**NORTHERN SECONDARY SCHOOL- SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING NOTES**

February 13, 2017 – Approved March 29, 2017

**Present**: Ron Felsen, Bettina Hoar, Scott deVeber, Adam Gordon, Haimchand Katwaroo, Kasi Kugapalan, Rachael Cayley, Johanna Samuel, Jackson Flagal, Joanna Strong, Kaan Yigit, Rick and Bryany Suvanto, Mauricio Viveros, Rob McCready, Samir Fahs, Peggy Judge, Jamshid Mortozavi, Nancy Matthews, Karim Hajj, Melissa Rosen, Jenn Marr, Ann Chlorakos, Mark ?, Judy Steiner, Steve Sims, Mehrnaz Sekora, Sylvia Perry.

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:**Quorum achieved, no conflicts of interest declared. The co-Chairs introduced Behzad Jazizadeh, who spoke to request consideration as Community Member (vote taken at the end of the meeting).

**TEACHERS REPORT**:

**Ann Chlorakos- Chair of Semester Committee**

Ann presented a PowerPoint presentation outlining the pro’s and cons of transferring Northern S.S. to a Semester Timetable, exploring whether this is a better solution for the students. A Semester Timetable would propose 4 classes every day for 5 months.

**Positive Points**:

Daily subject reinforcement is considered to be better for students: this timetable makes it easier for students to organize their homework and assignments.

Grade 10’s and 11’s can transfer into a different Coop more easily.

Students with A.D.D., focus or memory issues would benefit from this timetable.

Accomodations for students are more easily managed for Gifted and GLE Students. There are more opportunities for students to work ahead.

There are fewer heavy courses in Advanced Placement.

Shown to have a positive affect on students’ well being reducing stress with fewer assignments and fewer teachers to deal with.

Guidance has deemed it a positive change for students and teachers.

Students may redo a course in second semester if they’ve failed a course in their first semester (Credit recovery). 2nd Semester is viewed as a fresh start.

**Negative Points:**

There is less time for teachers and students to get to know one another

Students can easily fall behind

There is less time to work in groups

Students who participate in Sports have a difficult time catching up on work/classes they’ve missed and tend to have prolonged absences.

There is a big gap in learning per year

The Arts are negatively impacted i.e. Ceramics- there is not enough time to complete work which needs to be fired in kilns etc.

Field Trips are only available seasonally and will affect students who may not be able to attend.

There is no support in English for EQAO

There is less time to develop skills

There is no “semestered” option in the community and some students may struggle with this change.

A vote among the staff will take place in early March 2017. This change will move forward if there is a 60%/40% vote. If it is voted in, the change to the school timetable will take effect in 2018.

Parents are able to interact with the committee. Ann has created a Google Form which Principal Felsen will be sending out so parents can provide input.

Changing Northern to a Semester Timetable is not a fait accompli. This is a very conflicted issue and people are undecided. Principal Felsen recounted his experience going to a United Way Gala with 25 students and reported that there are students who do not want semestering. The decision rests with the staff vote.

**GIFTED PROGRAM**: **Rob McCready, Peggy Judge**

There are 108 students in the Grade 9 Gifted program. The maximum size is 120, down from 180 three years ago. The committee is looking at ways to actively bring up the numbers to the full size of the program. In order to maintain the health of the program there need to be students. The committee is looking at what tools can be made available to the program and have asked Principal Felsen for advice. The committee is asking for a formalized engagement with the Principal and Principal Felsen will refer them to someone specialized in Gifted Programming.

The motion in support of this request was passed unanimously by School Council. The motion can be found here: [GAC Motion to Retain size of Gifted Cohort](http://www.nsscouncil.com/uploads/7/7/5/0/77505964/approved_school_council_motion_re_size_of_gifted_cohort.pdf)

**BUDGET COMMITTEE- Kasi Kugapalan**

A cheque for $120.00 was cashed leaving the School Council with $20,034.41

Guidance counsellors will alert the committee about the number of students who have received grant money for post secondary school applications so that the Budget Committee can account for it.

**CELL PHONE COMMITTEE: Scott deVeber**

SCREENAGERS screening was a huge success. This was a great film and generated great engagement with parents and students. The film was a catalyst to an animated debate among students. The film cost $650.00 (US$) ($870.00 Cad$). Scott thanked Principal Felsen for making the time to have all students see the film and Principal Felsen remarked that the film generated engagement and conversation with the students about the issue. The Cell Phone Survey has been finalized and will be distributed among Parents and Students. Earl Grey S.S. has just banned cell phones from their school.

**L.D. COMMITTEE**- Thanked the Council for the $500.00 donated toward a future speaker. The Student Rep. asked for another session on Anxiety and Stress. LD and gifted working together for next lunch and learn: a session on “living with a learning disability” similar to “Walk a Mile in My Shoes”.

**CARING & SAFE**- Meeting on February 28, 2017.

**STUDENT REP.- Jackson Flagal:**

Students recently received a Progress Report which had no personal comments. The Course Selections are out and students need to complete this on My Blueprint. This is due

February 21, 2017. There are new orders available for Student clothing – the selection is great. They are working on ways of expressing spirit among the students at Northern.

**PRINCIPAL- Principal Felsen**

Principal Felsen will be sending out an email about how Course Selection works and how Courses, Conflicts and Timetables work and can be managed. We have a new Vice Principal previously at Downsview S.S. who started at Northern last week – Mr. Halling.

Our School Resource Officer received a promotion to the Fraud and Computer Fraud division and our new School Resource Officer started February 13th.

February 16th  Parent-Teacher interviews.

February 17th PD Day.

Spanish teacher is on maternity leave.

Every few years the Board revisits the Learning Opportunities Index which is a list of Elementary and Secondary schools which are most at risk and are ranked accordingly. Northern is fifth from the bottom of least needs, therefore will receive fewer resources. There are 100 Secondary schools ranked and this is calculated every 3 years.

**PARENT COUNCIL CO-CHAIRS- Bettina Hoar, Scott deVeber**

If you have a child with **any** special need (mental, physical, intellectual, behavioural, etc) whether your student is in a special needs program (i.e. Gifted, LD, DHH) or not, please take the time to fill out the survey below as it is the way to have your voice heard by the Board on whether or not your students needs are being met.

SEAC is the Special Education Advisory Committee – a committee that advises the school board directly on matters related to meeting the needs of students with special education needs. SEAC has put out the below survey which is getting ready to close. The goal of the survey is to get parent input into their experiences with Special Education and how to improve meeting students’ special needs at the TDSB. If you have a child with any special need (whether your student is in a special needs program (i.e. Gifted, LD, DHH) or not, please take the time to fill out the survey as it is the way to have your voice heard by the Board on whether or not your students needs are being met.

[http://www.tdsb.on.ca/Community/HowtoGetInvolved/CommunityAdvisoryCommittees/SpecialEducationAdvisoryCommittee.aspxhttp://www.tdsb.on.ca/Community/HowtoGetInvolved/CommunityAdvisoryCommittees/SpecialEducationAdvisoryCommittee.aspx](http://www.tdsb.on.ca/Community/HowtoGetInvolved/CommunityAdvisoryCommittees/SpecialEducationAdvisoryCommittee.aspx" \t "_blank)

The School Board is moving toward inclusion, i.e. placing students in regular classrooms.

On April 1st there is a 1-day FREE education conference for parents hosted by the TDSB called “parents as partners”. The schedule includes many excellent workshops and presentations very relevant to parents about the education of their child. All parents are welcome, child care is available upon registration. For info click here: [Parents as Partners Conference](http://www.parentsaspartners.ca/)

There being no others wishing to attend, Peggy and Scott will attend the SEAC appreciation dinner on the Council’s behalf.

**ELECTION OF COMMUNITY MEMBER: (Joanna)**

Our Parent Council requires a Community Member to be part of the Council. The motion to elect Behzad Jazizadeh was unanimously passed and he was welcomed to the Council.

At 7:30 the L.D. Committee welcomed parents to an information meeting about My Blue Print in Room 310 and the floor remained open for any questions parents had about this or other issues.

**COORDINATION OF WORKLOAD:**

Principal Felsen and Tanya previously spoke about trying to see a coordination of the school’s major tests and projects across all subjects to provide relief for students who are overburdened by homework, tests and assignments. So far English, Math, Science, French and Geography have blocked out when there will be tests and assignments due.

**CO-OP PLACEMENTS**:

A parent asked about Co-op. Principal Felsen explained the process of finding placements: students have meetings with the Coop Placement Teachers in June and are coached through the Coop process. Some students wish to find placements on their own, there are procedures in place for this. NSS has a large Co-op placement program with many collaborating partners for finding good placements for students. Most placements are established by September.

Meeting adjourned 7:55 p.m.