



Catholic School Council

Improving student achievement and school performance.

ND Catholic School Council
Notre Dame Catholic Secondary School
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School Council Meeting Oct 19, 6:30 pm ND Cafeteria

Roll Call:

Christine
Jeannie
Stephen
Marc
Matthew
Marysia
Gail
Kim McGregor
Charmaine
Andrea

Meeting Agenda hand out

Opening prayer - Norm Roberts

Mr. Roberts -Introducing Matthew from Student Council

Tiana will also join in future as voice of students

Madame Taylor asked them to join since they are both mentors and very involved in the school community

Looking forward to hearing their voices and opinions

Approval of the Minutes provided by Julie

Moved by Marc and Charmain

Agenda moved by Marysia and Christine

Principal Norm's Update

(Item 7 collection of issues that have been brought forward is just for reference)

- Youth Council - Pam MPP started an Oakville and North Burlington youth council and asked our students to participate which is an exciting opportunity



- Community - High profile parent passed away on the weekend, 2 children are students here at the school. This person was very involved in the Burlington community and the local sports community. We found out Sunday night and our school faculty team got together to set up counselling spaces, including the wellness room with a social worker and the chaplain in the chapel, to support all students. Permission from the wife to publicly announce the news and pray for the family and send an email to teachers about accessing support for students who may need it. Teachers were asked to please maintain their normal routine but identify any students that may need emotional support and send them to the Wellness room. Many students have made use of the support systems. Funeral has not been announced. May be another trigger for the affected students. Transition program for the 2 children will be established.
- Faith Day - an event for staff on the Friday before Thanksgiving on a scheduled PA day so students were not involved. The goal of the day was building stronger relationships among staff that may have suffered due to Covid. The day ended with a mass by Chaplain Bryan Dunn and Priest Father Paul.
- School Mass - ND is leaning away from big school masses at this time. They are difficult to conduct, it isn't quiet, and they don't seem to be meaningful for the students. The smaller masses with groups of students are more educational and more personal. Focus on liturgy, social justice...grade 12 will organize an end of year mass.
- Curriculum Night - moved to a virtual platform this Thursday night at 6pm, streamed and available for a week after, by Mr. Gardenia. Link through email and website.
The event will include a map of the school with highlighted sections and people can click on each section for curriculum expectations for each division.
- Grade 8 info night - virtual, being put together now, info to be disseminated soon.
- Awards night - Oct 26, 8:30 - 11pm - virtual. Celebrates Honours students, this year there are a lot of Honours students due to Covid marks being a bit inflated. Names will be announced on Awards Night and awards will be distributed to each classroom. Communication to be disseminated soon.
- Football games/Outdoor sports;
HCDS Board decision to allow fans at outdoor games came 2 days before the football game last week. All participants were tracked by name, phone and time arrival...340 students. Due to board sanctions, they can't ask about vaccinations



and can't mandate wearing of masks outside.

Line ups due to slow admissions process. There was an attempt to sign up online but they had some technical difficulties with that process. Process will change for the next game, perhaps using Cash Online and issuing tickets for a nominal fee, in order to track name and phone number and decrease wait times for admission at the game by simply showing tickets.

Some students at the last game left school early to pre-drink etc....then came to the game drunk and/or high, water bottles being tossed, bad language, food spills, kids from other schools came just to hang out, this behaviour ruins it for everyone....and the school admin had to deal with that. A communication will go out to notify parents that students are not allowed to sign out of class early to go to the football game. The nominal fee of \$5 for the next game is a deterrent to these particular students that aren't as serious about the football game...so that people who do come are more serious,....give money to fund charity and additional security at the game.

Ticket distribution for next game: 50 tickets to visiting team, 25 to parents and grandparents who don't have access to tickets, 25 tickets to football parents through Cash Online, students would have 200 - 250...seating is in the bleachers. Tickets to be sold a week to 5 days in advance

Night games - great fundraisers but there are typically more suspensions coming from night games...drunk, high, vaping, fighting, attracts a small group of bad behaviour kids so the school board is not open to it.

Fundraising BBQs are not permitted, food can't be open. Packaged food only.

- Washroom access - 100% improvement since Sep. The ND Letter that went home about bathrooms, really helped. There are still ongoing issues, but it is better than it's been in 5 years. Some washrooms don't have soap dispensers because they have been stolen and broken and new ones are on order. Hand sanitizer is distributed throughout the school. Matthew said that lots of kids are still hanging around the bathrooms, very crowded..can't get in stalls. The principal and VPs are continuing to do random checks on them and are continuing to brainstorm new ideas. One school has tested Locking all washrooms but 1 for period 1 then Period 2 open 2 washrooms which are all monitored. Students need to start taking ownership for the issue.

All City of Burlington Parks near highschoools have locked all washrooms due to destruction.



Social media “challenges” - ND sent a letter to advise parents of the ‘challenges’. The feedback is that the letter went over well and parents have even started phoning in tips, ie. ‘they are upstairs vaping right now’ and so the admin team is able to intervene in real time. The perpetrators are mostly a small group of grade 9s that are behaving poorly and other students are encouraging them. Rapor has been established so that these students are sharing more info with the admin which has really helped. In order to support students like this, ND has meetings with elementary teachers and principals prior to them coming to high school to discuss the students and how to support them best, maybe separate certain students, maybe give certain kids more support. Unfortunately these particular students did not come from ND feeder schools so these students are not part of that program.

- Parent Complaints - Parents need to understand that there are reasons for the rules, and they are not arbitrary, for example, requesting students remove their hat at the door...this is a safety issue so intruders aren't able to sneak past security at the school. Some students prefer to wear shorts all seasons and track pants are acceptable to be worn into school and to their locker without issue as long as they are removed at that time...but should the fire alarm go off in cold winter weather, it is not ideal for students wearing shorts. They will not have time to go to their locker before going outside and they may be outside for a long time depending on the situation. Please encourage students to wear clothes that are suitable for the weather. McCarthy has improved the styles and comfort level of the pants this year so this is becoming less of an issue. ISW was spreading information saying that pants are not allowed at ND, which is untrue. Principal will leave this issue for now and attempt to resolve it with students once Covid is over. School council will get first right of refusal/approval on new clothing items. Hoodie, pants..
- School Council Participation - Can parent council be virtual? - preference is not to have it virtual, the principal is thankful for the parents that do come to the meetings. The concern is that a parent joining virtually for a single issue may take something out of context or not get the full explanation and then tune out with the wrong impression. This is a very respectful atmosphere and if parent wants to join, please RSVP to Stephen Clarke @ NDschoolcouncil@gmail.com. Meeting minutes are on website, PDF with council members names are available there as well.



- Social Media - show more normal activities so that people can see we are getting back to normal.
- Photo Day / student card photos - delayed because photographers were not able to enter the school. New Date - Nov 3 and 4...communication will be going out. Goal is to bring in as many photographers at once. First in line will be those students in grade 9 math in order to get them to their EQAO on time...then grade 12 (need the grad pics for the yearbook and Grad ceremony) then grade 9s and up. Photos are used for multiple purposes including student identification.
- Math EQAO -testing will be repeated each quadmester for the students that are taking math.
- ND Communication team - needs to be more organized.
Complaints about too many emails and similarly with the lack of communication - trying to balance
Mark (internal communication) may need to come to the next meeting. RSS feed on the calendar through the website (you can subscribe to the feed) - there is nothing about tonight's meeting on there. RSS feed needs to include midterms and report card day and quad term dates. Please include instructions on how to access the feed.
The communication efforts by Julie are strictly regarding the School Council, and is separate from school sanctioned communication.
Student communication - inaccurate information is being provided to Matthew which is then posted - process needs to be modified so he is in the accurate information loop.
- Change to school schedule - to add 10 minutes, we now end at 2:20...feedback was that kids weren't able to get to class on time. Petitioned and needed board approval. ND lacked communication to parents and the principal apologizes for the oversight.
- Cafeteria update - cafeteria has increased available seating to 4 per table and a supervisor has been hired. 200 students total capacity, requesting that the students please don't eat in the lecture area until caf tables are at full capacity. Late November cafeteria food counter will be open to serve food.
- Midterm marks - email has been sent regarding availability, some parents are complaining that they don't have access to the student's 'power school' due to the fact that their students won't share their password with their parents. Board



will set it up to give parents access. They will need to provide instructions for that.

- Traffic flow - new signs are coming
- Speaker Series suggestions - mental health is paramount. Julie found the list from last year to advise the principal of what has happened in the past. Principal has strong faith that the wellness room and the social worker and the music/art therapy etc. have improved the vigilance at the school level. ND will also support parents regarding how to get outside support. NDs goal is to support students to stay in class. This year there will be no exams to relieve additional pressure. Some parents are concerned that their student won't adequately prepared for university. Principal agrees that we have to teach them a skill set for university, but advises us that over 50% of ND students don't apply to university and of those that do, only 15% get accepted and only 5% get a degree. Principal is questioning whether to focus on that skill set and is maybe something to reconsider (Timed assessments instead?) Due to this being another Covid year with quadmesters, the students don't need the added pressure of exams, and culminating projects will suffice instead. With the Quadmester schedule, instructional days are depleted as it is and 2 more days for exams reduces instructional days yet again, sacrificing content.
- Speaker series for parents - paul davis, Princeton staff member, #of events depends on cost, hoping for 2 events.
- Covid Update - some teachers weren't allowing students that are home to join in online. There is currently tension with teachers between virtual and non virtual simultaneously. Not all classes are set up to be virtual. Students claim at the beginning of the year whether they will be virtual or not. If there is a class that has no virtual students, then the teacher can't just turn it on for one student. If someone is sick then they should be home. Principal can't mandate teachers to record their class and can't mandate them to suddenly go virtual. Communication required for clarity so students and parents know that some classes are not virtual. Teachers/Admin were finding students were using virtual school as an excuse to not attend in person. Students can always access the google classroom so they know what their assignments are. Issues were identified with highly motivated students going to class sick with symptoms. They put high risk students at risk, as well as classmates/teachers. If a student has symptoms they have to miss in class instruction, sometimes for 3 days depending on Covid



testing site schedule availability... in a Quadmester schedule, they are missing a lot of content per course. If students go to school with symptoms to avoid missing this much in school instruction, this also puts additional pressure on the health system with additional Covid testing per sick student.

Covid Positive Instructions - We have sent 7 different letters -all with certain instructions; ie. to students that are at high risk of contact immediately surrounding them, students in the class, staff, bus routes, and general community.

School Council Budget prepared by Stephen and presented by Jeannie

- Typical annual surplus starts at \$5000. This year it is higher at \$15,000. The funds allocated in the budget are the same as we have always done but perhaps due to the surplus, we can consider spending a bit this year on a speaker series. Also, if something extraordinary comes up we have funds to support that.
Tech for students - supports the trades - bought the wood cutting machine
Is there anything set aside for the Arts? - principal/school council will consider that suggestion
Maintenance on existing tech? School budget handles that through the board
Anything for grad? Some of our budget covers grad but a grad fee covers lots of the expenses, location, gown etc.
Budget Approval on the agenda for next meeting

Evening with Bishop

- Pamphlet handed out - Halton Catholic Childrens Foundation- independent registered charity. Helps students and families in need across the HCDS board
- Supports students - Food, clothing, school supplies, eyeglasses, trips, club fees, bachelorette exam fees, assistance with footwear and tools, SAT exam fees
- Receive in kind donations - IT support
- Fundraising -
Golf tournament,
24 hour fast (lent),
Back to school campaign,
Evening with the Bishop



- Evening with Bishop Crosby (virtual) - Wed Nov 17 - casual reception with interactions, Bishop Crosby will interact with attendees, a more formal event will follow, entertainment, stories to warm your heart, Bishop Crosby speaking..wonderful stories with a great sense of humour.
- Looking for support, sponsorships available (companies), please help and reach out, ticket packages available.
- All Students succeeding in school and in life is the goal within HCDSB. Apply to foundation for assistance through the school (teacher, social worker). Assistance has been provided to 25 students from ND to date - ie. VP highlighted grade 11 student that didn't have technology at home and who was in jeopardy of failing. Marc met this student and he is thankful for the support. Now he was able to build his own resume and got a job and supported his family - shows how the impact made a difference for that student.
- Budget item on School Council - \$1000 proposed was passed by all council members. Email will go to school council members to invite you to attend (25 tickets) as well as some students who show interest

Fundraising - Christine (chair)

- Cobbs North has agreed to support us through a fundraiser where 10% of ND community sales go to the school. We need to spread the word to the school community to increase traffic and sales and to remind the parents to mention it upon time of purchase
- Little Caesars - they are willing to dedicate a week to our ND community and donate 15% of the ND sales back to the school - consideration for future.
- Mabels Labels - are they fundraising for ND? Is ND on the list? Jeannie will reach out.

Business Leadership Shism - Matthew

- SHINE - Mr. Barbatti - 'specialist high skills annual expo'
Shisms allow students to specialize in one area of study and to apply to certifications etc. BL is planning next wednesday during period 2.
5 different ND shisms will have a table each and all students are welcome to sign up - Grade 10s and 11s...deadline is Oct 30 to sign up for grade 11s.
- Planning Career Day for grade 10s.
- Halloween events



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- Prefects planning house group events

Next meeting Nov 16, 6:30pm

Motion to close, Charmaine and Marc

Prayer to close the meeting