

Northern School Council Meeting (Draft)

September 17, 2024, 6:30 - 8:00 pm (hybrid)

Attendees:

Council: Abby Dwosh, Anna Rutledge, Elena Comelli, Giovanni Grasselli, Jen Ankenmann, Jessica Miklos (co-secretary), John Bakous (co-chair), Kristina Turner (recording secretary), Melissa Rosen, Omar Becerril (co-chair), Jenn Marr (staff representative), Tania Osmond, Adam Marshall (Principal), Stephanie Nacawa, Natasha Sachs-Pepe, Stephanie Koutakis (student representative)

Parents: Alexei, Amanda R-F, Beth L., Brian M., Cathy W., Christine K., Gemma, Julie, Karen, Leila S., Linda, Maureen K, Sara N., Sarah, Song W., Susan P., Zsolt L.,

Regrets: Andy Anderson, Diana Goldie, Everton Lewis, Ana Rodrigues, Gaya Sathiyamoorthy.

Meeting called to order at 6:30 pm by Omar B.

- Welcome
- Land acknowledgement
- Approval of Agenda - Motion to approve: Anna R.; Seconded: Melissa R. Carried.

Co-chair Report – Omar B.

- Thanked the co-treasurer for submitting the necessary reporting to the TDSB on fundraising activities for the past year.
- Spoke about the options for the fall fundraising campaign. We have investigated the process that would allow us to issue charitable tax-receipts for donations. Wrapped up business for past school year. Submitted business report for disbursements for past year. Co-chairs reviewed parent engagement and support.

Student Representative’s Report – Stephanie K.

- Stephanie reported two requests from NSS student council, for funding:
 - \$1,200 to purchase 34 PALS t-shirts.
 - \$800 to send 20 delegates to a conference in mid-October.

Principal’s Report – Adam Marshall

- Parents are encouraged to send in questions before each council meeting, for the Principal to answer in the meeting – “Ask Adam”.

- Northern is fully staffed (145 teachers): hired a carpentry teacher, and the business department is fully staffed. Support staff are more challenging to find – for example, it is difficult to get sign language facilitators, and ceramics technologists. We continue to pursue possibilities and work with the Board.
- The school is in a space crunch – several rooms are being renovated, with one now in use, and the other two ready in late September and mid- November 15.
- Enrolment is up – now have 2,200 students.
- Question: how do the school coaches/clubs communicate with students? Answer: Ask the coach about their preferred method of communication. Many use Google Classroom.
- New cellphone guidelines have rolled out positively so far.

Approval of Minutes

- Approval of May 23, 2024 minutes - Motion to approve: Anna R. Carried.

Treasurer's Report – Jen Ankemann

- Last year, Council had \$15,500 to spend, while keeping \$2,000 to carry over. We ended the year with \$4,200, which will help fund academic awards for the upcoming Academic Awards Assembly.
- We used the GL41500 Ministry of Education fund to pay for last year's Paul Davis internet safety presentation. The treasurer has submitted council's year-end report to the Board.
- Fundraising: discussion about whether to offer tax receipts for our fundraising campaign, or not. If we don't issue tax receipts, the donations can flow into SchoolCashOnline into a pot we can spend immediately. If we do issue tax receipts, the donations would go into a separate account and would require us to use only board-approved vendors and to issue Purchase Orders. Under this model, it can take up to 30 days to receive the money.
- Decision was made to continue with last year's model (no tax receipts) so we can get contributions in quickly. Approval to seek only non-receiptable donations:
 - Whereas many council expenditures support students and do not use TDSB vendors, parent council should request contributions without tax receipts in our fall fundraising campaign. Motion to approve: Tania O.; Seconded, Kristina T. Carried.

Subcommittee Updates

If you are interested in joining a subcommittee, please visit our website to learn more or reach out to School Council via email (nss.school.council@gmail.com).

Education and Academic Achievement Committee – John B.

- Please contact nss.school.council@gmail.com with any questions or if you would like to join this committee.

Fundraising Committee – Tania O.

- Contributions have been falling since Covid. Last year was first fundraising committee meeting, where a teachers' wish list was compiled. We need parents who can help with our fundraising outreach – please send an email to nss.school.council@gmail.com. We need parents who would be willing to help carry this effort forward. Whether you like to shop, talk to teachers, design posters to promote a campaign, or run an actual fundraiser like a silent auction, every parent can play an important part in how we support student success at Northern.
- We rely on parents - by making donations or helping behind the scenes - to fulfill our purpose. If interested, please visit our website: nsscouncil.com and fill out a form to volunteer!

Gifted Advisory Committee – Anna R.

- Sep 25 – GAC parent social at the Granite, 6:30 pm. We welcome ideas for meetings this year – new topics, challenges, etc.

Academic Resource Committee – Tania O.

- The Academic Resource Committee plans parent socials, webinars, live calls, and keeps educational resources and a great virtual library on the website, all available to parents.

Website committee – Gemma, Stephanie, Tania

- If you'd like to join the Website committee, or share your ideas, please email nss.school.council@gmail.com.
- This is our fresh, one-stop shop for Northern news “by parents, for parents”. Besides hosting official School Council business, it is a virtual parent buddy. We connect you to Northern essentials - school map, calendar, clubs, sports, NSS Air, Adam's bulletin. But also, there are parent tips for parent-teacher interviews, post-secondary planning, and course selection. There is a page of Resources - from educational needs to mental health - and a library of expert recordings to help you find support beyond Northern. And, there's even a place to “Ask a Parent” and get your questions answered.

Social Committee – Tania O.

- The social committee plans events so that parents can meet other parents: Walking Buddies on Sundays this year, dates to be announced, 9:30 am in Mount Pleasant Cemetery; Monthly games night; other events can be created. Please contact nss.school.council@gmail.com with any questions, to volunteer, or to suggest ideas.

Election Committee:

- Northern School Council election is on October 8. Northern's School Council is made up of 15 parents, who work with a teacher and student representative to help support students achieve their best. The Principal is included on Council in an advisory role.
- School Council works both on in-school initiatives (workshops for parents and students, fund student initiatives and needs, help parents get connected, etc.) and educational matters (advocacy and student achievement). Our goal is to represent and advocate for

parents' and students' interests in both areas.

- Self-nominations will be open until October 3rd at 11:59 pm via a form on our website (nsscouncil.com)

Community Representative – Melissa R.

- TDSB Budget passed June 20 - larger than previous budgets.
- The Auditor General of Ontario is currently conducting a value for money audit of the TDSB.
- Changes at the TDSB and Provincial level:
 - Minister Lecce has been replaced by Jill Dunlop.
 - Trustee Rachel Chernos-Lin is taking a leave of absence while she runs in the by-election for Ward 15. In her absence, Shelley Laskin will respond to issues related to Northern.
 - Director of Education, Colleen Russell-Rawlins, is retiring – the position will be filled by temporary staff until the new Director is hired. A search firm has been retained and a survey for parents to share their ideas was made available to all parents until September 22.

Teacher rep – Jenn Marr

- Jenn Marr introduced herself as the teacher rep; Jenn has worked at Northern for 20 years.

New Business

- Safe and Caring Schools committee meeting report: the condition of school bathrooms was discussed at that meeting.

Motion to adjourn

Motion to approve: Jessica M., Seconded: Anna R., Carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

2024-25 Meeting Dates – 6:30 pm – 8 pm School Library/Teams

Tuesday, October 8, 2024 (elections only)

Tuesday, October 22, 2024

Thursday, November 21, 2024

Thursday, January 16, 2025

Tuesday, February 11, 2025

Thursday, April 3, 2025

Thursday, May 22, 2025