

Northern School Council Meeting (Approved)

September 20, 2022, 6:30 - 7:45 pm (School Library)

Attendees: Andy A, Jen A, Janice B, Rita C, Abby D, Diane C, Diane G, Laura M, Melissa R, Tania O, Adam Marshall, Jenni Marr, Ms. Peel

Regrets: Samir F, Sabina H, Karri P, Rhonda S, Claire S, Steve S, Leslie Usin- Rojas

Meeting called to order at 6:33 by Janice B

- Welcome
- Land acknowledgement
- Code of Conduct reviewed

Operational Matters

- Approval of Agenda Motion to approve: Diane; Seconded: Diana. Carried.
- Approval of May 25 minutes. Motion to approve: Tania; Seconded: Diane. Carried.

Co-chair Report – Andy

- Participated in Grade 9 welcome night which was held in June
- Curriculum Night. Opportunity to speak to parents.
- Have received some requests for funding, which the budget committee has approved:
 - Student Leadership - Approved
 - Senior/Jr Girls Basketball Team – Approved
- Freedom Event held at the school today was well organized and run.

Guest Presentation – Darya NSS Student Activity Council President

- Leadership retreat was held recently at Mono Cliffs, which the objective to promote team bonding, working together between different associations within the school
- Discussion of what is important. How to make environment impactful for students
- Honour our history and create a better school environment for those who are here now
- Groups Involved: SAC, United Way, GAA, BlackNSS, Head Buddies
- Appreciative of the funding from School Council
- Introduced by Mr. Isaac, head of United Way
- Hoping for an end of year retreat to promote continuity between the leadership teams
- Students had to fund approx. \$85 each

Principal's Report – Adam

Activity Fee. Why are there fees and are they mandatory?

The activity fee at Northern is \$60, of which \$35 is put towards yearbook, \$25 towards Student Activity Council account. The SAC account has \$33K thanks to contributions over past 3 weeks. These funds are used by student organizations which are evaluated with an equity and impact lens. If yearbook ends up needing less money due to economies of scale, that extra money is put into the SAC account. The fee is not mandatory and is waived if not afforded. Paying the fee is not required to access timetables.

School Cash Online wasn't used initially because were told it wouldn't reach everyone in the Northern school community. As a result, moved forward with cash or cheque.

Covid Protocol 22-23. Hepa filters are in rooms and masks are available in the lobby for students. Teachers have masks available to them if desired. Masks not mandatory. Deep cleaning not part of process any longer.

Attendance. 1721 projected. 1899 as of Sept 19th. Originally expected the higher numbers would mostly impact Grade 9 but also picked up 75 students grade 10-12. Have submitted request for 3 additional teachers. Need to redistribute students, primarily in Grade 10. Some classes in Grade 11/12 are large but have the expectation that the classes will be split in half. Several new teachers in the building.

Room 137. The vision for this room is a cross-fit gym to support phys-ed, as well as the health and wellness SCSM. Funding for this was approved in early summer. Architects have been in and are assessing. Hope to benefit staff wellness as well.

Elevators. Still using the freight elevator. However good news is the 2 new elevators have been installed. Now waiting on signoff by inspectors. Will be swipe access. So far it has taken 36 months to get to this point.

Security. Locked doors after morning entry and adding a camera on exit 1. Teachers will have swipe cards to get back into building if take class out. Exit 6 also needs camera.

Exams. Causing anxiety among students. SAC brought it up already and looking at ideas to ease tension. Also looking provide tips and tricks to students and reaching out to teachers and past students for tips. Adam mentioned Dr. Greg Wells as having a good wellness approach to being a good student which includes resting, eating, moving well and practicing excellence with all academic opportunities.

- Question about exam length. Adam suggested that exam length will 90 min in January, with senior exams might be a bit longer.
- Question. Do teachers coordinate to avoid 2 exams on one day? Adam clarified that the office sets the exam schedule, not teachers. First priority is to ensure don't have two

exams scheduled at the same time. Try to avoid 2 exams on same day but can't guarantee. There are only 5 days allotted for exams so could have two exams in a day.

- Question. How is exam weighting set? It is determined by department/course lead, with some general guidelines from office (i.e. not 30% in grade 9/10; college level classes). Lower grades capped on percentage to the mark, higher grades can be upwards of 30%.
- Question. When does student exam schedule come out? Students should have exam schedule by mid October.
- Question. Are all TDSB schools having exams? Yes.
- Question. With exams coming back, are there credit rescue days? No. Previously done on PA Days and typically used for Civics and Careers. Credit recovery through summer school or other avenues.
- Question. In quiet days, is there ARC support available? Yes.

OSSLT Results. They should be available in the next week or so. Currently coordinating with staff to distribute over 500 results.

Cafeteria. It is open for students to eat lunch and open all day to study for those who have spares.

Adam shared that there is tons of energy in the building. Lots of students wanting to participate. Fun to be at school again.

Subcommittee Updates

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

Treasurer's Report – Abby

- The budget document was reviewed.
- Cash on hand \$15,913. Disbursed \$13,175. Starting \$15,913 for 22-23 year.
 - Aim is to end school year with balance of min cash of \$2000
- This year's disbursements.
 - Student Leadership Retreat \$950
 - Senior/Jr Girls Basketball Team \$950
 - Ethics \$750
- Question: How long has budget been at this level? Primary schools raise \$100K-200K per year. Doesn't seem like enough to run the school.
Answer: Previous year's budgets run around \$30K and haven't had requests over this amount. Fundraising at high school is much less due to lower parent engagement and school activity fees contribute to the student council budget where clubs receive funding. School council has been at student meetings to share information about available funding. (Andy)
As a school, we are well funded. If there was a need to mobilize parents to make

contributions for capital projects, should get student input on what is needed. (Adam)
TDSB has specific fundraising rules. Money raised must be used for what is asked for.
School council has an annual request for voluntary contributions, which are not entitled to tax receipts. Northern Secondary School Foundation can run fundraising for projects ie. Turf, scoreboards and those are eligible for donations. (Janice)
Clubs are resilient and want to do their own fundraising. (Darya)

ARC – Tania

The Academic Resource Committee is a group of parents who work to support students with learning differences by connecting parents and students to resources within and beyond the TDSB.

This year, we are planning three social events and presenting a three-part series by Susan Schenk, co-founder of Shift Your Thinking . This year's focus is to introduce parents and students to Shift's broad resources for learning differences - a free library of expert recordings, monthly Live Youth calls (Sept is on Accommodations with Dr. Todd Cunningham), and their annual conference in November. The Northern presentations will begin in Sept with "Getting Off to a Good Start", continue in January with "Halftime Check- in", and end in April with "Finishing Well". Altogether, they will help parents to assess what they can do to support their student's learning needs better.

We were pleased to host Northern parents at our Sept parent social after Meet the Teacher night last week. There was a great turnout and a happy buzz as people made connections and contacts for themselves and their students. We look forward to doing that again in February and May.

Thank you to School Council for their generous funding for these initiatives. All parents and students are welcome to participate in any of our events.

Gifted Advisory Committee – Melissa

GAC will be having an evening social on Thurs Sept 29th. Details will follow in the weekly bulletin. There will also be speaker events which the Northern community along with other schools will be invited to.

2022 Graduation Gift - Melissa

Melissa shared what the 2022 grads received through support from school council supports this. A Northern branded soft backpack, card and pen were handed out at commencement in June.

Education Committee - Melissa

All volunteers are welcome to join this committee that focuses on systemic issues within the TDSB. Melissa sits on SEAC, which represent students with specialties. Over the summer, SEAC worked on the special education plan that was submitted July 31st. It is an operating

manual for how things will affect students with special education needs. 1 in 5 students are identified as having special education needs and many students have needs but have not been identified. Feel free to reach out to Melissa with questions.

Website – Jen

The School Council website is designed and updated by the website committee. If you haven't visited yet, go to nsscouncil.com and see the links "for parents, by parents".

Our most visited pages include:

- Home - which flags need to know schedule changes and important events for the week, as well as links to NSS Air (morning announcements) and Adam's weekly bulletins.
- What's On - which lists speakers, workshops and recordings at Northern and beyond to help with student success and well-being
- Inside NSS - which has links to daily schedules, school calendars, a school map, and suggestions. We have ideas for new content and will share with the council for review when ready.

Our goal is to be a virtual parent buddy to help you navigate at Northern. Let us know if you'd like to help or have suggestions for future content and development.

Community Update – Diana

No recent issues with the Roehampton shelter. Noticed there are additional containers in the parking lot so will send an email to follow up. The lease for the shelter has been extended into a third year.

Julia/Ms Peel – Caring and Safe Committee.

Had first meeting today. The focus this year is on equity and have focuses for action:

- Taking ministry documentation and making it user friendly for Northern
- Restorative Justice. 6-8 students
- Equity Walk. Includes reps from all student groups to point out issues through the building. Not a small undertaking but well worth it.

Want to ensure school is warm and welcoming for all people regardless of race, religion or gender.

New Business

Upcoming School Council Elections.

Last year the elections were online. TDSB bylaws direct that we have to school elections within 30 days of start of school. Last year the election process was all online and in the end, we didn't need an election as all 15 parent members were acclaimed. Anyone can be a volunteer on school council committee – you don't have to be a parent member.

If you are interested in being a parent member, you can nominate yourself through form that will be shared through the Friday bulletin. Aiming to announce it on September 30th and the form will close on Thanksgiving. Election committee headed up with Principal Marshall and include 2 parent volunteers who are not running.

If vote is needed, it will be at next council meeting, which will be on Zoom.

Council is made up of:

- 2 staff members. (Appointed)
- 1 student member. (Appointed)
- 1 community member. (Appointed) Talk about things in the community that impact school.
- 15 parent members. They will vote in 6 members to executive positions.

Information on the council and positions is available at nsscouncil.com.

Format for Council Meetings

The October will be held on Zoom to make it easier for the election. The newly elected council will decide the format for the remaining meetings. It is not position of this council to mandate for next council. Don't want to rush into decision. It was noted that guest speakers might impact whether meeting is in person or online.

Recognize that hard to get here in person and reason to have online. If the meetings are hybrid, there are some things to work out such as: Do people want to be on screen? How handle questions from the floor?

Hybrid meetings might encourage more people to participate in school council.

Meeting start time is always at 6:30pm. Some parents brought up conflicts with other school meetings.

Parent Socials.

As we begin to come out of Covid, we see opportunities for social for our parents. The ARC social had a great turnout last Thursday and parents are eager to connect with other parents. Discussion was had about setting up a social committee when the new council is setup.

Upcoming Events and Reminders

Melissa thanked Janice and Andy for all their efforts as co-chairs and the amount of work they do behind the scenes.

Adam shared that Northern is very lucky with the staff we have. What we have here is not normal. Our teachers work incredibly hard and participate in extracurricular activities to support our students. Thank you to everyone who came to the meeting tonight and appreciate all the participation.

2022 Remaining Meeting Dates

Wednesday, October 19, 2022 (election by Zoom)

Tuesday, November 22, 2022