

Thornhill Secondary School Parent Council Meeting

Minutes - October 11, 2018

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks – Anna Sit (Chair of Parent Council) and Ms. Ziegler (principal) welcomed parents and TSS staff to meeting.

2. Approval of September 2018 Minutes – Minutes were approved.

3. Treasurer's Report (Caryn)

- ☐ School Council fundraising has yielded \$1896.66.
- ☐ Pro-grant fund amount: \$1000.
- ☐ School Council Fund amount: \$500.

4. BOSS (Student Council) Update – Presented by Bob Pang

- ☐ Terry Fox Carnival – received great feedback & everyone had fun.
- ☐ House System for TSS was introduced: 4 houses named after seasons and based on student's birth month.
- ☐ Movie night: Next Thursday. Grade 9 students can go for free.
- ☐ Annual semi-formal is coming up.
- ☐ Grade 9 BOSS Senators for this year are Eric Zhang and Sarah Rong.

5. Administration's Report – Presented by Debbie Ziegler, Mr. Ganeshalingam and Ms. Vatousis.

- ☐ September has been a busy month!
- ☐ There are new welcome mats at the front doors.
- ☐ Most of the door locks work. Doors in the whole school have been re-keyed.
- ☐ There are new rolling doors in the autoshop.
- ☐ Presentations: Two women from Jack.org spoke to all grades about youth and mental health. The focus was on breaking the stigma associated with mental health issues and asking for help.
- ☐ There was a talk by a residential school survivor. There will be an orange shirt day in support of residential school survivors. TSS staff will receive training about indigenous issues so they will be better equipped to teach about them.
- ☐ Holocaust Education Week is in November. There may be a talk by a Holocaust survivor.
- ☐ Hand in Hand (group from ESL department) is hosting an after-school Hallowe'en Party. This is a group of newcomer students supporting each other.
- ☐ Semi-Formal will take place at Paramount Banquet Hall. Will cost \$45-50 if student has paid the activity fee and \$20 more if student has not. It's open to all grades. Will include dinner and dancing.
- ☐ Quest Conference takes place in November. Hosts 1000 educators from all over the world. TSS will provide 15 students in grades 9-12 as volunteers to accompany the staff. Students will thank the speakers and will take part in a leadership workshop. Students enter conference for free and can hear presentations from all the speakers. There will be speakers in the morning and workshops in the afternoon.
- ☐ March break student trip to London, Paris and Amsterdam will likely be approved by the Board of Education over the next 24 hours. With regards to a trip within Canada, the Music Department might take students to Nova Scotia for a music festival in the spring. Yesterday, YRDSB re-instated trips to the USA, unless what students are going to see is available in Canada too, in which case they will stay in Canada.

- ❑ West School Council Forum: Happens twice a year, and all west area schools come together. TSS is in the west area. First forum will take place on Monday October 29, 2018 at Maple High School from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Forum consists of a meeting and a choice of various workshops (e.g. equity mental health). There will be a presentation on EDSBY. Each school can send administration staff and parents. We can take 5 parents. School Council executives are expected to come. Dinner will be provided. Please send Ms. Ziegler any dietary restrictions.
- ❑ 'Every Student Counts' Survey is coming in November. This is a YRDSB initiative. Object is to gather data from every student at TSS. It will be done online during a class. Students can choose not to participate or parent can request that child be excused from taking it. Survey will take on average 30 minutes to complete. Demographic data (e.g. race) will be gathered. Information gathered will be confidential but not anonymous. Each student will get a number with which to sign in. If a student says something that is deemed to be concerning, the YRDSB will give TSS information about who said it. TSS admin gets aggregate information. There are two different elementary surveys, and a different one for high school.
- ❑ There will be a Remembrance Day program on the Friday before Remembrance Day.
- ❑ Ms. Ziegler is looking for a good motivational speaker for this year.
- ❑ Ms. Ziegler feels the student leaders at TSS are fantastic. They think outside the box and then work hard to achieve their goals. Ms. Ziegler wants to build capacity, i.e. For the graduating students to help the younger students get involved.
- ❑ A new teacher was hired two weeks ago. TSS has a regional ELL program. TSS received 15 new refugee students from all areas of York Region. They are from Iran and Syria, aged 14-18, who speak very little English. TSS has trauma counsellors for them. A few more students are still to come. There were new classrooms 'recovered' at TSS for them.

6. Grade 10 OSSLT Presentation – by Kim Earle (subject head for Geography and Literacy Lead at TSS)

- ❑ OSSLT is a requirement for graduation on Ontario Secondary School Diploma
- ❑ Focus is on the literate graduate.
- ❑ This year, OSSLT will take place on March 27, 2019.
- ❑ OSSLT measures whether or not students are meeting the minimum standard for literacy across all subjects up to the end of grade 9. It consists of 4 booklets. Test lasts 2.5 hours but last year, all students had extra time. Students are encouraged to go back and re-read their answers.
- ❑ Reading selections: information paragraph, news report, dialogue, real-life narrative, graphic text. Questions are multiple choice and open response (6 lines each).
- ❑ Writing tasks: 2 long writing tasks and 2 short writing tasks and multiple choice questions.
- ❑ Need mark of 300/400; 70% (level 3) is a pass. Parents should receive marks in June.
- ❑ Last year, 160 TSS students wrote OSSLT; 91% were successful. Males and females performed equally well. 94% of academic English students were successful. 71% of students in special education with accommodations were successful.
- ❑ Students complete a survey afterward.
- ❑ Can go to EQAO website for information. EQAO publishes sample test questions.
- ❑ Preparation: TSS runs an after-school literacy program. 10 sessions, in semesters 1 & 2. Ms. Earle has sign-up forms. Runs from 3:30 to 5 p.m. Program works on building literacy skills.
- ❑ If student is previously eligible, can re-write if not successful, or did not have enough English skills to write it in grade 10.

7. Council Topics

- Fundraising letter – Draft was reviewed by council members and changes were suggested. Staff will be asked for their 'wish lists' (what to spend fundraising money on).
- Last year's school council report: Question: Should we allocate funds (percentage of fundraising dollars) to YRDSB Trust Fund? After MUCH discussion, Council voted to say 'no' for now, and if we have some money left over later in the year, we can donate what we choose to the trust fund.

Contact: Thornhill.ss@sc.yrdsb.ca.

Next Meeting: Thursday January 17th, 2019 in the school library.

Upcoming Council Dates for 2018/2019:

- December – no meeting
- January 17
- February 14 (cancelled)
- March 28
- April – no meeting
- May 2
- June 6