



NGDHS Parent School Council

**Tuesday, February 7, 2023 @ 6:30 pm
Virtual**

1. Welcome and attendance - *Shahrzad Kandalajt*

Chris Bourne, Ann McNab, Shahrzad Kandalajt, Don Hickey, Kole Wollenschlager, Katherine, Culhaine, Andrea Hossack, Jill Sturdy, Amie Ivany,, Mark Stuart, Kimberly Macleod, Colleen Fitzpatrick, Ronda Clifton, Heinrick Krueger, Cesar Farhat

2. Acceptance of November 22, 2023 meeting minutes - *Shahrzad Kandalajt*
- accepted

3. Acceptance of agenda - *Shahrzad Kandalajt*
-accepted

4. Principal's report (intermediate) - *Don Hickey*

- presentations at NG: Paul Davis (Dec 14) reached all students in the building; 7-10 in person, 11/12 virtual on internet safety, social media safety; message reached kids; parents brought in for night presentation and it was well attended. Positive feedback from students, parents, teachers

- health nurses presented virtually for 7&8 students regarding vaping (dangers & realities and cessation of smoking); nurse is in building every Thursday morning now.

- Jan 31st: incoming grade 7 came to visit from feeder schools (~154 grade 6s). The WEB leaders led them around to 6 stations in the building, highlighting clubs, classes and opportunities for 90 min. They all ate together in the cafeteria afterwards. They will come back in the Spring for a more formal transition activities day.

-clubs are all still going on: NERD club, pride club, cooking club starting on Fridays, Knight fit every Friday, basketball started now

-sports: VB wrapped up: girls made it to UC cup; BB coming up now; boys tryouts (30 kids). We'll hopefully send 2 teams (one boy's and one girl's team), Looking to host an invitational (Mr. Kelsey spearheading it) Something for everyone that wants to get involved.

- open house scheduled next week, Feb 15. We'll have gr7 go 1st in caf and rotate around and then higher grades.

* Andrea expressed thanks (Jill Sturdy as well) for how the grade 6 transition day went.

5. Principal's report (secondary) – *Christopher Bourne*

- orientation: planning for next week. All predicated on secondary course selection. Ms. Mitchell has visited all gr 8 classes and will have a make up session for anyone away. This Friday at 9am, we'll have a course fair. Students will have an opportunity to visit all the new courses we

are offering next year as well as other areas. Often students don't know what the course means so this will let them become familiar with these new courses especially. We'll advertise what these new courses are. If students pick the courses, we'll offer it; if not, we can't offer it. It all depends on if the students pick the course, so it's important students know what courses are available. It also will be a great opportunity to discuss pathways (university vs. college vs. world of work).

- next week we will have an open house (Wed Feb 15th. NGI 5-6:30 and NGDHS 6-7:30). It will be one night as we are one school. Both will start with intro session in cafeteria and then WEB leaders and LINK leaders will lead students through.

- We are growing in NGI so we may need another classroom. We have dropped a little in NGDHS as both gr8 & 9 are smaller than other cohorts and have been as it goes through. We have a little over 600 students currently.

- Athletics: all clubs still running. Tutoring has been extended to March break. After school credits (drumming expanded to 2 teachers now; musical is being put on in the Spring – May – as a culminating)

-VB & BB still going. They start in Dec and end in spring; hockey is still going. Track dry land practice in weight room will start around March Break ; badminton is also starting around that time as the other 2 sports wrap up. Intramurals will be led by phys ed leadership class.

- Academics: report cards go home next Friday. They are due tomorrow from teachers and then they get printed and sent out. We'll then look at success rates and see what next steps we can do (can the credits be recoverable etc.); we are historically about 96-98% success rate.

- Focus has been put on Grade 9 de-streamed courses. We are looking at how best to make adjustments. We are collaborating with other schools. We are making sure great conversations between teachers and parents for next year if they should pick academic or applied stream as the mark does not tell you all you need to know about what the best pathway is. However, ultimately, it's the parent's choice, but we want them to be fully aware of what they are up for (how what they did translates to higher levels). Some students don't know which way, so we'll reflect on how the conversations went for those teachers.

- 90% will read at grade level (grade 8 reading level) is our goal. We started with gr 7&8 to do pre-assessments and then we are figuring out individualized plans. We are now progressing to expanding this to grade 9 and 10. It is a 3 minute assessment to check comprehension and a 1 minute reading test one on one with teacher. From there, we will work with the learning partners, and we'll look deeper and see what actions we can put in place to address things.

- we'll be doing mid point assessments in intermediate level over the next few weeks

-the data is for us as educators to know what we can do to help the kids.

- the learning partners will come in and look at all our data and see what we have as far as resources.

*Amie asked about new courses if there are new French ones.

- Chris affirmed this. We were losing students after grade 9 and then by the end, we only had about a dozen students. What we found is that grade 9 geography was a real barrier to a lot of students (a course that they didn't enjoy and it scared students away, so we have taken away French geography). We will add foods and culture course in French. We have 11 courses in person plus multiple online options

- French staff are all on board with this move.

- They will talk a lot of this on Friday. This will be offered at grade 11 level.

- The challenge is to make the credit authentic French .

*Amie also thanked him for comment about the de-streamed grade 9 courses as she was wondering why she was getting an email recommending what stream the student goes into next year.

- Chris mentioned that we wanted to avoid the thought that if grade 9 students passed de-streamed gr9 they automatically would go into grade 10 academic stream. They may pass de-streamed, but would REALLY struggle in academic if work habits, ability level, and interest level weren't there so they may better match college stream.

6. Discussion items:

a. PRO Grant update

- Chris sent link for applying for PROgrant. SK was busy but submitted 1 day before deadline. We had short notice, but Chris thought the workshop was still a good idea. SK knows her and does practice
- If we get the grant, we will need to know what dates that everyone is available. Chris was thinking avoiding May/June due to sports (soccer etc.) as it is late and people get busy as the weather gets nice. Chris says the earlier the better but he will make it a priority no matter when. Community use groups don't usually book out the cafeteria so it should work. SK thought end of April...Chris says in month of April would be ideal, but it depends on Dr. Armstrong and the grant application process.
- We will need refreshments at that time too, so SK would like someone to work with her on that and someone who will work on promoting it via the radio etc as we will be opening it up for the community as well.
- Amie asked what she will be talking about – what the focus is. She will talk about adolescents, mental health and parenting mentally healthy teens tips and tricks for increasing teen mental health & how to be resilient.
- CF commented that he agreed with the importance of this.
- CF asked what the parent council is. Chris ran through the general agenda of parent council meetings, and mentioned it is about the school as a whole. If there are specific things, let SK know in advance so Chris can do some research on these topics.
- CF wanted to know what we do when students are caught with drugs and how we can keep drugs out of the school. Chris reviewed the progressive discipline model and requested a follow up phone conversation should there be a specific issue that needed addressing

b. Workshop with Dr. Laura Armstrong, professional researcher, clinical psychologist, and associate professor who has developed a national SSHRC-funded mental health promotion program for school children called D.R.E.A.M)

c. Tentative workshop dates?

April some time. SK asked again for us to reach out to help for the refreshments etc for the workshop

7. New business:

a. HK was concerned about bullying; Chris welcomed the conversation through a private call as it was referring to a specific incident. HK was concerned that teachers might not report due to paperwork but he will give a call to Chris privately. He felt that it was a "don't tell" policy and he wanted to make sure we tell our students that it is NOT the message we are relaying. Chris reinforced it is not the message. Chris cautioned to not believe stories that are put on social media... there have been numerous events posted that have not been true. Chris mentioned

that parents can reach out and ask. If there is something that does not sound right, please reach out to the source.

b. CF asked how things are sent. Chris responded that we send out messages in my family room for anything official and also Facebook page. If there is something specific, Chris communicates to the families involved but doesn't want to feed a rumour mill by sending out a school wide letter to all parents when it may only involve a few.

c. Mark Stuart (signed in using his son's account)— asked about students being far behind due to covid. He asked about additional French programs and asked if we have an overall effect of covid on students coming in and the gap in learning. Chris responded we don't have specific numbers but we are definitely seeing a gap. We have also seen a significant age gap in maturity levels of about 2 years. It is common in all high schools but we are closing that gap. We are ultimately wanting to get them back to where we were at before COVID. Our biggest challenge in the aftermath is the higher number of students struggling with anxiety and getting them back into regular schooling. Teachers are prioritizing and teaching essentials instead of focusing on everything in the curriculum. Mark commented that the DH has been great helping out.

-an email will be sent once we get the notice of the grant.

8. Adjournment of meeting

Next meetings tentatively scheduled for 6:30 pm on the following dates:

Tues, April 4, 2023 (In person)

Tues, May 30, 2023 (Virtual)