

Minutes February 9th, 2017 Parent Council Meeting

Attendees: Rob Best, Rosalind Ward-Smith, Roberta Veitch, Meena Sahi, Susan Miles, Meetu Vijay, Sandra Hurl-Smith, Tara O'Connell, Tina MacCormac, Olaf Alksnis, Anette Winslow, Karena de Souza, Rose Brooks, Sarita Kaunds, Marie Day, Chelsea Shen, Carolyn Adams Hill, Evelyn Uvakov, Darlene Burnham

Minutes from January 12th, 2017 meeting approved by Marie Day and Anette Winslow.

Next month's meeting – proposed to not have a meeting in March but have one in April – decided on April 20th, 2017 at 7 pm. Need to update that on the website calendar.

Principal's Report – Meena Sahi

New Staff

Andrea Dailey – new VP responsible for students with last names A through L
Jennifer Edmonds and Mairi McCauley – Business
Jennifer Golding – Math
Michelle Liu – Science
Dave Cianfrini – Tech
3 more teachers to hire – interviews ongoing

Semester One

Students did very well in Semester 1. Report cards have been distributed this week.

Course Selections

Students are currently choosing their courses for next year. Course selections are due by February 21. Guidance councillors are great resources for information on course choices. Students will be using My Blueprint. Optional attendance decision will be made in the 3rd week of February.

OSSLT

Grade 10 students will write the literacy test on March 30 – passing this test is a graduation requirement.

This will be a paper and pencil test due to the issues we had with the on-line tests last fall. The test will be held in classrooms in one section of the school so that the area will be as quiet as possible for the students.

Students did a practice test today and will receive their marked tests back soon with a colour coded mark. Green means there should be no issues with the real test in March. Yellow means there are some concerns and red means there are real concerns for success on the literacy test.

Remedial courses are available after school for students needing extra support. Laura Cameron is the head of the English department, you can email her if your son/daughter is concerned about the proficiency test.

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Upcoming Events in Semester Two

Relay for Life – Kick off Assembly on March 31

Relay for Life – May 26

Will be asking for Parent Volunteers

Canada 150 – HDSB focus is more for the K-8 level but at OTHS we will be having a special Canadian Citizenship ceremony in the school theatre.

Prom

Will be at the Grand Victoria in Mississauga on May 18th

School sponsored event – Barb Pickard is in charge of Prom themes and decorations.

Prom tickets – ticket prices are based on how many tickets we think we are going to sell but we usually add in a buffer – if extra tickets are sold the money left over goes to school improvements.

Council member suggested that if any student couldn't go to prom because of lack of money, that parent council could help. Principal Meena said that any student in this situation will be able to get a ticket.

Student of Excellence

This year's student of excellence winner is Victoria Winslow. She was nominated by many teachers. The award is for a student who exemplifies excellence in academics, citizenship, community service, athletics, and vocation. Congratulations Victoria!

Traumatic Incident Response

OTHS lost one of its graduates from last year in tragic circumstances. The school offered support to affected students. I sent home a syner-message to parents which did not name the student who passed away. My intention in sending this message home was to help parents support their youth if so required. In such incidences, the school tries to balance our responsibility to protect a family's privacy and our need to care for students in the school. Parents are encouraged to contact the school with any questions or need for support.

Purchases

The bicycle racks purchased with money from the Parent Council are here, they are just waiting for warmer weather to install them at the front of the school. The computer notebooks (also purchased with money from the Parent Council) are here as well and being used in the library.

Lockers on the second floor will be replaced over March Break and there will be a \$70,000 bathroom renovation done this summer.

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20 new laptops will also be in use soon – they are just being formatted.

More benches for the atrium are coming. Four were paid for by last year's graduating class and 2 more were paid for by World Down Syndrome Day video contest winners.

Staff Update –Susan Miles

During the last PD day staff took part in a First Nations blanket ceremony. This ceremony was brought forth by the Truth and Reconciliation committee – staff found it very enlightening and the school may use something similar in its Civics course and Society, Challenge and Change course.

Final reports from Semester 1 are out – you should have had report card come home, contact the school if you did not.

Failures – very few students failed a course.

Credit recovery – 3 students are eligible, this is usually done at lunch.

Students failing a course last semester that are in Grade 12 have already met with guidance to make sure they get into courses they need to be in, to get into the program they want to get into next year.

On-line courses – it was a good semester, if there are concerns with on-line courses please contact Susan Miles.

Community Connections Update – Sandra-Hurl-Smith, Anette Winslow

The community connections meeting this past Tuesday had a slightly lower turn out than expected due to the freezing rain, however the people that did come got a lot of good information about choosing courses for the next school year.

The Chapters fundraiser was also that same evening which is unfortunate but \$400.00 were raised!

PIC Meeting report – A parent tool kit and presentation has been sent out to council members by Council Chair Rob Best. He encourages all members to take the Bias Test in the tool kit and to look around the school and the parent council to see if they are reflective of the community.

Karena de Souza - Equity and Inclusivity in Education for K-12, there was an incredible presentation, HDSB has been focused on equity and inclusivity for many years. One aspect of the presentation was a video of the good and bad aspects of life in a refugee camp (Clouds over Sidra – this a video you can find on YouTube).

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Finance/Treasurer Update - Marie Day, Rose Brooks

The Chrome books we purchased cost about \$200 less than expected so this leaves us with a \$3,700.00 cushion to work with.

New Business

Class of 17 sweat shirt fundraiser – Council members are wondering what this is, a prom fundraiser? Not done through the school – done completely outside of the school – questions as to whether this is truly a fundraiser for prom – what is the money being used for?

Sarita Kaunds has heard discussion about a Grade 12 trip to Wasaga Beach. Principal Meena warns that this is NOT a school sanctioned trip but there are May 24 weekend plans to descend on Wasaga beach – parents need to have a discussion with their children about the dangers of these trips if they allow their children to go.

Principal Meena also warned us of other trips she has heard about -- students get paid to advertise trips on their social media accounts – these trips are historically not well supervised and have had issues of hotel trashing (there are no teachers or supervisors on these trips). Trips to Montreal and Cuba have been advertised.

Meeting adjourned @ 8:08PM.

Next meeting: April 20, 2017 at 7 pm.

Motion to adjourn: Anette Winslow , Tara O-Connell