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# BPCI School Council Meeting Minutes

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*PENDING APPROVAL*

*Sept. 18, 2019, 6:45 p.m.*

## **In Attendance**

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Mary-Ann Settrington – SC Chair, Gloria Morgan, Lana Miller, Olga Ingrahm, Kim Rainford Ying Ong, Carol Warner, Susan Deering, Ellen Austrom – Principal, Debora Ferrari – V.P., David Fewson – V.P.

## **1. Welcome – Mary-Ann Settrington, 2018/2019 Co-Chair**

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### **2. Round Table Introductions**

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- BPCI admin was represented by Ellen Austrom, Principal, Debora Ferrari, V.P. and David Fewson, V.P.
- David Fewson, V.P.
  - David is new to BPCI, but not to the position of V.P. working previously at West Hill Collegiate Institute and Don Mills Collegiate Institute.
  - One of the new initiatives at BPCI is a renewed presence in the hallways, walking the entire school once a period – pop into classrooms, check the washrooms, etc. – great way to meet the kids.
  - There’s concern from the parents at the meeting that the grade 9 kids are intimidated by the washrooms – by the bigger kids hanging out and vaping in the washrooms. David said that all schools are having problems with vaping. At BPCI if kids are caught vaping the vape pen is taken away and not given back – that is the first consequence.
  - There is also a big push on attendance and arriving to class on time and a new initiative is attendance letters. If a child is absent or late for a minimum of 5 classes in any class, a letter will be mailed out to the parents to inform them.
  - David is also working on another communication initiative that he hopes to talk about at the next meeting.
- Debora Ferrari:
  - Debora is in her third year at BPCI and she’s pleased that the school year has been off to a wonderful start. She praised the student’s participation in the Terry Fox Run, spearheaded by Ms. Ireland and her leadership class.
  - Debora has been visiting grade 9 homerooms with a survey to get their feedback on questions like “in my classroom I care a lot about ...”, what would be on their wish list for things to participate in at school (late starts were at the top of the list!) and what they need to be successful students, etc.

### **3. Principals Update – Ellen Austrom**

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- Ellen said it’s been a good start to the new school year – the grade 9 students are awesome.
- The school is well enrolled and most classes are full – there have been few timetable changes.

- BPCI's website has been updated to make it easier to access the information – Ellen updates the main “landing page” of the website monthly.
- The Curriculum Night for the grade 9 students is Wed. Sept. 25<sup>th</sup> – Ellen will have information about the evening up on the website soon.
- School was unable to give out the BPCI calendar magnets this year because the vendor has discontinued them – have to make do with a paper copy this year – noted that it should be updated to have the school phone number on it for easy access for parents looking to call the school.
- There is a strong peer leaders group this year run by the Guidance Department. The peer leaders are doing homeroom visits and are planning a grade 9 day on Sept. 26<sup>th</sup> with fun activities to build school spirit, etc.
- Carol asked about the repercussions for students fighting in the school – Ellen responded that each case is looked at individually. Staff try to coach, mentor and return students to the classroom with clear expectations of how to behave. BPCI follows all the TDSB protocols and parents and students should know that there may be consequences that are not obvious.
- Ying asked about the access to technology in the classroom – e.g. looking up something for class on your phone. Staff will set clear expectations that students will not use phones in class. On a subject by subject basis there may be the use of phones for research – in a math class students may use their phone as a calculator and in French they may use it for Google Translate. The school library has a series of workshops to get the grade 9's into the library, the school has Google carts and there's a computer lab upstairs – so there are lots of ways of accessing technology. The school is working on establishing norms around technology in the classroom. Students with IEPs may require computers and there's a cart where they can sign a laptop out at the start of the day and sign it back in at the end of the day. There's a concern that students who don't have phones will be left out because they are unable to participate at the same level as kids with phones – school admin and teachers are very aware of this and take workshops on equity and bias as to better deal with those kinds of situations in the classroom.
- Regarding unauthorized cell phone use during class – staff have been going into grade 9 classrooms to make sure they know the general expectations of school, including classroom cell phone use. If the student refuses to put their phone away during a class they are sent to the school office where the phone is taken away until the end of the day, at which point there's a discussion with the student. So far, there have only been a few students sent to the office because of classroom cell phone use.

#### **4. Review of SC Constitution & Standing Committees**

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- Copies of the BPCI SC Constitution and By-Laws were passed out to the new parents. Mary-Ann asked parents to review the Constitution and bring any questions to the next meeting.
- Mary-Ann briefly ran through the Standing Committees and encouraged any parent who may have an interest in spearheading a committee to take the lead. The only active committee that has a parent lead is the Caring & Safe Schools Committee with parent Avinash Sudama.

#### **5. Discuss Election of School Council Officers to 2019/2020 School Council**

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- The positions of School Council Chair (or two Co-Chairs) and Secretary are vacant (with Mary-Ann filling in for both until those positions are filled). While the Constitution calls for a

Treasurer, because any SC funds are handled through Ellen, there isn't a need for a Treasurer. The positions of Chair/Co-Chairs and Secretary will be filled at the next SC meeting on October 16, 2019.

## **6. Discussion – 2019/2020 SC Parent Workshops & Fundraising**

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- The provincial government hasn't made any announcements about making the Parents Reading Out (PRO) Grants available this year, so our budget this year is \$0.00.
- Mary-Ann has reached out to John Westland, a social worker in the Substance Abuse Program at the Hospital for Sick Kids and he is happy to give a talk at BPCI (for free!). He will talk about substance use by teens – what kids are using and why. He also makes himself available to speak directly to students during the school day and interested teachers. Mary-Ann will follow up with John and see if he's available in November.
- Kim offered to contact Toronto Public Health and arrange to have a speaker come to the school in February for a parent workshop (also free!). It was suggested that they speak about mental health and anxiety, since anxiety in students increases in February, especially with grade 12 students as they prepare for post-secondary school/life.

## **7. Other Business**

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- Debora shared the information for the various BPCI social media accounts:
  - Instagram: bpci\_tdsb, bpci\_guidance
  - Twitter: @BPCIguidance, dferrari\_tdsb
  - Facebook: BPCI School Council
- Ellen said that BPCI is looking at doing a survey on the BPCI website to get feedback from other parents. She handed out a sheet of sample questions and asked for any suggestions/feedback on the questions. A question was asked about whether school correspondence should be offered in other languages – Ellen to look into this.
- Gloria asked about making the information about school clubs easier to access, especially for the grade 9 students – kids sometimes only hear about a club after it has started. Ellen will look into doing a visual for the students so they know date, time and location of the various clubs.

## **8. Next meeting date & time**

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- October 16, 2019, 6:45 p.m. in the BPCI library

Meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.