

Newmarket High School
School Council
Minutes- Monday November 19, 2018

Acting Secretary: Tracey Cole

1. Welcome and call to order by Erik Gordon
2. Amendment to the minutes from Sept. 17/18: Tanya Gripich offered to serve our school council in the role as co-chair with Elisa Mobile. The remainder of the minutes from Sept. 17/18 were approved by Poupak Pournazari and seconded by Linda Gilbert.
3. The co-chairs meet with the principal 1-2 weeks prior to each scheduled council meeting. They review the last minutes, discuss any new issues and create an agenda for the next school council meeting. All members of the school, parents and community are welcome to add items to the agenda by contacting the principal or parent council. (school council email is: newmarket.hs2@sc.yrdsb.ca) The school administration team wants to create a **collaborative partnership** between school, families and the community.
4. Erik Gordon reviewed the **Multi-Year Strategic Plan 2018-2022**
 - Foster Well Being and Mental Health
 - Build Collaborative Relationships
 - Champion Equality and Inclusivity
 - Empower Ethical Leadership

Academic development occurs best when all of these areas are being met.

Details of this plan are available on the school website. This plan was created in part with consultation from town hall meetings from families and community members. Erik Gordon stressed that NHHS is working hard to foster collaboration with families and community. There is a focus in this Strategic Plan on underperforming and underserved students. Efforts are being

made to identify and best meet the needs of these students to close the gap. The community as a whole benefits when all students flourish.

5. Some of the **resources** available to help students are:

-peer mentoring: the program has changed and is now small groups rather than 1 on 1. The new system seems to be more effective and has received positive feedback. If you are interesting in becoming a peer mentor or need some assistance from a peer tutor, please contact guidance, or Ms. MacDonald or Mr. Horcsh. Teachers, Vice Principals and guidance counselors often recommend peer mentoring for students who need a bit of extra support.

-Most teachers are available either before, after or during lunch to assist students.

-Kahn Academy (www.khanacademy.org) is an online resource of videos that can assist students in all grades with math and science.

-Mathify (www.tvomathify.com) formerly MathHomeHelp.com is a free Ontario resource offering assistance in grade 7-10 math. Qualified teachers are available online to help students with their math.

-There are many resources available for students in and out of the school, but often the ones who need the most help do not advocate for themselves or take the initiative to seek help. The teachers and administrators at NHHS are committed to identify these children and help meet their needs.

-Families play an important role in the partnership of educating their children.

6. **Student Council Reports:** (Presented by Linda MacDonald on behalf of the Student Council)

Encourage your students to get involved and participate in spirit days!

-Nov. 22: Lumber Jack Day

-Nov. 30: PJ Day

-Nov. 26-30: Grad Photos in the Library Classroom

-Nov. 27: Club and Team Photos

- Dec. 12: Open House for Grade 8 students and families (6:30-8:30pm)
- Dec. 13, 14, 15: School Musical, "The Little Mermaid"
- Dec. 19: Music Night

7. **Grade 8 Open House:** Erik asked parents for feedback about how they felt about the Grade 8 Open House in the past. Parents provided very positive feedback with the suggestion of having less formal presentation at the beginning to allow for more time to tour the school and speak to teachers and students. Several parents voiced that they were impressed with the student ambassadors.

8. **School Council Annual Report:** Erik was unable to print hard copies of the report but will email it to the School Council then make it available on the school website.

9. **Principal Profile:** Each year every school council for each school in Ontario submits a Principal's Profile to their respective superintendent. Elisa Mobile spoke on behalf of the school council co-chairs and invited ALL NHHS families to participate in this sub-committee to create our principal profile. The meeting will be on Thursday December 6th at 6:30. The location will be determined soon. If you would like to attend or give your feedback, please contact newmarket.hs2@sc.yrdsb.ca. The purpose of this is to involve families and community in determining which characteristics are most valuable in a principal at THIS school. Reviewing the leadership framework that is used for hiring and evaluating school administrators may provide us with some areas to discuss in determining the needs at NHHS. Everyone is welcome to provide feedback. The superintendent reviews the principal profile that is submitted by each school council annually and it is one of the factors that is considered when placing principals in schools. An e-bulletin will go out next Friday November 30 with the details.

10. **Awards Ceremony:** Overall, the school has received positive feedback about the Awards Ceremony from families and students. This year it was a new format as it took place in the

evening and more students were able to be acknowledged on stage. The plan is to continue with this format in the future. Feedback is always appreciated.

11. Teacher Communication: Feedback appears to be strong by most parents about the communication between teachers and parents. Most parents report being happy with email as the primary form of communication with teachers as teachers are harder to reach by phone as they are in class teaching or helping students most of the day. Parents may wish to email a teacher with a request for the teacher to call the parent. If parents find that their emails are not being answered within 24 hours, they are welcome to let a vice principal know so that they may help.

12. Career Cruising to My Pathway Planner: Students have been given instructions to save their work on Career Cruising so it will be transferred to My Pathway Planner. Students who need assistance with this should see guidance for help.

13. Exams: The exam dates are set by the Ministry of Education. The exams for the first semester are January 24- January 30. The exam review day is January 31. The exam schedule will be issued in December. All students who are scheduled to write an exam are expected to do so except in extreme circumstances.

14. Regional School Council Forum: Elisa Mobile updated the group about the School Council Forum that Elisa Mobile, Tanya Gripich, Linda Gilbert, Linda MacDonald and Tracey Cole attended on November 5th. The participants learned about the **Board Improvement Plan** which is to focus on:

- Math

- Mental Health

- Modern Learning

- Indigenous Education and Equity

The Trustee's Multi-Year Strategic Plan focuses on:

- Foster Well Being and Mental Health
- Build Collaborative Relationships
- Champion Equality and Inclusivity
- Empower Ethical Leadership

There was a presentation about the Edsby platform with instructions of how to use the resource. There was also a presentation about equity, belonging and reconciliation. It was stressed that achievement comes *after* equity and belonging are felt. There were break-out sessions offered on the following topics:

- Inclusivity
- Indigenous Education
- Principal Profile
- Triple P Parenting

Our group had at least one member at each presentation.

15. **PRO Grant:** (Parents Reaching Out Grant) Tracey Cole spoke about the PRO Grant status. In the past, each school council in Ontario was able to apply for up to \$1000 in grant money to use toward parent education that aligned with the Ministry's focus (inclusivity, metal health etc.) In the past, the funds were used for guest speakers and workshops to help educate parents. The new Ontario government has put this funding on hold. We now need to be creative in utilizing the free resources that are available within our community to educate families.

16. **Newmarket Parents' Network (NPN):** The Newmarket Parents' Network is a group of parents from elementary and high schools in Newmarket. This group meets a few times each year and is a valuable resource. In the past, about 8-12 local schools applied for their PRO Grant and the school councils pooled the grant money through NPN members and arranged for guest speakers to come for the entire community rather than just the members of one school. This way, instead of having only one opportunity to attend parent education at your child's school, parents were invited to attend all of the events happening at all of the schools that chose to participate. It created a great deal of value and gave parents many opportunities. Now that we

don't have access to grant money, the NPN may still want to organize events that are provided free by our community contacts and continue to open it up to our partner schools. The first meeting for NPN is Saturday December 1st. Tracey Cole will be attending and will report back at our next council meeting.

16. School Council Learning Sessions Possibilities:

-Triple P Parenting is a free resource that could be arranged for our parent education.

They have a variety of topics that would be helpful regarding parenting teenagers.

Tracey will look into arranging this.

-Last year NHHS hosted Safe Talk to help parents understand how to talk about suicide.

It was presented by mental health professionals. It received excellent feedback so this may be possible again for this year.

-Social Media Fitness (possibly Chris Vollum) is another popular topic.

-York Regional Police did a great presentation about substance use and abuse last year and we would like to have them do something similar again.

-CAMH is another idea

-Erik indicated that NHHS is available to host events on Thursday evenings as the school has permits for the other evenings.

17. New Business: Linda Gilbert- Parental Consultation: Linda made the group aware that the Ontario government is inviting parents to provide feedback about the following topics: financial literacy, parents' bill of rights, STEM programming, sex education, skilled workforce, standardized testing and technology/cell phone use in the classroom. There are town hall meetings that you can dial into or there is a survey at www.ontario.ca/page/for-the-parents Consultation closes Dec. 15, 2018.

18. Erik Gordon moved that the meeting be adjourned, and was seconded by Leslie Travatto. Our next meeting will be January 8, 2019.