



NORTHERN SCHOOL COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

Virtual only

May 22, 2025

ATTENDEES - ALL ONLINE

Council Members: Jessica Miklos, Omar Becerril, Stephanie Nacawa, Shelagh Durno, Gavin McCulloch, Anna Rutledge, Julie Buckareff, Harp Thind, John Bakous, Wendy Li, Keith Tong, Catherine Wong, Amanda Ricketts Fredrick

Council Member Regrets: Kristina Turner, Sarah Flint

Principal: Adam Marshall

Teacher Representative: Jenn Marr (regrets)

Student Representatives: Savannah Royes, Humza Jadoon (regrets)

Community Representative: Bronwen Alsop (regrets)

Attendees: Kaan Yigit, Beth, SK, Tania K, RK, Alexei, Irene Lim, Brian, Margaret Yeung

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Omar Becerril

- Welcome to all attending
- Quorum confirmed
- Land acknowledgement
- Will add Staff Wish List to today's agenda

MOTION: approve the May 22 agenda. Motion to approve: Omar Becerril; seconded: Gavin McCulloch. Motion carried.

CO-CHAIRS' UPDATES

Jessica Miklos

- Congratulations to Council members Wendy Li, John Bakous and Kristina Turner on their students' graduation.
- Thank you to Jenn Marr for your contributions at Teacher Rep. We wish you well on your move to your new school.
- The TDSB budget process continues to evolve. There were marginal increases for education in the provincial budget. The TDSB still doesn't know how much they will be getting.
- Staff presented the option of closing some school pools to save money, but the Minister of Education said that he will not allow pools to close. There is no funding provided for pools.



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- An investigator is reviewing TDSB finances with their report due 5/31. It is unclear what this report will add to the other two reports previously released.
- There are some groups organizing an education rally at Queen's Park on May 24th
- TDSB fundraising policy: The proposal to make contributions to the central priorities fund mandatory was defeated. There will be no requirements for councils to share with other schools. The issue may be raised again if schools don't share on a voluntary basis. This will be discussed in more detail later tonight.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT AND ASK ADAM

Principal Adam Marshall

ASK ADAM QUESTIONS

1. Is there an update regarding January exams and how many students needed the full time allotment to complete them?

Many classes did not use the full time allotted, but there were a number of classes where many students used the full extended time. There will be ongoing monitoring for future exams to ensure that exams are written to match the time available.

2. Can you please explain how supply teacher coverage is funded when students travel to athletic or co-curricular team events? We have heard that coverage for athletics is automatic, but for club events, students often need to pay for the cost of the supply teacher. Is this accurate?

It depends on the number of students attending and the coaches, whether it's regular league vs. tournament. There is no perfect answer. The bottom line is that schools do not have the ability to cover every absence of a teacher. For example, the ski team is an expensive club but is also supported by the school. This will be more difficult in the future. There is no hard and fast rule. Every team has the ability to participate in league play and events for clubs are often covered.

3. When students turn 18, is communication with parents automatically stopped, or is there a form that students are asked to sign? What types of communication are affected? Where can families learn more?



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At Northern, the office runs a list every month of students turning 18 and they call them down to ask about filling out a form allowing the school to continue to communicate with parents. If the student says no, the communication ceases. If a parent calls the school and asks for information, the student's response of no communication is flagged and most of the time, information will not be shared. If there is a concern from home, the administrator will explain the circumstances to the student to ask them if the School can release information.

4. Would the school consider recording events like the STEM panel so that families who cannot be at the school in the evenings would have the opportunity to benefit from the considerable work that goes into these events?

Likely no. We want people to attend in person and don't want people to opt out of attending. It is nice to have an audience for those who came to present.

5. There are concerns about the condition of the girls' washrooms and certain behaviours:

- a. Washroom stall lock issues and holes (first floor)
- b. Stall door gaps (girls' change rooms & first floor)
- c. Misuse of washroom spaces
- d. Vaping in washrooms

We are going to look into this, but we have a look at the reality. Regarding holes in doors and gaps and space on the sides of stalls, we are not going to be able to rectify that as a school. I don't see a solution for that. Regarding vaping and skipping class, this is an issue. Our five male hall monitors call down to a female administrator but that can take a couple of minutes. We hope to get a female hall monitor going forward. This is not a new issue and we are aware of it. I suspect we will be battling this for a long time. Damage to washrooms has decreased 90% this year. Hall monitors have been able to keep an eye on things and track the damage.

6. Several local schools hosted Olympian Lori-Ann Muenzer at their schools this spring. She is an inspirational speaker. Is this something that we could consider for Northern students? If so, can school council fund presenters for students during school or would this have to be an optional after hours event?

If the School Council would like to host it, they would need to consider a few things. Would it be appropriate for all ages or does she want to speak directly to a particular grade? Is it costly? Anything is possible. Regarding timing, if we want to run an event in the evening, we need to



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make sure permits are available. If it is hosted during school, November is busy, but other months could work. I am open to a discussion on this.

7. I understand that there is a change in staffing requirements for high school pools starting in September 2025. If the Northern pool remains open, how will this new rule affect Northern students?

I am not aware of a change to the staffing requirements. A teacher and a lifeguard must be on deck at the pool. Permits have had a change in the evening. A Student must sit on the deck so if there is an emergency they can call 911, but there is no change during school hours. I'll follow up to see if there is a change that I'm not aware of.

8. With the moratorium on new permits due to boiler repairs, will there be the option of hosting speakers or events for families after school next year? How will School council meetings be affected?

It is not an issue if an event is on the calendar early. Once the heating season starts, permits in the evening will not be a problem. They will be doing work on the boilers until around Thanksgiving weekend. There shouldn't be an issue for School Council meetings in the evenings.

OTHER UPDATES:

- The staffing "cone of silence" will be in place until June 2nd, after which time they will be moving teachers into vacancies around the board. The good news is that they are not going to be bumping junior teachers by more senior teachers who have been declared surplus elsewhere. That means Northern will hang on to its junior teachers. We are in much better shape to retain our teachers. We won't keep all of them, but we are in good shape.
- Facilities update: there is work going on with the boilers now. They are drilling holes in concrete around the building and there is new piping to carry the hot water to heat the building. The board did not find a contractor for asbestos abatement until recently. Abatement will start next week at 6:00 pm, so we will have to remove people from the building prior to that time.
- Courtyard update: Principal Marshall has reached out to 25 people on the Board. The Board does not approve two large capital projects in the building at the same time. He



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will slowly try to ramp up pressure to get this done. If it was done by 2030, it would be a victory. Regarding the back field, he reached out to the provincial government and is waiting to hear back. There are growing concerns, including the settling of the field, the fence, the retaining walls and the state of the asphalt. At the north end of the parking lot there are pot holes with more equipment being brought into the space.

- May is Asian Heritage Month. Joy Kim, our new administrator, is leading this along with other staff. There are 39% of students around the Board with Asian heritage.
- June 4 is the Grade 8 welcome evening.
- Boundary changes were approved for Northern. This is a good first step.
- Yearbooks are arriving soon. We will be distributing them between June 11-13.
- Prom and Commencement are coming up. The Valedictorian was selected. Decorations for prom are arriving soon.
- POR (department heads): the Board decided we will have the same structure as last year. We are not going to have to revisit this model, which is a time saver for the school administration
- Is there anything planned for Pride month? The GSA organizes that and it is student-driven. If they have an event they want to run, the school always tries to say yes. They will have a number of events throughout the month, including a flag raising out front to kick things off. There is visibility around the school and shirts have been ordered for new staff. There are many things going on for Pride at Northern.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

MOTION: approve the April 3, 2025 minutes. Motion to approve: Omar Becerril; seconded: Gavin McCulloch. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Budget Committee Update

Julie Buckareff

- There is \$1,020 in funds still to be allocated; \$520 for parent enrichment and \$500 for student enrichment.



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- We have funded many clubs, the Buddies' conference, graduation awards, equipment for the school (ceramics, physics, math, classroom fans, etc.), staff events, our website and bank accounts.
- For the \$520 that must be spent on parent enrichment, if we don't use it, the TDSB will claw it back.
- School Council helped fund the first aid supply cart
- School cash online: we will set up lower donation amounts for next year (\$10, \$15 - currently the minimum is \$25)
- We would like to consider making a voluntary contribution of \$500 next year to another school. Eastdale Collegiate was identified as a possible recipient. Council members voiced support for this initiative as other schools don't raise funds needed to support key programs.

Gifted Advisory Committee

Anna Rutledge

- We are looking for a date with Guidance and John Moyer in the next few weeks to hold the post-secondary slideshow for gifted families. This will be a virtual event.
- We are also looking to get dates on the calendar for next year's GAC events.

Social Committee

Jessica Mikilos

- There is a walk this weekend on Saturday, May 24 at 9:30am
- There will likely be walks in June (one or two). Look to the Parent Post for updates.
- The evening at the ROM was a success.

Website Committee

HarpThind

- This past year, the Committee focused on enhancing the refresh of the website, removing redundancies, reviewing content and links and making sure the content was relevant.
- We started the School Council Instagram account to share quick updates: so far we have 60 followers on Instagram with 230 views.



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- Ideas for initiatives next year include: committee name change to reflect broader communication than just the website, increased parent participation in the Instagram account, standardizing the cadence for website and Instagram updates, potentially opening up the Instagram account for other SC members to post

Student Representative Update

Savannah Royes

Savannah, via email, passed along heartfelt thank-yous from the student leaders to School Council for all the funding and support this year.

NEW BUSINESS

- The Grade 8 welcome event is on June 4th from 5:00 pm to 6:30 pm. Can any Council members volunteer for this event? There are Grade 8 parents who are chairing middle school councils likely in attendance. Being there helps to raise awareness and how to access the website and email list.
- Fundraising plan for next year
 - Our proposed fundraising plan is to raise \$11,000 for next year through a fairly passive campaign. Given that the amount schools will have to spend on clubs and other things will get tighter, is there capacity and interest to try to raise more?
 - In the past, we haven't had a lot of capacity for teams and club events that happen at the end of the year. It would be nice to consider funding more of those activities.
 - Some funds come in through Student Activity fees and also through the Foundation. We are trying to be mindful of how many "asks" families are getting.
 - We can use the option of issuing tax receipts but it limits what we can fund (can only spend those funds with board-approved vendors).
 - Could we use tax-receipt funds for robotics competitions or buddies conferences? Principal Marshall will reach out to the accounting department for what we can and cannot fund with these donations.
 - The Council discussed different fundraising approaches: passive at the beginning of the year, another ask after March break for teacher needs or offer tax receipts later in the year and the timing which perhaps could begin after activity fees are finished. Historically, SC asked in August with the welcome emails and wrapped up in November/December when the Foundation started



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their campaigns. Principal Marshall mentioned that we could start as early as July as School Cash Online is available to give us more flexibility.

- It was discussed that at another school, the two links (one for a tax receipt and one for a donation without a tax receipt) and donations came in about evenly split between the two ways. Corporate matching may also be an option for us.
 - Donations with tax receipts have a delay so it takes time to know how much you have raised, but we don't spend the money until later, so not really an issue.
 - Other discussions mentioned collecting more due to inflation and how best to communicate fundraising goals.
 - Principal Marshall mentioned that the school is seeing a significant jump in students asking for support. The school puts aside some of their budget to help students and that this year they will use all of it.
 - School Council can approve the budget in September at the last meeting of this Council.
- Voluntary Contributions to other Schools
 - With the recent Trustee proposal that did not pass, School Councils said they were willing to make voluntary contributions.
 - A contribution of \$500 is above the proposed mandatory amount of 1% (which was not an official number).
 - Council members discussed the proposal and the disparity between schools across the TDSB.

MOTION: School Council will make a contribution of \$500 to another school next year. Motion to Approve: Jessica Miklos; seconded: Amanda Ricketts Fredrick. Motion carried.

- School Council needs volunteers to form the Election Committee which will organize the Council elections in September/October. As way of background, there are 15 voting members on School Council. All families are welcome to join the meetings and get involved in committees, but only voting members can vote. We ask parents interested in running for School Council to commit for the full year. We need a quorum (a majority) at all meetings to vote on council business. The Election Committee is open to all parents and caregivers at the school who are not running for School Council.
- School Council meeting dates for next year: There is limited capacity for the school after hours. There are typically seven meetings in total plus the election (including the last meeting of Council the following September). One option for us to reduce the number of



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dates is to combine the September and October meetings. Omar Becerril will finalize the dates for next year.

- Staff Wish List: Last year, School Council made a presentation to Northern staff and pulled together a wishlist of funding needs. Teachers submitted their proposals, the list was reviewed with school administration and the most impactful items were identified. We had a \$6,000 carryover to help fund these items. Principal Marshall suggested that one way to narrow the funding requests is to work with the department heads to prioritize ideas. Stephanie Nacawa offered to help move this forward.
- Question to Principal Marshall: could Northern lose hall monitors for the coming year?
 - The number will remain the same for next year.
 - There is a bigger worry that we may lose a ceramic technician. There are seven sections of ceramics and this position is very important to the many functions of that class.
- Question to Principal Marshall: is there a chance you could be moved to a new school?
 - I have not been informed of that, but not 100% confident that this won't happen.
 - The Board is having conversations about those after 5 years at a school and Principals want to be included in the conversation.
- The next School Council meeting will be held in September.

MOTION: Motion to adjourn. Motion to Approve: Jessica Miklos; Seconded: Gavin McCullough. Motion carried.

New Items for follow-up:

- Continued follow up on the courtyard and the back field improvements
- Principal Marshall to follow up to see if there has been a change to pool supervision requirements
- Budget Committee to set up lower donation amounts for School Cash Online
- Consider the allocation of \$1020 in remaining funds
- GAC to finalize dates for next season
- GAC to finalize the post-secondary event this season
- Decide fundraising approach for the summer/fall: tax receipts, timing, campaign, etc.
- Budget Committee to follow-up on Staff Wish List for next year
- Election Committee to be selected



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- Omar Becerril to finalize dates for next year

Items for follow-up from prior meetings:

- School Council to consider ways to advocate for better funding for facilities, including courtyard and back field improvements
- Budget Committee: continue to finalize spending plans for remaining funds
- Adam Marshall to consider ASL posters around the building: "sign of the week"