

Unionville High School **School Council**

MEETING 01/20/2020

20 January 2020 / 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm / UHS Library

ATTENDEES

Felix, Jeevan, Nadine, Sueelyn, Sara, Candy, Patrick

Parents: 41

AGENDA

- 6:00 – 6:30 p.m. Mix and Mingle - Come enjoy some light refreshments and connect with other parents.
- 6:30 – 7:00 p.m. Admin Update – Substance Misuse (Vaping webinar)
- Padlet Parent Questions Answered by Admin
- 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. Revisioning UHS School Community Come join us for an interactive discussion as we explore “our” definition of Community (conducted in English and Chinese) and work towards an understanding of the members that comprise our community. ○ How do we create spaces of belonging for everyone where diverse groups can work and talk together to promote discussion and acceptance of differences? ○ What do those spaces look like? ○ Who are the students, family and staff in our community?

Minutes:

- Minutes from last meeting approved
- Parents should be getting a Friday weekly bulletin. If you are not getting it, you should contact Sueelyn and she will take your email.
- **Admin Updates**
 - Upcoming dates
 - Festive Luna New Year Events - Jan 20 and 21, period 3 & 4
 - Day in the life experience of international students (Beijing, Taiwan beginning school this week) This week is orientation week for them. Learn about the school, and develop buddies.
 - EQAO is canceled
 - Exams Jan 23 -29 exam schedule is available in office There will be no

strike during the exam. If there is inclement weather, then exam will be moved to another day.

- Exam Review Day - modified schedule
- AU Auditions Jan 23-29
- PA Day Jan 31
- Monday Feb 3 Semester 2 Begins
- Monday Feb 10 - School Council Meeting ○ UHS
Students Council USAC Update
 - World Mental Health Day (Oct 10) working to prevent suicide (dealing with anxieties etc). There is a mental health program with the Wellness Council. It is a student council. It provides ways for communication of issues/concerns and in creating positive experience with students
 - Food Drive in Dec - raised over 3000 cans (far surpass the 2000 goals).
 - Future plans
 - Valentine day market (Feb 14) and semi-formal (target Feb 27, Crystal fountain - not yet confirmed.) More information will be available once teacher availability to supervise is confirmed.

• Staffing Updates

- Sandie Zhang (currently LTO for Jerry Berridge) ○
- Retirements : Lyn Ogilvy, Terry Wollenzien ○ Yachna Minhas, Beckey Serwaa on maternity leave ○
- Clemansa Hlevca on family leave ○ We are posting six LTOs for semester 2 ○ 42 new students joining for semester 2 (international)

• **Exam schedule** - periods 1 (Thurs), 2 (Fri), 5 (Mon), 3(Tues), 4(Wed) This is already included the parent bulletin so parents can refer to it.

• **Important Note:**! In Feb - information will be available for courses being offered by UHS for Sept 2020. Guidance will come and present on the next Student Council (Feb 10)). Students will be given info by Guidance. This information will be published in the parents bulletin.

• **Vaping Video** URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uXzLt8roFWs&feature=youtu.be>
Parents please view and you can use this to communicate with your children.

- It is coming from more an adult point of view. ○
- The board is working on a student version of this.

• Padlet Parent Questions Answered by Admin

- **Can you talk about the Unionville STEM program?**

This is new to UHS, grade 9 can join, More can be found on <http://www.yrdsb.ca/schools/unionville.hs/Pages/default.aspx> Brochure here STEM Brochure & Program Details ○ UHS is the first school in Markham secondary to have a

STEM program (also available in
Richmond
)

- No students are excluded (based on language, or any EP)
- No exam to write.
- Teachers went out to grade 8 night to visit. ○ **How do grade 9 students register for STEM projects?**
 - Parents and Guardians can register their child using the following link on UHS website
 - Current grade 9 UHS students must click here to register STEM Registration Online Form STEM Registration Online Form 2019/2020
 - May need to cap at some level. Grade 9 can apply anytime.
- **The STEM program requires** to have 4 math, 4 science, a computer elective and a tech elective. There is a cross curricular project and other activities. These will be tracked so students will be able to achieve the STEM designation. ○ If fees are required, notes will be sent to the parents.

• **Revisioning UHS School Community (led by Sarah Leung)** Sara Presented (SEAS South East Asian), look at the specific needs of these communities. How to make students feel part of the community?

- Two questions
 - What does community mean to you
 - Why is building community important
- Parents were invited to write down their view
- Redefining community: the why
 - Responding to a changing world:
 - Instantaneous communication with people around the world
 - Transportation systems that increase mobility (community is changing)
 - International trade systems have created an interdependent global economy. This affects our view of the job market and skills required, how to cooperate across Geos. ○ How we used to think of community has to be changed. ○ Demographic has changed drastically
 - Population of York Region grew from 1971 0.16 million to 1.1 million in 2016.
 - 36k to 300k in Markham
 - 90% in Markham are Canadian, but about half is born outside of Canada
 - Languages: Cantonese, Mandarin, Farsi, Russian, Italian, Tamil, Korean, Urdu, Spanish, Punjabi.
 - Household with young people living alone has gone up, as well as multiple families, and single parent family. Staff, parents, students are now from very different background.
- Used to be community is a group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristics in common. Our families and students are geographically connected.

- Residents in Markham
- Family members of YRDSB, of students of UHS
- School populations are increasingly more diverse. They reflect sites of multilingual, multifaith and multicultural diversity
- We are more aware than ever before that there are multiple ways of thinking, knowing, believing and being in the world. ○ How to support our students in this setting?
- **What does community mean?**
 - Community is ultimately how people feel and experience their daily lives in school. ○ There are issues of discrimination, sometimes not a sense of belonging.
 - What are some strengths and concerns, and issues for the community? ○ **Past understanding of community = sameness**
 - Acceptance based on agreed beliefs, values, practices, behaviors.
 - Processes that create community boundaries based on sameness
 - Cooperation = agreement
 - We want to work on this to make everyone belong ○
- Visioning an Inclusive Approach to Community**
 - Respect for differences based on validation and affirmation. We include each other.
 - Process that promote understanding of others, inclusion of all and valuing of difference as assets. How do we talk to each other to understand the differences? How do we design program to include everyone?
 - Cooperation within difference through an ethics of peaceful cooperation and healthy tension. How to talk about differences and understand someone else. How do we support specific community without looking like providing special treatment. As long as we work towards the welfare of the group (our children/students) then it is healthy
 - Sense of belonging is FOR ALL.
- To better support your child's well-being and sense of belonging at school, what should UHS staff and community leaders know about:
 - Your child and family experience
 - Your community's strengths and challenges.
 - Parents discussed in groups of 5-7, and then shared.
 - Findings
 - Kids do feel safe and have sense of belonging. While there are a lot of kids from the same background, there is also diversity.
 - Kids don't want to communicate with parents - difficulties communicate with school.
 - Funding question - how to ensure school gets properly covered
 - How to make kids belong from the get go (more for grade 9-10). Some suggestions:
 - Table tennis - need 3 (for different expertise levels) ○
 - Community meals, not so much a pot luck but something across

different groups ○ Houses (as in Harry Potter) - set up houses? A sense of community within the houses.

- Lunch - does cafeteria offer ethnic food?
- Student experience - guidance on course selection, how children can be guided. Students sometimes find it hard to access, what to do if they are interested in multiple streams (aptitude test).
- Conversation like this is good to enhance communication.

Next School Council Meeting Feb

10