

Don Valley Middle School Council Meeting

(January 28th, 2025, 7pm Virtual Microsoft Team)

Meeting started 7:00 pm (Trustee James Li in attendance)

School Updates

Parking Lot:

Principal Karailiadis shared that the parking lot signs arrived, however due to the weather conditions they will be installed in the spring. Every morning traffic flow is monitored.

Indigo Grant:

Vice-Principal Bourjot provided an update related to the Indigo Grant. Over 400 books were delivered to the school. They are in the process of finishing the library.

Principal Karailiadis mentioned that there is a need to revitalize the learning space in the library, this can be discussed in the Fundraising section.

Ski Trip:

- Ms. Micallef is organizing the ski trip will be on February 21st, 2025.
- A Google classroom was set up with all the details of the trip.
- The ski rental does not include the goggles.
- Busses are paid off, and supervision is organized.
- For students not going on the trip and staying at DVMS, a fun day activity is planned, indoor kind of play day, movie, under the supervision of the remaining staff in the building. More information will be shared in the Friday flash.

Overnight trips:

Grade 7 Island Trip:

- Booked March 3-5; March 5-7.
- Classes will be divided between the booked dates.
- Cost is \$150
- Letters sent to parents to see who would like to go.

Grade 8 White Pine trip:

- Booked June 10-13.
- Cost is around \$300
- Payment plans (3 instalments) will be considered to alleviate the cost.
- Parent information session will be organized.
- Conference championships may interfere with these dates, however, is a nonnegotiable date. Admin will ask the convenor involved to not schedule the finals at that time.
- Regular updates Friday flash, DV dragons Headquarters.

School Improvement Plan:

DVMS is in a Hub with other Middle Schools (Woodbine, Windfields, St Andrew's, Donview) to network and work alongside other middle schools. The first hub meeting, will be the second week of February at St Andrew's

Trustee James Li: Ward 13 Don Valley North

- Messages of thanks and updates from the Board
- New Director of Education, Clayton La Touche. He used to be the Associated Deputy Minister.
- TDSB Budget- first time we are in budget, we are not allowed to run a deficit; Parents will be sent a survey about priorities and feedback.
- Security Breach: The TDSB very large vendor PowerSchools, someone within the organization found a way to access the file, make a copy of all information. This Impacted individuals from 1987 until now, students and current staff. There will be changes to IT security.
- Security and School Safety- A school hold and secure simulation will run sometime in March for parents. Parents will have the opportunity to hear directly from police services to find out what happens during a lock-down and to answer questions. Parents of AY Jackson (school) had the opportunity to attend it and it was very successful and helpful.
- Family of schools- Superintendents who are experts in the neighborhood. Schools are closer to each other, we are close by, and it will be great to have the same context and close drive. We need leaders that understand the community.
- PIAC Election Ward: We have an organization for parent involvement within the Board. We have 2 parents who serve, and we will be running an election in March. Anyone who is a parent at DV or in Ward 13 can run. It is a volunteer role, very fulfilling. Will send the information to Maria, but you can subscribe to my newsletter.

Parents Questions:

- 1) Innovation Grant Denied- We collaborated with the Parent Council and submitted a grant for the Innovation Grant in conjunction with Pleasantview, and it was denied. In the past, we have applied for the grant, and successfully received it, and we got a lot of wonderful things. Eligibility criteria for the grant changed, and workshops are no longer eligible for the grant. It is difficult to navigate and understand the grant and criteria on what we can use it for. If they can talk to us and see if we are well prepared for next year to make the grant better?

Trustee Li will put Maria in contact with the school in Pineway PS because they got the Grant approved, and he will try to find some staff to help. In the meantime, keep applying the nature of the grant is sometimes you get it and not. I will connect you with those approved to ensure you are better prepared for next year.

- 2) Are there support options for families struggling to pay for tutoring for kids that need it?

Trustee Li, The TDSB always have school support. But always your best support is your school.

Principal Karailiadis mentioned that a TDSB support program will start at DV for remediation Math and English that will be funded by the Continuing Education Dept.

Trustee Li mentioned that recently the TDSB passed a math improvement plan, to improve the EQAO overall. They are putting resources and focus to get the achievement, and language action plan. Each

board is different, and some have more diversity, newcomers, so we don't have a comparable benchmark for the EQAO target. The goal is to do better than last year, and that is the Math action plan.

- 3) Principal Karailiadis, asked Trustee Li to bring forward that the elections should be in Community Centers and not in schools, particularly during the school day. It is difficult to control who is in the building and walking around when elections happen. I would like to move them to a community centre.

Trustee Li mentioned no voter should be going to the same space that the kids are, there should be an outside door to access the voting premises, and the school access closed.

- 4) Wondering if mental health could be added to the curriculum?

Trustee Li, mentioned, Mental Health is in the new Health curriculum. How to deal with stress, health, and physical education.

As no more questions for James Li, he thanked the audience for having him and indicated that he is always available.

Learning Opportunities Index (LOI)

The LOI ranks TDSB schools based on measures of external challenges affecting student success, the lowest you are in the rank the highest the needs of the school. DVMS is 322 in the ranking. The criteria are based on median family income in our community, among other factors.

Fundraising Initiative:

Music program: Donations are much appreciated by our Music Department (donations from parents who attended the Music Sharing Nights). It is expensive to have a music program.

Fundraising Letter: Signed by the School Council, summary of what we did, and what we are doing, are we ok with sharing this letter? Approved to put it in the Friday Flash to ask for donations for the Library Learning Commons.

Pizza Lunch:

Pizza lunch is going great, everyone is happy with Pizza Nova, excellent volunteers, raised around \$6000 so far.

Nutrition Program Grant:

A few students told us they wanted to apply. We worked on it, and we completed it for this school year, but we did not receive it. They would like us to apply again. We will put in another application. Hoping this year, we will be successful. It is not a TDSB grant. We will consider new fundraising opportunities; we will need to show that we will be doing some. We will fill it out next week. We are happy to get some help if you want to join us with zoom. Thanks to Martha and Walter for their support. There is also a PC (President Choice) Grant we can look into this year.

Graduation Sub-Committee:

Last year, parents reached out to us. We received a lot of great donations for Graduation. We would like to set up a sub-committee on School Council for Graduation. Committee will have meetings to discuss supports for Graduation.

Caring and Safe Schools Committee:

Caring and Safe Schools meeting will be held on Feb 25, 2025, just before the School Council meeting at 6:15pm (using the same meeting invite). Everyone is welcome.

Meeting adjourned.