

Parent Council Meeting Nov 30, 2021



Agenda

- 6:30-6:45 Safe and Accepting Schools Meeting
- Review NGDHS Anti-Bullying Plan
 - Highlight ideas for foyer refresh
- 6:45-7:30 School Council Meeting
- Principals reports
 - New Business
 - Pro Grant
 - Parent workshop suggestion
 - Bursaries

Meeting Notes:

Attending: Brad O'Neil, Chris Bourne, Shahrzad Kandalaft, Colleen Fitzpatrick, Ronda Clifton, Ann McNab, Samantha Kutowy, Andrea Hossack, Amie Ivany, Katie Culhane, Shelley, Suzanne Roy, Kenneth Nesbitt, Abdel El Farhaoui, Jocelyn Grant, Denice Christopher.

1. Chris started with the policy statement of the **Safe Schools**, defined bullying and safe and accepting school team (Angela Hunter & Stephen Henderson are the 2 staff members, Sharon Pickup (office), Annie Collins (OPP), and 2 students (Cheska & Aby). Dan McRae is principal of equity and inclusion in our board. Our Voices group wants to make NG better and the goals of this team and our goals fit very well together. As the school grows, it becomes more important that we have specific processes and people in place to make sure student needs are addressed. He quickly went through how to report bullying and the intervention strategies.
2. **Principal's Report:** (Brad for intermediates) Academics, Athletic, and clubs. We have hired Helen Minkhorst in the office as an office assistant to help with intermediate attendance. We are now moving towards hands on classroom learning now. More opportunities now for engaged reading, writing and math for 7-12 in all the content areas. More experiential learning where students have voice and choice of what they are doing in the class so they can see themselves in the curriculum. Intermediates especially need to have some adult assistance from time to time in navigating proper interactions. Athletics/clubs: Xctry: Ferguson meet, G&B soccer, scrimmage games; G&B VB (50+ students interested in this... focusing on skill development); Pride club is up & running; NERD club on Tues (capped at 35-40 students) with Mr. Wilson; A lot of different media for art is occurring and are on display (Picasso, Remembrance Day art); Mr. Nesbitt has been in for Drama & gr7 science. Mr. Peitersma is enjoying paternity leave and will return Dec 6th. Music (Heather Lance) supply teaching and drumming with students after school. A lot of music literacy is being taught through this drumming.
3. **Principal's report** (Chris for secondary): Finished literacy test writing (2 writing periods...one in Fall and one in spring; Fall = gr 11. Spring=gr10.) The test has changed and is not what it used to be. Results will be ready at the end of January, allowing for

time to prepare them for a 2nd writing in spring for those that couldn't get it done (remote learning etc.). Katie & Chris have presentation to their superintendents and he highlighted where we are for student achievement. NG numbers: 96.1% credit achievement. Since then, we've gained an additional 1% through credit recovery. (over 97% achievement!) From Quadmester 1, we had a 98% achievement rate for Quad 1 of this year. We now have space in the new addition so have created a new SST learning area in the north side of the learning commons that will be open the entire semester (the rest of this quad and rest of semester). Available for teachers to refer students that need that extra one-on-one. The blitz from quad 1 allowed 40 students to get essential assignments completed and earn their credit. We are interviewing students from last year and having insightful discussions with students that weren't successful last year to find out what we can do to improve their school experience. We are looking to expand course offerings to offer a wide variety of courses. We have a new enhanced spec ed expansion. Details to come! New spec ed staff are being added. NERD club, Our Voices, G BB teams won at AA!!; Jr boys VB ended up 2nd!! Community use of our facility will start up again next week. Heather Lance has started after school drumming again 2 times a week.

-Shahzad mentioned the mental health of kids is good; mentioned concern about new variant and asked for what we have heard. Unfortunately, no change in direction from Public Health have been given yet but we're listening to this. All our direction is coming from them and we will communicate it out as soon as we hear anything. Next semester we'll all have a common lunch and a fixed timetable of a 5-day schedule.

-any plan to reinstate exams? Some complications are what happens with students that had exams in Q1&2... a question of fairness. We won't answer at the school level (board level will decide) but we are waiting to hear back an answer. We expect there may be exams, though.

4. **School Grant:** Chris will find out within a day or two where the paperwork went for the grant ASAP (switch in admin, so locating papers) and get this to Shahrzad. Andrea's news: Dr. Allyssa Scklar a communications consultant, wants to help develop positive digital citizens (wellness and safety) for students, parents, etc. We are all contributing to health of internet. The thought is we could do this online (digital presentation). Andrea willing to contact her (Shahrzad said yes! Abdel: expressed thanks for how children feeling at school; his point about Alyssa.... His daughter in grade 10 now. This year she is having a hard time focusing and needs to talk with someone. He wanted Alyssa to talk about how students can focus. Is there any plan for this? Andrea responded that she doesn't know if she'll give individual audiences, but students can see guidance. Chris said he'll follow up. Shahrzad asked how she'll help us look in a different way. Colleen mentioned her agreement in being interested in her thoughts and how it will work in the future for sure. Last year it was \$560+taxes. Chris confirmed that if it is that amount, we have the money. Andrea will get info and give it to Shahrzad. Chris will verify the amount. Shahrzad checked to see who agreed: Andrea, Shelly, Abdel, Jocelyn, Ammie and 6 others agreed. IF anyone has other concerns, please let her know. Andrea expressed gratitude for the sports.
5. **Foyer refresh ideas:** Chris mentions that currently is void of representation from the school, so we are looking at how to make it more welcoming and inclusive for all our students...a long term (months long) refresh. Consultation has begun with students, and

we are open for ideas from students.... A “wow” factor of sorts to represent our beautiful space.

Abdel: compared his children and expressed his appreciation in both English and French for how happy his children are to attend school.

6. **Bursaries:** Andrea and Shahrzad are looking to get new people to share for award money for grade 12. We are looking for help with transportation. Question: do we want this to be one time or ask new community members for an amount for the end of year or for busing for school OR continuously to come. Chris mentioned transportation this year is exorbitantly expensive despite estimating high. See if community involvement can support athletics. It cost about \$50K to run the athletic program. We have the lowest fee per student sport (\$60) but it still is costing us an additional \$50K. We don't always want to have our hands out to the community when it is tough for families, so we need to decide where our priorities. Over the Christmas break we'll go through this and see if they are still interested in helping and we have a staff member doing this over the Christmas holidays. Chris is going to go through all his expenses and then decide moving forward where money will go for future years. We are making sure fees are never a barrier for playing. The \$50K pot needs replenishing every year. Before pandemic, Andrea had spreadsheet and was hoping that real estate really thrived so it might be worth knocking on their door and asking them.... There may be other sectors and wondered if there was a possibility to get them to come up with sports funds if there were some sponsorship/advertising possibilities

Rhonda: question regarding sports fee. Chris explained \$50K to run all sports. \$60 is for high school. Intermediates don't travel as much so they aren't \$60. Football & Hockey are most expensive (ice bill is huge as is cost for equipment for football). Busing costs are not the same. Bus costs usually \$700-\$750 per trip. Bursaries are only for grade 12. Chris does not want the sports expense to be at the expense of the bursaries. Chris will sit down with athletic team and decide what we will do moving forward.

7. **Meeting adjourned!** (next meeting on Feb 8th)