

**EYCI School Advisory Council**  
**Monday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

**Present:** Sue Gill, Raymonde Lievens, Amber Taylor, Tony Racigro, Lenore Brooks, Karen Thomson, Erika Paget, Aubrey Hicks, Julianne Smiley, Kimber Tzogas, Melanie Locke, Sofia Parkes, Andrea Palmay, Stephen Morris, Christina Lagoudontis, Nick Moutafis.

**1. Call to order:** 6:37pm

**2. Approval of agenda:** motion proposed: Amber Taylor; seconded: Lenore Brooks

**3. Approval of minutes:** motion proposed: Amber Taylor; seconded: Lenore Brooks

- Error with attendance in minutes. Duplication of some names, others omitted.
- Semester 2 reference – should refer to Semester 1

**REPORTS**

**4.1. Student government:** (Sofia Parkes):

*Semi-formal:* Took place on Feb. 15<sup>th</sup>. Went really well - about 130 in attendance. The venue was Celebration Banquet Hall. Pictures and video from the event on the Student Government Instagram. Will be putting out a survey to students for feedback and how to improve the event for next year and to avoid problems with ticket sales.

*Talent Show:* Focus right now, taking place on March 8<sup>th</sup>. Met with performers and rehearsals are next week. Starting promotion.

*International Day of Pink* – will be running some events in collaboration with the GSA after the March break. Brainstorming about selling pink shirts and donating the funds to charity such as Kids's Help Phone. Also considering pink shirt design competition.

**4.2. Principal** (Stephen Morris)

*Facilities Updates:*

- A/C in auditorium: School has been approved for all rough-ins. They went with the second option which includes installing the A/C as well. Hope to have it installed by end of September 2024.
- Roofing Project: Commencing in about 1 week. Sending notice out to staff once the specific plan comes out. Have promised that the hot asphalt work will be done in March when students are off on break.
- Sound System in auditorium: Received notice that they will be moving forward with this which is a huge development. Expensive job. Likely will be done over two parts for entire sound system overhaul. Will have much of this done prior to the school's 100-year anniversary.
- Seating in auditorium: Received approval to get it costed. Important first step in the process. Once costed, you are on the queue to get the job done. Don't expect to get this done until 2025. Sounds like they are committed to doing it. Focus will be on the balcony and if we are lucky the school will not have to pay for it.
- Library Revamp: Will be opening donation account as soon as this week. But, might have a

corporate doner / local doner which will take care of a good chunk on the expenditure. Doner is also interested in speaking to the council about getting even more work done.

- Lighting in the auditorium: Needs to also be done. No immediate plan on this but may look to corporate doner support. Might be able to set up an account to collect donations for the auditorium.

### *Upcoming School Events*

- National Theatre Drama Festival Performance Competition – coming this Wednesday. Can purchase tickets for \$5 in advance or \$10 at the door. Can email Mr. Nolan to reserve tickets. Hoping to win again this year. 68 cast members as part of the show.
- Preview show for special invited guests. Including a guest singer from Toronto (Performed at Grey Cup, Canada's Got Talent. She is also a blind artist. Quite an honour to have her perform. She will also meet with the BSA before the show.
- International Day of Pink: May get a chance to be invited to TDSB to show the great work being done.

### *Commencement*

- Decision needs to be made as to whether it will be this June or if will we do it in the Fall as per usual. Main holdup is getting approvals regarding the portable A/C units: a) from the Fire Marshal, and b) from the Board (contingent on Fire Marshal approval). If anything can be done to have it in June, will try to make it work. Must make a decision before the March break at the latest.
- Question around June commencement survey results and a potential additional cost of \$15,000.
  - School completed three surveys – one to parents, one to students and one to teachers
  - Generally speaking, the response rate was 20%. Of the 20% that responded, about 80% of parents and students wanted a June commencement. Only 56% of teacher community was in favour.
  - Want to support those who chose to participate.
  - Need approval that the school is allowed to bring in the Portable A/C unit. To bring this in over two days will cost about \$15,000.
- Follow-up question regarding where the \$15,000 will come from?
  - That will need to be determined. Potentially, minor ticket cost or a school subsidy for part of it.
  - Will not deny anyone a ticket, however.
- Other challenge is that they cannot fit everyone in auditorium this year due to a lack of available seating. Will have satellite location in the library to house about 150 people.
- If there is no A/C approval in next two weeks, it is not happening in June.
- Discussion followed on whether \$15,000 could be better spent elsewhere or potential for a corporate doner to cover the cost of the portable A/C unit.

*Student Success:* Question around what is happening with regards to student success. How are we helping teachers help students be successful.

- Contending with academic gap. Continues to carry forward. Trying to find happy medium of closing gap and still ensuring students have the requirements for post secondary education.
- Expanded student success section to accommodate for that.
- Peer tutoring program with many participants – extra remediation in less threatening environment.
- Just approved for after school numeracy remediation program. In process of establishing list of

who will be involved – students on the cusp with grades in the 40s and 50s and even low 60s will be the primary targets. No cost to students.

- If parents feel there may be other reasons for a student's performance give the school a call – guidance department can take a closer look at what the needs are
- Schools moving to a pedagogy called UDL – Universal Design of Learning. If one student requires additional time, all the students get the extra time and benefits more students. Now you don't need an ILP to get extra time.
- If you feel that UDL is not being deployed, please let us know.
- Question around teachers and teaching style, where the entire class has low grades. What can we do there?
  - We know that there are gaps that may be different for individual students.
  - That is what the UDL is for. What do we do for those students that feel lost.
- How are students supposed to advocate for themselves, when there are certain groups of kids that are disrupting the classrooms with no consequence?
- No classroom is perfect all the time, but we are not ignoring it. Every PD is spent towards pedagogy, towards inclusion, towards UDL. We continue to do our best and will always look towards elevating that par.
- Tough labour force – tough to find a teacher of any kind. They are non-existent. VPs and staff spending a good portion of time each day trying to find teachers to fill in.
- Question around those instances where year after year specific teachers class averages are very low. Are there any flags?
  - We do compare one section to another and make sure there are equitable distributions. May raise the marks for the entire class.
- Question: Can parents help to advocate for staffing:
  - Even if you can send emails to me on the issue, I can compile and send them along to my superiors quantifying the number of families raising the issue
- Problem is that we have gone from hundreds of applicants applying for one teaching position to the current state where zero applicants are applying for multiple positions.

#### **4.3. Teachers' representative:** (Andrea Palmay):

*Fashion:* Sharing images from various classes.

*Family Studies:* Focus on nutrition. There is a kitchen where they are able to try out new recipes. Held a taste-testing contest where staff were recruited to judge.

*Sports:* various athletic and sporting achievements were reported in girls' and boys' indoor soccer, hockey, basketball, and volleyball. Badminton team will be announced shortly as tryouts have been completed. There will also be skills-based intramurals taking place. Rugby and outdoor soccer tryouts will start after March break. Track and field and softball will commence later in the Spring. Looking to start cricket as well and looking to recruit students for this. The girls' lacrosse team was able to secure new kits for the team. School has also added some funds to Athletic Association account through student activity fees that will be used to purchase new uniforms that will be phased in over the next two to three years.

#### **4.4. Guidance:** (Erika Paget):

Course selection is wrapping up. Spending the week chasing down the 30% of students that have not done it yet. Many of these students are in grade 12. A lot of next steps for graduating students. A

package went out. Grade 12 students need to be on top of their communications with the schools that they are applying to.

#### **4.5. Student Success:** (Erika Paget)

Two teachers in charge of Peer Tutoring program from math and science departments. Have also received funding for an after-school math program running two days a week. Will be reaching out to math classes to let students know about this. Board did allocate additional teacher support for literacy and numeracy support just for this semester.

At the end of Semester 1, the school had 12% grade 9 students with at least one failed credit, and 11.5% of grade 12s. Grade 10s and 11s had just under 15% of students with at least one failed credit. Numbers are down from midterms – from 15% for grades 9 and 12; and 22% and 23% percent for grade 10s and 11s.

Question: When is the grade 10 literacy test?

- It will be taking place in April. Delaying until April 11<sup>th</sup> and have until April 24<sup>th</sup> to run all tests.
- Changes this year in terms of preparation. Intense remediation support. No student will go in and not have seen the format before – no surprises. Being pre-emptive before that.

#### **4.6. Co-chairs report:** (Melanie Locke, Nick Moutafis):

4.6.1. *School Statement of Needs:* Normally done in the Fall each year. Used in the event that the school needs to hire a new Principal or Vice-Principal. Participation has been historically low, but have seen some growth following the change to the approach of the online questionnaire. A total of 63 responses were collected in 2023 – up about 20% from the previous year. Last year we streamlined the process to make it less intimidating. The previous year's questionnaire was presented to those in attendance. A participation incentive has been incorporated in each of the last two years – a draw for a \$50 gift card.

There was consensus that this is the best approach, relative to what those in attendance have seen at other schools. One suggestion was to simplify the wording at the beginning of the questionnaire, as it may be seen as daunting.

Unanimous agreement to move forward with the same approach and same format for this year's SSON, with the continued \$50 incentive. Survey to open in late-March.

4.6.2. *Mental Health Workshops Update:* Discussed strategies on how to destress. Focusing on the moment not on the past or what might happen in the future. Often forget about the beauty of the moment. Cannot constantly be in a stress mode. Need to focus on what means the most to you in order to appreciate the moment. Provided some tools on how to get into that state of mind.

There will be a second workshop on May 9<sup>th</sup>, that will build on the first. However, even if you missed the first workshop you can still attend the second.

4.6.3: *SAC Communication Tools:* Discussion around using social media to further communicate with parents and the community. Particularly given the challenges with the SAC email account. Looking to begin using SAC school messenger moving forward to communicate information as well. Social media may be good way to push information out quickly but requires someone to take this on and manage the account. Most schools do have Facebook or Instagram account for School Council, however our school

does not. Karen volunteered to set up a Facebook group for the parent community and share this with council and the school administration.

Some discussion around virtual versus in-person meetings. Option to try some virtual meetings to see how attendance would differ.

4.6.4: *Staff Appreciation Lunch / Grad Breakfast*: Each year Council holds both a Staff Appreciation Lunch and Grad Breakfast. The staff lunch is held either outside or in the library and has been catered the last few years. Big hit with the staff and feedback has been very positive. Typically occurs in mid-to late-May. The biggest challenge is getting volunteers for the event. Suggestion of having students assist and earn Volunteer hours.

Discussion around funding for the Staff Appreciation Lunch. One option may be to fund through parent contributions and fund raising. In past years the food has been heavily subsidized.

Grad Breakfast typically occurs during early June. The students really look forward to the event and it is a good sendoff. This is an event that requires a significant number of volunteers and every year there is a struggle to get assistance. This event is typically partially catered. Need to determine if a June commencement may impact whether the Grad Breakfast takes place.

The next meeting of the Council is to take place on March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

The meeting adjourned at 8.05pm.