

School Council MEETING 11/25

25 November 2019 / 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm / UHS Library

ATTENDEES

Felix Lee, Isabelle Tremblay, Nadine Cyr, Suelyn Chong

AGENDA

1. 6:30 - 7:00 p.m Administration updates

a. Student updates b. Principal – Suelyn Cheong:

- Staffing updates
- Facility updates

• UHS goals c. Padlet Questions 2. 7:00 - 8:00 p.m Reconceptualizing School Council and Community :

Presentation from Inclusive School and Community Services - Sara Leung

Minutes:

Due to the level of attendance, the agenda was modified. The Padlet section was not covered. Sara's portion was also modified. She did not go through her planned presentation but simply talked with the group about Inclusive Community.

1. Update from Nadine from the School Council Forum meeting held on Nov 11. Felix and Nadine and Mr. Belmonte attended.

a. A Video on Vaping was shown. We had a chance to discuss it with other parents. Ideas were generated, having students to present the videos. b. There were 4 sessions

i. Effective, Inclusive School Councils - strategies that work ii. Mental health iii. Problematic gaming iv. TVO – Digital Math c. We presented on item i) we discussed what we are doing here in UHS such as

i. Grade 9 introduction booklet ii. Jop carousel iii. Involving Alumni. d. Met with our Superintendent Becky Green, talked about follow up. e. There were interests from other schools to perhaps work together for some items.

2. We did not have students update (not able to join)

3. Principal Updates (Suelyn)

a. OSSTF Work-to-rule update

i. There is no effect on student's day to day learning. Get attention from

Administration. There is no difference, except there is no after school meeting. ii. Extracurricular activities are NOT affected. They will go on as usual. iii. In the morning there might be picketing. Probably handing out pamphlets, and they may also be there after school. iv. Give yourself another 15 minutes for potential traffic. UHS may be targeted.

v. Students' learning is not affected. vi. Communication will come from YRDSB, not UHS b. Staffing Updates

i. There has been a number of changes. Communication would have gone to the parents. ii. Other teacher goes on maternity leave – will hire someone similar for one term to ensure there's a good fit. iii. There is a freeze on hiring, no contract teacher can be hired. Only allowed to fill

contractor with LTO (Long Term Occasional Teacher). c. Facility Updates

i. The roof has been leaking. A contractor has come in to look at it. ii. Looking at installing blinds for security reasons. iii. If there is a lockdown – need to ensure there are blinds in the open area. iv. To address students spending too much time on phones etc, facilities are added such as brand new ping-pong table; 2 new Connect-Four games; chess/board games – to let students socialize instead of games.

4. Reconceptualizing School; Council and Community

a. The official presentation will move to the next meeting in Jan 2020 b. Sara went through the Inclusive design

i. Support schools via projects like the inclusive design. Create a space for all learners and develop a sense of belonging. What are group challenges? How to work collaboratively so everyone feels they belong and they are valued. ii. **Pilot Program** starting with UHS last year (about 20 schools). It will run for 2 years. However, that is the information-gathering phase. The Inclusive program will be ongoing.

There is a team of staff getting specific learning. Looking at school practices in the classroom, program/initiative schoolwise. Find out who is in the community, what are the strengths and challenges of the community, who are the learners, who are the families, how to engage the community.

How to bring in parents/families and community organizations to be part of that conversation.

What do we believe the community to mean? How to bring student/family/staff voice – so all of the different groups can have a conversation, dialogue. What kind of changes do we want to see?

c. How to build an inclusive model in 6 threads

i. Engaging parents, families, elders, and community.

One is how to engage the community. Part of this is involvement, how do we raise involvement. How do we remove barriers? ii. Designing the instructional program

Does it reflect the characteristics and needs of the students, who they are, their history, their learning?

The curriculum usually provides broad expectations. We need to fit it to the characteristics of the UHS community. The curriculum is meant to serve different communities with a different focus.

Why are students not learning? Who's voice is not heard and silenced?

Looking at school data. Who are the successful/not successful – what are common threads? What do we need to support them? UHS has students who are here on their own away from family. Need to address mental health issues (it is present). iii.

Establishing an environment as the third teacher iv. Building leadership and capacity

v. Analyzing data vi. Engaging and responding to student's voice

Student Voice – started 3 years ago to collect student voices. Each Home Room will provide a representative (voted for). Once every 6 weeks to have a conversation with admin.

However, this (like student council) tend to only capture the popular and vocal group of students. It is not capturing the voice of needs of many who are simply too quiet or are not selected for representation based on various factors, in particular, those whose first language is not English.

We will need to continue to work with the community to find the most effective way to find a truly representative view. The school will look into action plans based on the needs of the community.

5. Additional discussions

a. School Council – a good place to communicate with the school. b. There are large parents WeChat groups (over 400 members) so there are a lot of

conversations happening outside of school councils or with the school. Sometimes there are wrong answers being circulated. c. How to encourage parents to engage? d. Can consider engaging in different ways (flexible with format and time), using tools such

as zoom or google hangout. e. It can also include programs in each meeting that will interest a broader set of parents:

Student presentation, department presentation, items that the parents are interested in.

f. Grade 9 Booklet – meant to be a one-stop-shop for a broad community (especially those who may not be comfortable communicating/asking verbally). But also need to be careful to ensure the right information is communicated correctly. g. Need time to earn the trust of the community.