



## Northern School Council Meeting

**February 11, 2026 6:30 - 8:00 pm (Heritage Room and Teams)**

**Attendees:**

**In person:** Aimee Sulliman, (Co-Chair)

Anna Rutledge (Council)

Kristin Beach (VP, NSS and Chair Caring & Safe Schools Committee)

Jessica Miklos (Council)

Ulrica Jobe (Council)

Imran Khan (Council)

Margaret Yeung (Council)

Kristina Turner (Council)

Chris Maissan (Website Committee)

Tania Osmond (Website Committee)

Tianna Regis (Student Representative)

**Guests:**

Rachel Erin Trescases

Oliver Trescases

Giuliana Paniccia

Ailidh Carpendale

Maclean

Tawni Roth

Leslie Vermeersch

Lisa Bordan

Wade Ivan

Sabina Scheibehenne

**Online:**

Amanda Ricketts-Frederik (Council)

Omar Becerril (Council)

Bronwyn Alsop (Community Representative)

Guests (on-line): Ronald Kwan; Sangeetha Navaneethasingam; Shannon Knights; Shiho; SM; Sonya Walker; Stephen Davy; Tania; TK; Vanessa; Wendy Li; Yali Liang; Morgan; Jan (Solgen) Nguyen; Nina Camargo Ramos; Pratima;; June; Karen E; Kathleen Allen; Kelly Goldthorpe; Anny Law; Lei Gao; Lisa; Liz Snip; M Rutherford Melissa Jacobs; Ivan Wade; J P; JA; Janelle Gordon; Jansel Akyol-Yavus; Jen N; JL; Joanne; Josephine; JT; June; Beth Lauer; Blythe Owen; Brenda; Cara Brown; Catherine W; Charu; Donna Hall; Edith Poon; Raisal Qureshi; Stacey;; Afifa; Alana; Amber; Joanne Anderson; Anya Tafliovich; Arti Panday; Omar Becerril Garcia.

**Regrets:** Gavin McCulloch (Co-Chair)

Chris Henville (Teacher Representative)

Keith Tong (Treasurer)

Catherine Wong (Council)

Alicia Soerensen (Council)

Brenda Perras-Winter (Council)

**Meeting called to order at 6:32 pm by Aimee – quorum**

**Approval of Agenda**

Approval of Agenda - Motion to approve: Ulrica.; Seconded: Jessica.

**Welcome and Introductions**

**Moment of Silence** for students, families, teachers, community affected by Tumbler Ridge School shooting

**Approval of Minutes**

Approval of January 14, 2026 minutes - Motion to approve: Ulrica; Seconded: Jessica. Carried.

The Co-Chair thanked Northern Administration and staff for proactively and continuously prioritizing and ensuring safety and well-being of students and staff - encouraged participation by the community in the Caring & Safe School Committee.

**Caring & Safe Schools Committee (Kristin Beach)**

- Emphasized they are a well-trained teaching and student body.
- Always reviewing how they can make the school safer.

- Students are always being coached on what would happen during a lockdown Survey was created, reviewed by Adam Marshall and then the Board level
- Safety coaching also done by Toronto Police,
- Other areas being looked at: washrooms, vaping, who needs support and boundaries, strategies, connecting with Guidance, parents and more.

### **Student Rep Update -Tianna Regis**

Updates from January 2026. Spirit wear merchandise still being collected.

[STUDENTNUMBER@tdsb.ca](mailto:STUDENTNUMBER@tdsb.ca) pw should not be shared with friends. SAC providing budget request forms. Stemcell drive: 2 sessions in library (17-35 years old). Schism: CO OP opportunities available now.

### **PIAC Update (Imran)**

Sat Feb 7th whole day event - recap: what an effective school council should be doing, importance of bylaws, strong communication etc. and offering virtual formats to increase participation by parents. E.g. 360 degrees webcam was used by one school (very successful). Our NSS PC is operating at a strong level right now. We are aligned with all recommended practices. Some schools have 1 parent doing all the jobs. We have a great committed team. Mental Health & Wellbeing committee was represented. PIAC Tool Kit: many tips and checklists here and also e.g. Healthy digital habits for kids. Student mental health action kit. Non profit organization Roseneath Theatre "The Flight"

PCEO - Effective School Council Webinar

STEM Alumni Panel - Feb 18

### **Subcommittee Updates**

**Partnering with NSSF *In Conversation Series* - April 16 – Featuring Claire Cameron (NSS Grad 1991) – recently won Governor General’s Literary award 2025 for Non-Fiction, [How to Survive A Bear Attack](#)) for her memoir. Will be a fundraiser for the school council funded activities and her books will be available for sale. First time collaboration with NSSF to jointly inspire students, engage the community, and raise funds for the school community activities.**

**Teacher Presentation - Ana Rodrigues** - Adam has identified opportunities for Teachers for learning opportunities. Identifying a date right now.

**Community Update:** Bronwen Alsop

Special Education event April 13 (Mon) at 7pm a Town Hall will be held, inviting all parents and community members to be present.

We will post on NSS website and social media.

**Teacher Rep Update:** Chris Henville (regrets)

**Budget Committee:** No update

**Fundraising Update:** Ulrica

February until March 7th COBS Davisville will take \$5 for a raffle for free bread for 3 months. Fantastic community partner. On March 7th hot cross buns will donate \$2 back to the NSS Nutrition program.

**Social Committee - Kristina**

Reminder for parents that we have a social walk in Mount Pleasant bi-weekly, Grade 9 Parents Coffee, and Post Secondary Coffee monthly, All of this info is in Adam's weekly newsletter and Parent Post. Social events are always fun.

**Bylaws Committee** – Aimee Sulliman noted there are governance related matters to be addressed and outstanding need to update the By-Laws of the Council, however, there is a lack of volunteers to form a committee to do so or interest from Council to address therefore status quo remains without updates.

**Website Committee - Chris** - would like a volunteer to help contribute content on the website.

**Gifted Advisory Committee** - (see below)

**Co-Chair's Update - Aimee and Gavin**

- Staff expressed gratitude for the appreciation breakfast that was hosted by the Council and Community before the holidays. The Co-Chair also thanked the volunteers and community partners who made the breakfast possible.
- 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 and approved.

**Principal's Report and Ask Adam**

Adam shared the following updates:

- **Stem cell Drive:** Students have initiated a drive .
- **Absentee students:** Efforts underway to redirect students in the building but not attending class to class with the support of Hall Monitors. Goal is to ensure optimal participation in class.
- **Guidance:** Adam noted that the Guidance department plays an essential role within Northern and any changes in funding would have consequences to student and staff well being.
- **Staffing.** POR (position of responsibility ... dept head) 2026 - 2029 cycle. Union & TDSB driven PD Day.
- **Tuesday Brazilian delegation visitation** - held showcasing the school. Latin heritage club students participation (Portuguese).

- **TTC LRT open.** Two entrances in proximity to Northern (Mt. Pleasant Station): NE corner (unmanned); other station (manned). Plastic plexi glass barn door at unmanned entrance. Students have been passing through in droves and not paying fares. The new platforms are at foot level – passengers must stay off the tracks. Stations do not have safety guard rails, but they do have sensors which halt and delay train operation. School has encouraged TTC to provide appropriate staffing and education on safety, appropriate use, fares, and ensure adherence to rules & regulations on TTC property

**Gifted Program.:** Adam provided an overview of the advocacy he has undertaken to support the 350+ gifted students at Northern and the positive impact of having a Gifted Program on the overall community. Special Programs grandfathered til 2027. Course selection - pulled 4 4 2 2 you get to choose and then take the rest of the courses with the student body. He expressed concern with the recent communications and actions by the Gifted Advisory Committee to preemptively assume the position of the TDSB and launching a campaign before hearing from the TDSB. Would like to extend goodwill to the TDSB and allow for response and continued dialogue. This is specifically a NSS issue. Hopeful that TDSB updates will appease parents. There concerns about the 4 - 4 - 2- 2 model, especially regarding eLearning. Also students that have a dual-diagnosis, extreme strengths and extreme weaknesses. What is the strategy of accommodating specific gifted students with special needs. AP Advanced Placement is a well recognized program, offering a 1st year university credit and noted on transcripts. Depth of program of AP courses, are “deeper” than a Grade 11 Gifted Program Chemistry for example. Credits on a transcript will appear as AP courses (not the case with Gifted courses – a designation not recognized outside of Northern). Adam noted there is also a forthcoming opportunity to provide teacher’s with training for Northern staff at no cost for teachers to upskill and received designation in Advanced Placement. Feedback has been received from students and parents that are sometimes unhappy with certain Gifted NSS courses. There may be deeper opportunities to learn through AP courses.

Parents asked for clarity on the threshold for enrollment to offer a course in-person at Northern. Adam noted it is 24>. AP Course roster - course selection, accounting, law, etc New classes could have a lower number. Parents expressed concern that AP offering may be shifted to on-line(virtual) rather than in-person. Adam noted given enrollment in Northern this would not be an immediate risk.

Parents asked How do Gifted teachers become trained to be AP teachers? Who pays to re training? Adam indicated that to teach Gifted,there is no designated training curriculum. To be trained in AP, teachers can be trained in AP over 4 days (no fee) this Spring. Professional learning for Teachers via Student Success funds also pays for some training. Adam would ideally like to send 2 - 3 teachers in every subject, for example to receive AP designation and training. Question was asked is a Board thing or an NSS thing? Board is trying to provide opportunities for teachers advancement.

Tania brought up that Gifted kids need to be taught in their own unique way. Margaret shared that her son took 2 AP courses at a private school and really disliked it; they ended up coming back to NSS. Her now Grade 12 son said that AP was very disorganized.

School Improvement Plan Update on Student success: Adam discussed a new approach to support students who are not reaching optimal success at school, usually because they are not present in classroom or are disengaged. Northern is now engaging with 441 students to help them want to be in the class with teachers, through various methods. This year, success will be measured by attendance, participation and presence in the classroom, along with grades. One measure will be taken mid-semester, and Adam will provide an update on the program's progress to close the gaps for the 441 (20% of Northern's student population) success.

Parents sought clarity on the Gifted Program and whether TDSB trying to align gifted programs across the board. Adam is offering more AP courses as an alternative to fill the gaps (not for every student eg., dual diagnosis students who will need alternate offerings to address weaknesses).

Adam advised the TDSB planning department has indicated that the Northern administration will be given discretion to ensure optimal enrollment as a Closed School.

Parents asked whether there is opportunity to expand enrollment of the gifted program as a Centre of Excellence within the TDSB?

Stacy Kline expressed that in her short time as Trustee, she felt there was opposition to gifted being part of special education. In the board there is an equity lens and gifted is used around the board as a way of parents to get their kids into a special program.

**Jessica – GAC update:**

- Event February 19 about executive function skills – successful, as registration is full.

**Gifted topic**

- Jessica supports Adam's efforts to provide AP courses for all students but posited that it is not the answer to losing gifted course offerings.
- Jessica created a document about gifted programs at Northern and read aloud a four page address on the history of gifted programs at Northern – excellence, leadership, innovation and strong outcomes. Changes must be grounded in peer reviewed information.
- Jessica read aloud a letter from Bright Children Ontario which supports GAC's wish to retain gifted programming and outlined potential risks to students if programming is reduced.
- Jessica indicated that the GAC supports Adam in leadership role but understands his limits as TDSB employee. Because this is the last council meeting before students have to make their course selections, Jessica has drafted a motion (shared earlier today).

- Noted that large schools don't offer the same courses that smaller schools do. Pointed that there has not been a consultation on this policy change. Emphasized importance of broad gifted programming and asked council for support. Offered that we could delay the motion if we wanted to wait to hear from TDSB for a few days if council would prefer.
  - Moved the motion and shared printed copies for voting members and other attendees.
- Ulrica noted potential risk of putting forward the motion without allowing time for the Board to work with Adam and potential risks.
- Anna offered that the plan is to have the motion approved in the meeting, but hold off presenting this vote to the Board until after Board communication has been sent.
- Adam stated that he is trying to keep the lines of communication open with the Board.
- A parent asked what other course of action council would take if we don't send the letter to the board.
- Jessica proposed that she would ask parents to escalate and contact media and other outlets if it's decided that we are not happy with the TDSB's response. Jessica also noted that Northern is a model for other schools and it's important to advocate for gifted programming on behalf of other schools and provinces.
- Aimee summarised the concern of parents, and Adam's concern on the risk of advocacy escalation at this time. Suggested taking time to regroup with Adam on evolving discussions. She noted as citizens, we have agency to talk to any of our elected or unelected officials, and highlighted the potential risks (chill effect on registration and interest by prospective Northern Gifted parents and students) about talking negatively about Northern and the Gifted program to media. Asked other council members to share their views. Proposed GAC regroup after this evening.
- Tania Osmond pointed out that twice in the past, TDSB has tried to cancel gifted programs, and parent voice and advocacy changed that decision twice. She emphasised the importance of parent advocacy.

Ulrica suggested an amendment to the motion: strike "... immediately following its passage" and replace it with "...if there is no communication from the Board by February 28, 2026 OR if the communication from the Board compromises the Gifted Program at Northern to the detriment of its current and future gifted population".

Moved by Jessica, seconded by Ulrica. Aimee Sulliman recused herself from the vote. All in favour. No one opposed.

Other business:

Secretary for April 14 – Anna Rutledge.

Meeting adjourned 8.47pm.

**2025-26 Council Meeting Dates – 6.30pm – 8pm Heritage Room/Teams**

April 14

May 22