

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Secondary School Council Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date – March 10, 2021

Meeting Time – 6:30 pm – Microsoft Team Meeting

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

Prayer and Acknowledgement of our Land: Adriana

- Grade 9 virtual retreats are happening with 2 completed and 7 more to go.
- February 22nd a parent education information night took place to discuss non-academic support at the school and in the community. Speaker from ADAPT and mental health nurse discussed support available. Video of this evening is available on the school website.
- Coffee, Lent and conversation for month of lent with Father Con where we talk about faith and culture. Links are shared if anyone wishes to watch.

SHSM and science conference

February 18th completed a presentation to parents of our feeder schools to discuss the existing SHSM programs offered at our school as well as the new ones awaiting final approval.

Voyage Science's STEM Careers Conference was run by IB students for 3 days and was a great success with an average of 900 students per session and an impressive list of speakers.

An amazing group of students is proposing a Model UN conference – currently attempting to get other schools to join.

Covid Update

Directive from Ministry of Health continues that staff must wear mask and face shield (or goggles) in common areas of the school and in class where there is close proximity.

Self screening continues and has been smooth with no covid cases to date in the building.

Region has changed protocols of what is expected regarding symptoms and household contact directives. Information can be found on board website and our website and continue to evolve.

Grade 12 Graduation update

Continue to meet about the plan for a virtual graduation. While an outside event was considered, it does not seem conceivable given the rules for gatherings and directives from public health.

We are in the process of collecting information from students and hoping to order gowns and caps to be available by April break. Also working on grad gifts.

Photos will be set up for late April and will be taken in the cafeteria – exit in and out of building to prevent touchpoints and get students in and out quickly and efficiently.

June 28 is the planned date for virtual graduation at 7pm. Consideration is being given to a potential drive through with staff outside and a field backdrop for photos. Not sure at this point if this will be allowed by Public Health. If allowed decision to be made if will offered on separate day or same day as graduation.

Hiring videographer from Sheridan college to do a high-quality graduation video.

OSSLT – Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test

Direction from the Board that a decision has been made to waive this test requirement for graduating students in the 2020/2021 school year who did not complete the test. This is due to the missed opportunity to write this past March when the test was cancelled because of school closures.

At this point, we are still moving forward for grade 11 students to complete this test this year – 2 part 2 day test which will be completed on-line at the beginning of quad 4.

IEPs – online distribution

Moving towards an online distribution of IEPs. Will be sent out in a virtual format with electronic signatures from parents. Basic format of document is similar to previous paper version.

Uniforms

We have moved to McCarthys for future uniforms.

Full black shoes still an area of contention and our current rules are school based. Concern around equity and inclusion and potential financial burden makes this bigger - discussion around the need for flexibility as stores closed and all black more difficult to find. Adriano will discuss with senior leadership.

School Enhancements: SGF funds

Continue to clean up the weight room – hoping to get fully open after school in September so students can be engaged.

Some funds will be used for graduation activities and mementos.

Decision has been made about the tech room #305 and #306. Due to ventilation, we have not been able to fully utilize all the equipment in there – laser printer, 3D printer, t-shirt press. We are going to move this equipment down to first floor #109 beside the auto/construction area. Wall has been moved to open the room and redesign the space. This will allow for proper ventilation and we will purchase new 3D printers and equipment. Will be ready for September and we are hoping to use this upgraded tech room to attract new students from our feeder schools.

We are buying frames to put up student art around the school.

L2L Tutoring

We have trained students – sponsored by Royal Bank - from grade 11, 12 to tutor students in grade 9, 10. The students are tutoring virtually, and the engagement is picking up momentum. This ties in with our mentoring program and has really helped our younger students.

IB exams

A decision has been made that IB exams will be cancelled. Final marks will be based on internal assessments, teacher input and algorithm from past work. Focus throughout May will be to keep students engaged.

OPEN DISCUSSION

Incoming grade 8 number of students is currently 285 - hoping to hit 300 by September. We are really working on promoting our school since more students means more teachers and more courses offered.

Culminating is coming up in a few weeks. Teachers will be updating students with dates.

English department is purchasing a variety of novels to offer students more diverse options to choose from. This year focus is on grade 10 and will expand every year.

Next Meeting TBC