

Northern School Council Meeting - Principal's Update November 25, 2020, 6:30-7:30 (Zoom)

Credit Rescue

The two days that had been scheduled originally as Exam Days for the end of Q1 were changed to Credit Rescue days to help students who were at risk of failing a course pass it instead. This is different from Credit Recovery which happens after a course is completed. During the 'mid-term' updates earlier in Q1, there were 146 failing marks in the school. After the credit rescue days this number decreased to 37. This is thanks to a great effort by parents/caregivers, teachers and staff, and, of course, the students

PD Day

Friday Nov 20th was the first PD day of the school year. The first half of the day was spent with 4 students from the BlackNSS group. These students spoke to 118 staff members about microaggressions they have experienced at Northern. The students described ways and places they felt welcome, and ways and places they have NOT felt welcome. The staff will have access to different books and reading material to help them with their own education and awareness of this issue. There is a new form PR728 which mandates a follow up on any Human Rights complaint (similar to the Duty to Report in the case of Child Neglect). The afternoon was reserved for self-directed work.

Budget

NSS will be able to support some budget requests if no new major changes need to be funded. E.g. The yearbook and Grad, both which incur significant costs, could receive some funding from the school. Depending on what other things do/don't get funded, the remaining funds will be spent on things that are in the interest of students.

Air Quality

This TDSB document lists schools that have met certain criteria for additional ventilation equipment (HEPA filters). NSS will not get HEPA filters (not deemed necessary by TDSB evaluation) and we cannot fundraise for them (can only fundraise for student enrichment). Re:open windows, there are many windows at the school that can be opened and the teachers will open them as appropriate depending on the weather etc. The school's air system should be able to handle the air cleaning.

Attendance Protocols

Re: new attendance protocols - Ministry has asked that attendance still be taken on the days when students are doing independent asynchronous learning. Students are asked to fill out an online form between 8:45 and 9:00 a.m. Teachers will review and submit attendance by 9:30 a.m. and then the parent calls will begin. There has been lots of frustration around this system already. Organizations like OSSTF and TDSB are looking into it, and we will be notified of any changes that come about.

School Model for Virtual Learning Cohort

Four different models were considered for the new virtual learning cohort

The one that ended up working best for NSS was for grade 9 and 10 students to be clustered, and have one day with face to face (virtual) learning and all virtual on the second day. For grades 11 and 12, simultaneous instruction is happening where a teacher is teaching both in-person students and at-home students at the same time. As the school year goes on, options become more limited for clustered learning because there are fewer courses left for the students.

Support for Students who are isolating at home due to Covid
We now have some tech that can help in situations where a teacher and/or students are isolating at home due to Covid exposure. It may involve a student temporarily joining the NSS virtual learning cohort for those days.

Student Support (GLE, IEPs, Student Success)
GLE is not supported well by the quadmester structure. It's very hard to ensure that GLE is scheduled with the course the students need the most help with. This is obviously not ideal, but students with IEPs can contact Jessica Beresford (ARC/LD), Monique Cipollone (Gifted), or Eric Larocque (DHH) for additional support and/or 20-minute sessions if available. To learn more for students with learning differences, visit Academic Resource Center website.
Student Success is meant to support students who need help (for any reason), but do not have the benefit of an IEP. These students should contact April Vilbert, a Student Success teacher.

Grad Photos
Due to Covid safety protocols, outside photographers are not allowed in the schools until further notice. Parents are welcome to have the photos taken outside of the school if they prefer not to wait.

Thank A Teacher Campaign
As mentioned by Tania earlier, the emails from parents thanking teachers meant a great deal to our staff! Thank you!
And a reminder - please take a moment at any point to let your teacher know if your student is struggling or enjoying their class. Feedback is very helpful this year.

NSS Website
The best place for information is the NSS Website.
Info for next year's incoming grade 9 students (currently Gr 8) is now up.

2019-2020 Grads
Info will be going out to last year's graduates about the plans for them to pick up diplomas etc. later this month when hopefully most of the grads will be home from university.
Current plan is for a drive-thru set up. Some adjustments may need to be made due to Covid.

Building Updates
Northern has been working on upgrading two of the first floor rooms - plans is for room 137 to be dedicated as a wellness space (gym/yoga/health) while room 143 will be a space for makers and also for special presentations that require an upper level for overhead viewing. Updates

continue but currently the rooms are being used for storage to accommodate the need for smaller class sizes this year.

The roof repair is complete. The final phase of that is repairing the floors and change rooms that were damaged.

The installation of security cameras continues.