

## St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Secondary School Council Meeting Minutes

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Meeting Date – January 26, 2021

Meeting Time – 6:30 pm – Microsoft Team Meeting

Members Present: Adriano Perusin, Principal  
Adriana Rerecich  
Michelle Sparrock-Henderson  
Kevin Wells  
Phaedra Renaud  
Kyle Dillon-Alcasid  
Angela Lombardi  
Shery Milhail  
Ciara De Jong  
Judy-Ann  
David Montoya  
Sharon Stewart Guthrie

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### MEETING MINUTES

#### **Opening prayer - Adriana**

All council members joined in opening prayer and acknowledgement of our land.

#### **Administrative changes & staff changes**

Clark McDougall will be leaving our school and David Montoya joining STA as of February 8, 2021.

#### **Covid update**

We are awaiting information from the Ministry with regards to potential re-opening of schools for in-class learning.

#### **Graduation Update**

Waiting for direction from senior administration with next steps regarding graduation. The board is looking for consistency across all schools. Conversations have been ongoing between schools, but nothing has been confirmed.

### **Mental Health Supports**

We will be having a virtual parent presentation at the end of February to discuss mental health supports at our school. Hoping to have a few pieces including the faith aspect of mental health. Since there was not a curriculum night this year for grade 9 students and parents to meet the teachers, we will include Department Heads in this presentation. We are also working to update our school web site to add a Mental Health and Well-Being tab on the main page that is more accessible and easier to find.

### **Uniform Updates**

We are moving back to McCarthy Uniforms and have made a small tweak to the school logo to incorporate a cross. Students will be allowed to wear old uniforms.

### **Spring Sports**

At this time everything related to spring sports is on hold.

### **Option Sheet Presentations**

Email will go out tomorrow with instructions on the course selection for the 2021-2022 school year. There will be a pre-recorded presentation that will be available on our website and teachers will be showing this video during class on Tuesday February 9, 2021. For students who would like to meet one on one with their guidance counsellor, please set up a virtual or phone appointment. New this year - students will be asked to submit selected courses to their parents/guardians via email for approval. We will not be asking the student to hand in signed option sheet approval forms. **Parents/guardians will receive an email from their student after they have submitted their choices. By selecting **approve**, you are indicating that you are approving your child's options. If you decline their choices, your child will be responsible to resubmit their courses.**

### **SHSM (Specialist High Skills Major) updates**

A SHSM is a ministry-approved specialized program that allows students to focus their learning on a specific economic sector while meeting the requirements to graduate from secondary school. It also assists in their transition after graduation to apprenticeship training, college, university, or the workplace. A notification will be sent out to all parents shortly with changes:

SHSMs are currently available at St. Thomas Aquinas in the following sectors:

- Information and Communications Technology
- Health and Wellness

2 additional SHSMs will be offered next year:

- Construction and Transportation (new for 2021)
- Sports (new 2021)

### **IB numbers**

As per December minutes, the number of students enrolled at our school will be down this year at only 1100. We have a large cohort graduating in June and the incoming enrollment does not cover this deficit.

We received 140-150 applicants for our IB program which is a phenomenal number and have put out acceptance letters. Hoping for a minimum of 100 new IB enrollments and may have graduates from grade 12 students returning for a bridge year to upgrade to prepare for post-secondary.

Also noted that IB exams are scheduled to happen in May. Had to do some juggling of schedules to accommodate moving subjects such as math, from quad 4 to quad 3, in order to prepare the students for these exams.

### **Technology access for students**

We are providing laptops to anyone who needs one to enable virtual learning.

### **Other discussions**

Adriano mentioned that the Christmas fund raiser raised a great amount of money which is being put right back in community to support families in financial distress.

Representation Matters Group will be working on communications about Black History Month. We completed a survey with the students to gauge their judgements on how we handle diversity and race relations in the school. Small sample response but did get some interesting information that we will use to go forward. In future we will begin with the incoming Grade 9 students to ensure we clearly communicate our values and acceptable behaviour.

Next meeting February 9, 2021