

NCIVS School Council Minutes

Tuesday, March 23, 2021

6:30 pm – 8 pm

Present: Adenike Aladetayinbo, Tristan Bhola, Tiffany Cadotte, Jody Charron, Susan Ferguson, Nathan Jeffrey, Christine Murphy, Laurie Yuen Mark, Tara Pace-James, Mark Scott, Sue Tomback, Hannah Yao

1. Welcome

- ✓ Christine Murphy, Northern's School Council Co-Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- ✓ Everyone in attendance introduced themselves.
- ✓ Christine reviewed the purpose of the School Council. The School Council provides a forum for people interested in public education to work cooperatively to develop common goals and plans to strengthen schools in order to improve student achievement. Input from the various council members shapes school policies and priorities. All parents are welcome to attend.

2. Treaty Acknowledgement

- ✓ Hannah Yao read the Traditional Territory Acknowledgement.

3. Student Council Update – Hannah Yao and Tristan Bhola

- ✓ The Student Council has continued to use Instagram to engage with students.
- ✓ This week is Spirit Week. Students are encouraged to dress according to the daily theme. For example, Monday was Pyjama day, Tuesday was Tie-Dye Day, and Wednesday is Fannel/Plaid Day. Students can post pictures to the Student Council Instagram account to win prizes. Every day this week, there is also a "Name That Tune" contest during morning announcements.
- ✓ The Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Subcommittee is continuing its efforts to educate students and spark discussion within the NCIVS community. During Black History Month (February), the subcommittee organized various guest speakers and videos for students. The committee has now focused its efforts on Women's History Month.
- ✓ Christine Murphy commented that there was a lot of great information on the Student Council Instagram page during Black History Month.
- ✓ For the first time, the Student Council has created Grad Wear which will be on sale shortly.

4. Feedback

- ✓ **Grade 8 Parent Information Sessions**
 - A parent who attended one of the virtual sessions commented that she thought the meeting was excellent. The speakers were very good, and everything was seamless.
- ✓ **Parent-Teacher Interviews:**
 - All of the parents who took part in Parent-Teacher Interviews were pleased with the telephone interviews. Parents liked the ease of the process – there was no waiting in line, and interviews didn't feel rushed. The downside is not being able to put a face to a name.
 - Parents made 720 appointments for interviews.
 - Most parents found the SignUpGenuis website easy to use. Other schools are also using SignUpGenuis.
 - Parents suggested that the interviews be held earlier in Quadmester 4 to ensure that parents are aware of problems earlier. For Q4, Parent-Teacher Interviews will be on May 27, 2021 – there will be an entire month of school remaining after the interviews.

✓ **School Messenger App:**

- The new School Messenger App allows parents to text the office to report their child's absences.
- All the parents in attendance were happy with the app. Parents appreciated that they could look back in the app history to see all previous messages in one place. A parent liked receiving the confirmation e-mail when she used the app to report an absence.

5. Student Services Update – Mark Scott

- ✓ Two Grade 8 Parent Information meetings were held in February. Parents of approximately 70% of the students attended.
- ✓ Some of the Grade 8 classes at the feeder schools had virtual presentations, while other schools had in-school presentations. Mr. Scott said that the Guidance Counsellors will be going back to all the feeder schools in May to answer any additional student questions.
- ✓ Student Services was busy in February as students completed their option sheets for next year. There were 420 requests for appointments between the time option sheets were handed out, and the time the option sheets were due. This was the best year in terms of students submitting their option sheets on time.
- ✓ There will be a spring order of Spirit Wear. Information will be sent out later this week.

6. OSSLT – Nathan Jeffrey

- ✓ Northern is planning for the Literacy Test but also still waiting for more information.
- ✓ Four hundred ninety-six students are eligible to write the Literacy Test this year.
- ✓ If the students write, it will be an electronic exam.

7. Inclusivity & Diversity Programming – Tiffany Cadotte

- ✓ Northern has been actively working on 2 goals – the Indigenous Awareness goal and the Inclusive Diversity Goal.
- ✓ February was Black History Month. MAC, Student Council and the Inclusive Diversity Team all contributed resources during Black History Month. Examples of activities:
 - MAC played songs by Contemporary Black Canadian artists before the Morning Announcements. They also explained the meaning of some songs/poems during the morning announcements.
 - Student Council provided informational videos that were shown in classrooms (ex. What is Systemic Racism?) Also, there were videos of guest speakers shown throughout the month. Several of the guest speakers were former students who spoke about their experiences at Northern.
 - There is a Staff Book Club that is studying Ibram X. Kendi's *How to be an Anti-Racist*.
- ✓ Various departments also worked to highlight Black History Month. Northern's Phys. Ed Dept. used their Instagram page to share information with students. Northern Library's also used its Instagram page to highlight various books by Black authors available for students. The library has acquired several sets of books (*White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo and *The New Jim Crow* by Michelle Alexander) that can be used for future book clubs.
- ✓ The English department has sought out some unique posters (ex. All are welcome here)
- ✓ In early March, the Indigenous Awareness Committee and Mr. Westlake's NDA3M/NDW4M class promoted the "Moose Hide Campaign." The Moose Hide Campaign is a grassroots movement of Indigenous and non-Indigenous men and boys who are standing up against violence towards women and children. Students watched a variety of videos to learn about the campaign.
- ✓ The LKDSB Indigenous Team hosted a virtual painting evening with artist Moses Lunham for LKDSB staff and their families in March. Moses is from the Anishinabeg Nation of Kettle and Stony Point and has been creating art for most of his life. Moses walked the participants through an entire painting

while sharing cultural teachings along the way. Two other painting evenings are planned in April and May.

- ✓ Northern is celebrating Women's History Month during March. Resources are being shared with students in their classes.

8. Principal Update – Susan Ferguson

• Textbook Returns

- ✓ Due to the school's closure, some students did not return textbooks last June and in February. Every department has submitted a list of missing textbooks. The secretaries are now calling parents to encourage families to return the textbooks. We are starting to see textbooks trickle in. We need all textbooks returned.

• Covid Update

- ✓ Northern's first Covid case was back in October. Northern has had 9 cases in total. There are currently 2 cases.
- ✓ Initially, Lambton Public Health contacted all students that were affected and Northern was not involved. Now that Lambton Public Health is busier, the school is contacting families. When the school is contacted about a positive case on the weekend, the parents are contacted via e-mail. If it happens during the school day, parents are contacted to pick their student up, and the student goes home to self-isolate.
- ✓ For the last few cases, teachers have been allowed to continue working due to the PPE they are wearing.
- ✓ In the fall, Northern was sending out a school messenger announcement and phone call every time there was a positive case in the school community. Then, for a while, Northern didn't send these messages. Now, Northern is again sending a messenger message every time there is a positive case in the school community. The information is also posted on the school website.

• School Photo Re-Takes

- ✓ Edge Photography is doing student pictures this year. In the past, Northern has used LifeTouch Photography, but they were unavailable this year.
- ✓ Edge Photography will be coming back for re-takes. A re-take date will be provided when it becomes available.

• Inclement Weather Policy

- ✓ For the remainder of the year, if buses are cancelled due to inclement weather, the school will be closed to students. Students will be expected to connect with their teacher in their virtual classroom.

• School Climate Survey

- ✓ The dates for the survey are May 3 – 21, 2021. The board wants input from parents, students, and staff.
- ✓ Northern will put something out on school messenger to encourage parents to complete the survey.

• Graduation

- ✓ Mr. Moir will be putting together a Virtual Graduation video for this year's graduates.
- ✓ Northern is also hoping that there will be an opportunity for parents and students to celebrate with some type of drive-by event.
- ✓ Our school council co-chairs have written a letter to the Director of Education requesting some type of event to celebrate this year's graduates. The school board is currently considering the request.

- ✓ Northern has started making preliminary plans. Mr. Scott indicated that he is confident that Northern will be able to organize something to celebrate the graduates but more information is needed.
- ✓ Grad packages will be available for purchase this year.

- **Next Year**

- ✓ Parents are asking about next year. Virtual School? Extra-curriculars? Semesters or quadesters? Unfortunately, there are no answers at this time.

9. Parent Questions/Feedback

- **Daily Closed Book Quizzes**

- ✓ Tristan mentioned that some classes are doing daily closed-book quizzes. Students learn the material one day and then write a quiz the following morning. Some students find this practice stressful.
- ✓ Mrs. Ferguson stated that she and Tristan could discuss this further tomorrow at the school.

10. Meeting Adjourned

- ✓ Future meetings: Tuesday, May 4 and Tuesday, June 8, 2021 at 6:30 pm