

# Thornhill Secondary School Parent Council Meeting

## Minutes – May 3, 2018

### 1. Welcome

Co-chair Anna Sit welcomed everyone to this evening's parent council meeting.

### 2. Outdoor Classroom presentation

- Idea of outdoor classroom is to enrich school environment & foster a sense of community.
- Designs for outdoor classroom have recently been approved by the Board, but garden plans have not yet been approved.
- Students hope to have construction started before the end of this year, or at least, to have all the money collected.
- Estimated cost is \$30,000. Students will be applying for grants.
- Teaching staff Ms. Koslowska and Ms. Earle are also involved with this project.

### 3. "One to One" school presentation, by Heather Leatham & Jatin Patel, teaching staff

- Electronic devices are a very important tool in teaching now. Teachers and students are using technology within the curriculum for a variety of subjects. For example, business students use software to access accounting programs. Deep learning is enhanced by technology.
- TSS is considering having each student bring a device to school to aid in learning. 4 other secondary schools are implementing "one to one" program for technology. Instead of having a teacher install software on all the school computers, students will be given a code to access and download software to their devices.
- Pros: over half of TSS students bring their own devices now. Students can use the devices they own, and may prefer to use software with which they are already familiar. Students are more careful with their own devices. This program will encourage teaching staff to incorporate technology into their lessons. Students may be more receptive when teachers ask them to close down their devices. Program would reduce school costs for maintaining school devices. Technology tends to be more 'cutting-edge' and better-maintained when it comes from student's home and the infrastructure is already in place. Plan will cost money initially, but save money in the long run. School would save paper. Rooms that have computers in them now could be re-purposed, and so could the computers. Chromebooks are fairly cheap (around \$250) and are adequate to aid in learning.
- Cons: Some students won't be able to afford their own devices. Students may be easily distracted by the devices. Applications and tools may not be universal. IT support will not be available. Storage and safekeeping of devices may be problematic. There may be issues related to online safety and privacy. Need to consider our 'digital footprint'.
- Getting started: Students sign a Technology Acceptable Use agreement. Students would learn about 'digital citizenship'.
- If students don't have devices, they can sign out devices already in the school (e.g. chromebooks, laptops, i-Pads). This would apply more if students forget their devices at home.

#### **4. Approval of February 15 and March 29, 2018 Meeting Minutes**

- Clarification to February 15 minutes: By summer, TSS will conduct feasibility studies with respect to air conditioning to see if it can be installed in a few years' time. Both sets of minutes were approved with clarification.

#### **5. Treasurer's Report for February 15 to March 29, 2018 – presented by Anna Sit**

- Current Parent Council budget from fundraising = \$3196.66.
- Pro-grant balance after presentation = \$343.33. These funds will go back to the Ministry of Education unless they are spent by Parent Council. Parent Council will spend this money on Parent Handbooks for school.
- Parent Council board acct. (petty cash) – balance is \$733.06. Parent Council will give \$100 to Breakfast program and the rest will go to support Parent Handbooks. School will support breakfast program.

#### **6. BOSS Update – not presented as no BOSS representatives were at meeting.**

#### **7. Administration's Report – Mr. David McAdam**

- Prom takes place on May 10. It is earlier than usual due to Ramadan.
- Graduation is on Wednesday, June 27<sup>th</sup> at Terrace Banquet Centre, at Rutherford and Creditstone.
- Exams start on Wednesday, June 20. Order of exams: subjects from periods 5, 1, 2, 3, and last, 4.
- Administration is looking to provide accommodation of extra time for EQAO when needed. This will affect grade 9 EQAO math students. Students will be grouped together to write EQAO test over 1-2 periods. Grade 9 math will be written in the semester the student takes it. An IEP will not be required to receive extra time; the student can ask for extra time during the test.
- EDSBY software has been introduced to elementary schools in York Region. Eventually, it will be used as the communication tool for grades K-12. All schools should be online with EDSBY by September 2019. School is looking at best way to opt in. Parents can give input about which features we want to see.
- Projections in terms of staffing: TSS is expecting just under 1000 students next year. Traditionally we have had between 1050 and 1100 students, so this is below the status quo. School needs to declare some teachers surplus. 8 teachers were declared surplus at the end of April, and will be looking for work in other schools for Sept. 2018. TSS teachers have been told which departments they will be connected with next year.
- This past Tuesday, there was a leadership camp for subject heads to support learning for next year.
- Staff members are working on next year's school calendar.

#### **8. Council Topics**

- a. Review of March presentation by Kate Jones & Associates - 11 parents attended. Attendance was less than we had hoped for, but it was the day before the Easter & Passover holidays, and the weather was poor. Presenters were knowledgeable and entertaining and the presentation went well!
- b. Parent Symposium: This took place on April 4<sup>th</sup>. It opened with 30 minutes of drumming. Then, speakers from the Indigenous Community spoke for 20 minutes. Presentation from the Ministry of Education took 20 minutes. Michelle Cassidy spoke about mindfulness and being present 'in the moment'. The food was good!
- c. Parent Handbook will be printed in different languages with money donated by the Parent Council.
- d. June 7 Parent Council meeting has been cancelled.
- e. Staff Appreciation Breakfast will take place on Thursday, June 28 at 8:35 a.m. for 90 staff. Please contact Anna Sit if you would like to help out at this event!

Have a great summer!