



Northern School Council Meeting

January 14, 2026 6:30 - 8:00 pm (hybrid)

Attendees:

Council: Aimee Sulliman and Gavin McCulloch, co-Chairs; Keith Tong, Treasurer; Alicia Soerensen; Cathy Wong; Margaret Yeung; Ulrica Jobe; Kristina Turner, recording; Omar Becerril; Anna Rutledge; Tianna Regis, student rep; Brownen Alsop, Community Rep; Jessica Miklos; Imran Khan; Brenda Winter; Jennifer Ng; Amanda Ricketts Fredrick.

Regrets: Brenda Winter

Meeting called to order at 6:35 pm by Gavin – quorum

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Agenda - Motion to approve: Anna.; Seconded: none. Carried.

Welcome and Introductions

Approval of Minutes

Approval of November 13, 2025 minutes - Motion to approve: Alicia.; Seconded: Omar. Carried.

Student Rep Update -Tianna Regis

Tianna reported on the upcoming exam dates. She also referenced the upcoming change in the format of student TDSB email addresses, which Adam then discussed in more detail. This change is initiated by TDSB to increase security (instead of the email format being firstname.lastname@student.tdsb.on.ca, it will become student number@tdsb.ca).

There were questions in the meeting about how this will impact privacy (students and parents will now have access to student numbers); where downloaded files will be stored or if they will be transferred to the new email addresses; new email addresses will be needed for Chromebook login. Adam promised a fuller update in the upcoming newsletter once he has more information from TDSB.

Co-Chair's Update - Aimee and Gavin

- The teachers expressed their gratitude for the teacher appreciation breakfast that was put on by the Council just before the holidays.
- It was decided that council business would be conducted by email (not WhatsApp etc).
- Bronwen Alsop, parent, was put forward for the council position of community representative.

Approval of council position – community representative

Approval of Bronwen Alsop as community representative. Motion to approve: Ulrica; Seconded: Omar. Carried.

- By-Law review: By-law Review: Gavin noted that the bylaws are due for review; members from the previous bylaw committee (Omar B. and Tania Osmond) recapped that SC's last bylaw review happened in 2023. At that time, the TDSB put forward a template of bylaws for all School Councils to adopt. However, the committee found several issues in the template that violated Ontario Regulation 612/00 which governs School Councils. Thus, the committee recommended rejecting the template, which SC voted to do.

Since any changes in bylaws need to be made according to our existing bylaws (which require a minimum of 90 days for notice, discussion, and voting on a motion to amend), it was suggested that this would be best started in the beginning of a new school year, and only if the changes were clearly helpful to improve the smooth operations of Council.

Parents currently interested in a bylaw review could help prepare that process by meeting this year and making recommendations for next year's Council to pursue as they see fit.

- SSON – School Statement of Needs was submitted to the TDSB in December.

Principal's Report and Ask Adam

Adam shared the following updates:

- **Staffing:** The school is one teacher away from being fully staffed.
- **Facility:** Students may have noticed temperature fluctuations in the school over the last 6 weeks – this is due to new boiler installation work, which will take some time to complete the process.
- **Enrolment:** our enrolment this year is 1955, and Adam's preferred number is 2000. The TDSB has projected our enrolment for next year at 1870, which is a concern: the lower the projection, the lower the actual number will end up being because of unpredictable factors (especially since Northern is now open to enrollment to any student in Toronto).

We are well under projection in all grades and no longer have large catchments to bring those students in. One of Northern's advantages is its breadth of programs – but if we

have lower attendance, we will lose teachers, and programming. Council asked how they could help; right now that is challenging because there is no school Trustee, but the TDSB's new "parent complaint office" will be the best place for parents to advocate. This office opens on January 19. Adam noted that last week, schools submitted their commentary on the new SSWAB planning process. TDSB will take some time to process all these commentaries, and Adam will share an update when ready.

- **EQAO and OSSLT**

- **EQAO** is a standardized Math test for Grade 9 students. At Northern, 72% of our students achieve at the provincial standard (compared to 65% of students in TDSB and 58% of students province-wide). When we look at Special education students (excluding gifted students), that score drops to 43% (lower in TDSB and province). Adam acknowledged that our score needs work and is the result of math being de-streamed (along with testing Grade 9 students who have only been at Northern from September to January with not enough time to strengthen the skills they brought with them from middle school.) Solving this problem starts with feeder schools, not Northern; however, we have a lot of feeder schools, plus students who can attend from all over the city.
- **OSSLT** is a standardized literacy test for Grade 10 students. Northern scores around 90% on a 3-year trend (TDSB students score 85%, and students province-wide score 85%). When we look at Special education students (excluding gifted students), those scores drop to 65% for Northern (TDSB 62% and 63% province-wide).
- **Student success:** Adam discussed a new approach to support students who are not successful at school, usually because they are not present in classroom or are disengaged. Northern is now engaging with 441 "marker students" to help them want to be in the class with teachers, through various methods. This year, success will be measured by attendance, and can also be measured by comparing grades, student involvement, etc over time. One measure will be taken mid-semester, and Adam will provide an update on the program's success at the end of the year.

- **Ask Adam:**

- **Spirit wear order delay:** It is an unusual delay and will hopefully arrive at the beginning of February. Adam will assess whether we will continue to use the company in the future.
- **Minister's Certificate of Recognition for Community Involvement:** new certificate for students who complete more than 50 volunteer hours during high school. For students who have already logged more than the required 40 hours at this time, they should contact the original volunteer work provider to have their volunteer logs updated.
- **Pest control:** pest control in an old building like Northern is a routine measure. Orkin provided pest control just after the winter holiday.
- **Ministry of Education classroom phone ban** – why is there a discrepancy in enforcing throughout classes? Adam noted that there is no universal approach at Northern – many different methods have been tried, with various results. Often it

comes down to the teacher and their effectiveness in setting expectations.
Ongoing challenge.

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).

Budget Committee - Keith

- Keith shared the current list of spending requests and noted that we have excess funds that can be used for students.

Fundraising Update - Ulrica

- The recent fundraising drive “Close the Gap” was very successful, raising \$6,500 in just over one week, bringing total raised for the Fall Campaign to \$13,700. We will use the same strategy, a targeted direct ask in the Fall of the 2026-2027 school year. The other area we hope to develop for 2026-2027 is an organized and structured system for requesting funds. For example, staff and students could request funds in Fall, Winter and Spring by a specific deadline to help spread out the spending and help with planning. More details to come!

Gifted Advisory Committee – Anna

- There was a great turnout to the December GAC event. The next event is on February 19, on Actionable Executive Functioning strategies for Gifted Learners (also applicable to most students). Further details in the weekly newsletter.

Social Committee - Kristina

- Reviewed upcoming parent events, which are all listed in the weekly newsletter: bi-weekly walks, coffee for Grade 9 parents, and coffee for parents interested in topics related to post-secondary study.

Website Committee - Chris/Tania

- Good progress on the updates to the Northern School Council [website](#), including a “parent tips” section with lots of helpful info for parents new to the school. One suggestion was to add a highlights reel showing Northern’s key events throughout the year – eg fashion show – to help parents understand what these events look like.

Community Update - Bronwen Alsop

- Bronwen attended the recent Parents as Partners conference, which is an annual Board-wide event designed to strengthen collaboration between families, caregivers, educators, and system leaders.

Other Business

Request for secretary for February 11 meeting – Margaret has offered.

Motion to adjourn

Motion to approve: Kristina, Seconded: Omar, Carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm.

2025-26 Meeting Dates – 6.30pm – 8pm School/Teams

February 11

April 3

May 22