study Session. Date TBA.

A session open to all parents and students focusing on study habits and tips, as well as how to navigate help at Northern and beyond. Watch Adam's weekly bulletin for more information.

Conferences of Interest

Parents as Partners - Oct 16-17

CADDAC - 13th Annual ADHD Conference - Oct 16-17

Shift Your Thinking/LD - 7th Annual Conference - Nov 12-13

2021 Meeting Dates

- Wed, Nov 24 - 6:30pm
- Thurs Jan 13
- Wed Feb 23
- Wed, April 6
- Wed May 18