

Bendale BTI School Council

MINUTES

March 22, 2018

**Present:** Tammy Price (Bendale BTI Council Chair), Rick MacDonald, Marie Coltman, Ms. Dunlop (Bendale BTI Staff Rep), Colin Dye (Principal/Bendale BTI), Zoran Pejovic (VP/Bendale BTI), Peter Harrison (Bendale BTI Staff Rep) Lynn Bellingher, Val Lusted (Bendale BTI Council Secretary), Selma, Annie Lucas, Chi Nguyen, Michel Lachance, Dorothy Michez (Thomson Collegiate Council Chair), Lori Davis  
**Guest:** Shirley Chan, Superintendent/TDSB

*\*It is noted that not all participants were recorded on the attendance sheet. Several were new parents from Bendale BTI, others were guests from Thomson Collegiate Administration, Staff Reps and Council parents.*

1.0 Welcome/Introductions

2.0 Minutes of Last Meeting- January 9/18—approval of the minutes deferred but electronic copies have been distributed to the Council email list and posted on the School school website.

3.0 Old Business

4.0 New Business

4.1 FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS FOR SHIRLEY CHAN, SUPERINTENDANT

In keeping with the Bendale spirit, the parents of the School Council posed the following questions:

A. as per your last visit, the school will have many more outlets to accommodate students especially those with special needs that have much needed electronic devices.

*WiFi; lots of outlets; working closely re inventory (ongoing); use of SEA claim devices to continue; some options re students to bring their own devices the Board and its reps are seeking out potential partnerships to help supplement resources available to students; Spec Ed consultants for both schools plus feeder schools are involved in the process (ongoing)*

B. Also to confirm for those parents missing at a previous Council meeting, Welding, Plumbing and Automotive will not be offered. How will this impact course selection in February 2019 for September 2019?

*Alternative options in the area will be explored in consultation with Board reps; specialist majors already exist at Thomson—health & wellness plus others with co-ops—will continue;  
Some parents in the audience reiterated past concerns re their children had chosen Bendale specifically for the welding, plumbing & automotive options  
Churchill, Woburn, Cedarbrae have automotive courses currently  
Board is moving forward with "universal design" course delivery to help accommodate the array of spec ed needs re locally developed, academic & applied levels of students' needs  
Some students might stay at the new school in the morning then go to alternate schools for their other courses, not offered at the new school; board transportation will be available for students who need this level of support  
Will establish a 'go to' team of Board consultants to sort through the unique needs of each student's pathway  
Only one other school in the Board (Central Tech) currently offers machine shop  
Final details re course selection in the new school will be available in Feb 2019 for Sept 2019—this is a routine process re the Board evaluates annually its course demands, resource availability, etc as part of its overall planning tasks  
Open lab space in the new building will provide some flexibility for course determination as per future planning/future students' needs*

Parents appreciate the array of tech courses 'sampled' by Bendale's current course availability to help students determine their interests and skills 'fit'—they would strongly recommend these types of 'sampling' opportunities continue as much as possible, especially for students with spec ed needs who may have limited university bound options

Community input+++ over many years has gone into the planning for this new school

Thomson's current robotics program has 'exploded' over recent years since its inception—this will now be more readily available for Bendale Students too

Currently, some Thomson students attend Bendale's automotive classes (when Thomson had to close this course at their site)

Thomson has already lost its machine shop *Auto shop*

Every school faces the same annual challenge—courses are offered as per enrollment and course selection minimums are demonstrated

C. How is Bendale currently being promoted due to the fact the above classes will no longer be offered in September of 2019? Our current grade 9 parents had no idea of this when they chose Bendale for their students last year.

~~Available~~ Available courses will be published in Feb 2019  
*This question was not directly addressed. for the new school. Guidance counsellors for the elementary schools will be involved in this process.*

D. Is there any further update on the process of the combined School name?

Nil—as per previous meeting with Shirley Chan October 3, 2017

E. Are there any considerations given on how to bring the two schools together?

We were thinking of joint celebrations for the two schools to get to know each other and to also include the community. Example: at the end of the school year in 2019 both schools walk over to the new school and join as one.

Orientation activities for both student populations; already have joint swim teams; ski trips; wrestling teams; Thomson's May Fair—how to include Bendale students at this social event?

Local summer school at Thomson will be open to Bendale students; for some gr 8 students coming into high school--focus on literacy, numeracy skills

Focus on Youth Toronto—open to both Thomson and Bendale students—paid work experience over the summer months (handout distributed to those present)

Bendale Council parents are interested in open invitation for Thomson Council parents to join their ongoing Council meetings over the next year; perhaps Council members from both schools can explore a Pro Grant funded joint initiative to foster/enhance joint parent engagement in the new school transition

Both school communities have students with high anxiety/transition support needs

Bendale Council parents feel their strong advocacy expertise can be a 'value add' for Thomson Council parents—still some anxiety about the larger school population in the new school—will exclusion incidents increase in a 'larger melting pot' for our kids; reassurances offered re staff/student ratios, social workers, etc available through the Board

Facts: Over 80% Bendale students are on IEP's; Approx 40% Thomson students are on IEP's

Thomson staff spoke passionately about inclusion successes of their current students—students with MID's, LD's, DD's

Other handouts distributed to those present included a visual aid "Pyramid of Intervention" to reflect Thomson staff's dedication to student success across the spectrum of needs

Also see question G below

F. The Graduating class of 2019 are worried they will have to graduate in the new school that they did not attend. (Commencement usually takes place in November following the end of classes in June. I have been advised by my own graduating student that he will not attend if it is held in the new school.) The students think it would be nice to have their commencement at Bendale in June 2019. Is this okay with the Board?

*Many schools already have June commencements—it's up to Bendale -planning for this change is underway  
Thomson is also planning to have a June commencement*

G. a) "In keeping with the recently released *Enhancing Equity* report from the Director of Education of the TDSB, what specific plans are in place to build the capacity of teaching staff to enable them to provide the best possible teaching methods aimed at adequately supporting special education students within an inclusive education environment at the new school?

b) how will special education students like those currently at Bendale BTI, be supported in engaging with "mainstream" students in all aspects of school life? (ie. within an integrated classroom setting, during extracurricular activities, etc.)

c) please tell us more about inclusive education and its benefits and how best practice will be implemented at the new school for our children?"

*Board wide-innovative, inclusive ed initiatives, professional development activities re using technology for ALL students' successes*

*See question E above*

H. What options exist for students with exceptionalities to be exempt from mandatory French in Gr. 9 when the new school opens?

*If students have an exceptionality, could give a GLE (Learning Strategies Course) to substitute for this mandatory course*

I. How is staffing going to be managed as the two school communities merge?

*This will be decided through collective agreements next year*

*Consolidation will mean staffing changes and administrative changes as per every school planning year*

*Staffing is based on enrollment as well as the types of student needs*

*Fall Council meeting-consider joint f/u session with Project Lead re the new building*

5.0 Last Council Meeting - Tuesday, May 8th, 6 pm \*\*\*ALL WELCOME—Contact the School Council Chair c/o of the office if you have an agenda item to include

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