

Humberside Collegiate Institute (HCI)
School Advisory Council Meeting
Monday, November 16, 2020, 6pm – ZOOM meeting

6:00pm Welcome, Introductions, Actions

- Declaration of conflict of interest
 - None was declared
- Approval of February 24, 2020 meeting minutes
 - Minutes approved
- Agenda approval
 - Agenda approved

6:05 - 6:10 Student Council Report

- None presented
 - Principal McLaren will encourage Council to send a representative and/or report to a future meeting

6:10 - 6:15 Report from Chair (R. Hansen)

- Summary of SAC mandate and role.
 - SAC exists as a forum to address the HCI student experience in general – focus is on issues with broader impacts than those specific to individual students or families
- Appointment/reappointment of SAC executive membership
 - Chair: Randall Hansen – happy to serve again in this role
 - Communications: Helen Kula – happy to continue in this role
 - Treasurer: role is vacant and needs to be appointed
 - Last year's treasurer has left the school
 - Would be responsible for managing the Council's budget –approx. \$1500.00
 - Chair advised that Council typically doesn't engage in fundraising because of limitations that TDSB places on fundraising and how funds can be allocated and because of potential impact on student groups' own fundraising initiatives
 - Nominations of individuals or self-nominations for the Treasurer position can be sent to Randall Hansen
 - Safe & Caring Schools Committee representatives: Amy Mulhern & Katherine Cole – both continuing on
 - Ward 7 representatives: Glenn Dunphy and Jillian Kohler – both continuing on

- Open discussion of online/hybrid teaching experience:
 - Jillian Kohler and Lesley Graham raised concerns about lack of social distancing outside both on school grounds in the key and off school grounds
 - Asked that school continue with education and reinforcement of messages about importance of maintaining distance of 6 feet apart when coming together in groups and of wearing masks if maintaining that distance is not possible
 - School's efforts to communicate behaviour norms were acknowledged at beginning of term but concern expressed about COVID fatigue in current context of much higher rates of community transmission
 - Principal McLaren is aware that physical distancing and mask wearing on school grounds is not always happening before and after school
 - School will continue to promote appropriate behaviours and intervene if observed
 - Strategies discussed included:
 - Tying social distancing and mask wearing to ability to keep schools open and maintain in-school learning option
 - Addressing misperception that students won't get sick or at least, very sick – would case studies or examples help – challenge of right balance between fear and awareness
 - Using peer-to-peer messaging through pre-recorded messages played as announcements or shared via other media – some classes are already making these announcements as a class assignment
 - Using Art classes to create posters and wall art to encourage physical distancing and mask wearing (the tight quadmester timeframes may not allow for the flexibility needed here)
 - Principal McLaren indicated she would be open to distributing a message to parents written by public health experts involved in the Parent Council but noted she had experienced some push-back to an earlier message flagging problem behaviours by students – this had been perceived by some parents as being overly negative
 - Jillian Kohl and Lesley Graham will work together on a message to parents
 - Principal McLaren noted that school staff had observed a range of COVID-related attitudes and behaviours in students – some students appear very cautious while others appear very cavalier and noted that in this age group, there may be some social stigma associated with being perceived as too 'cautious' by their peers

- In response to a concern raised by a parent about teacher adherence with COVID protocols, Principal McLaren noted a high level of compliance and respect by staff
- Katherine Cole, parent representative for Safe & Caring Schools committee noted that this group will be holding a video contest using TikTok to promote COVID-19 safety messages
- Vice-Principal Isabel Arias Lopez advised that these videos will be circulated through the student clubs and will use the Husky House of Commons, the umbrella club organization, as the main channel for this
- If students have COVID-related safety concerns, they can report these anonymously through the Guidance Office

6:15 – 6:20 Teacher Report (TBD)

- No report provided

6:20 – 6:30 Principal's/VP's Report (K. McLaren/I. Lopez/R. Palmer)

- Principal McLaren extended her thanks to parents for their ongoing support as School administration developed a new hybrid, quadmestered model
 - New model has involved significant change and adjustment for admin, teachers and students
 - She noted that student time in class also very different, given the length of the instruction period
- Principal McLaren also thanked the teachers for their efforts to work collaboratively with parents, students and staff this term
- School is trying hard create some degree of 'normalcy' for students – student clubs and activities are quite vibrant and several charity projects have been or will be undertaken
- Vice Principal Robert Palmer is the master time-tabler for the school
 - New challenge now in accommodating requested shifts to virtual learning for the second quadmester
 - Approximately 40 students (10 per grade) will be making the change to virtual learning
 - Because of the relatively small numbers involved and the capacity of the new Virtual School (enrollment is now 18,000 students), local high schools are working collaboratively to create classes that will share students from multiple schools – Humberside students may not be taught by a Humberside teacher
 - Timetabling challenges may also result in changes to timetables of students in in-school learning – trying to minimize these as much as we can

- 2 students will be returning from the virtual learning option to in-person schooling
- Principal McLaren advised that the TDSB has not yet indicated that the holiday break will be extended as it has been in other provincial jurisdictions – it will take its direction from the Ministry of Education
- Vice Principal Isabel Arias Lopez is the school’s achievement coordinator and reported that it is not yet clear how the quadmester’s report cards will be distributed – either in print or electronic
- A parent raised the issue that students enrolled in in-school learning, particularly those in Grade 12, are concerned about the perceived advantage that students enrolled in Virtual Learning have with respect to assessment – online testing may provide more opportunity to cheat and/or plagiarize than the in-person option

6:30 – 6:45 Standing Committee Reports N/A

6:45 – 7:05 Other Business

- Continued open discussion of online/hybrid teaching experience
 - There was some discussion of classroom management and inappropriate screen sharing behaviours during online classes – software does provide opportunities to block and/or mute meeting participants
 - In response to a question, Principal McLaren advised that if students move out the school’s catchment area ½ way through the year, they can complete their year at the school but they would not be able to accommodate them the following year because the school is closed to optional attendance
 - Parents shared multiple thanks to teachers and school leadership for excellent work during pandemic
 - There was some discussion of students turning off the cameras during online instruction
 - Some students reported feeling peer pressure to keep the cameras turned off
 - Would it be advisable to mandate cameras be on during online learning?
 - Was expectation clearly communicated to students that cameras should be on, with onus on them to explain when/why they don’t have a camera on?
 - Privacy and comfort concerns may be preventing students from turning cameras on – challenge also in enforcing such a camera-on policy if adopted – what is the consequence?
 - Equity issues also noted – not all students have access to camera technology

- While teachers prefer to have cameras on during teaching, this issue is endemic to online teaching within the age group – widely reported across North America
 - Principal McLaren advised that she has shared resources with teachers about best practices and standards for using the camera during instruction
 - Issue of professional practice
- In response to a parent question about extra-curricular opportunities for students enrolled in virtual learning to engage with the community, it was noted that all clubs have Instagram accounts and students are encouraged to follow and engage with clubs using that platform
- A parent also asked that virtual learners be encouraged to participate in group activities associated with in-class learning – dialogue begun with school’s leadership about this will continue
- A parent suggested the school’s mask-wearing and COVID safety initiatives be shared more broadly in community-oriented Facebook groups to signal that the school is doing its best and we are all trying – some concern was expressed that some community members are quick to blame or scapegoat teenagers
 - Randall Hansen asked Tanya Berger and other parents to reshare and circulate what is coming out of Humberside with appropriate groups
- A parent asked about the status of the peer tutoring program
 - Unable to be offered right now because of need to monitor or supervise students working together and challenge of timing, given current school schedule
- It was confirmed that students don’t have a homeroom teacher with a quadmestered schedule
- A parent acknowledged the racist incident involving Humberside students last summer and asked about the School’s plans to address and build anti-racism capacity
 - Principal McLaren noted all teachers will be taking anti-black and anti-indigenous racism professional development this year (two sessions have been completed so far)
 - The Queer-Straight Alliance has been working very diligently on a virtual assembly that will be held in December that will feature a video – this will also be shared with our virtual students
 - Principal McLaren noted that the school now has a Specialist High Skills Major in Social Justice – there are many school groups working on various aspects of this
 - Vice Principal Isabel Arias Lopez noted that the Caring & Safe Schools Committee will be administering a survey to assess student safety and what else we can do to support them

- More students are actively involved in this Committee this year and the group is looking to involve representatives from the student clubs to ensure their work and messaging gets distributed
 - Virtual learning students will be included in the survey
 - School is also encouraging all clubs to be more inclusive and open to all students
 - The option of using Council funds to pay for a speaker on anti-black racism or other diversity, equity and inclusion issues was raised
 - If Council pursues this issue, would like to involve parents representing affected groups in selection of speaker and organization of event
 - A parent asked about the status of the Guidance Department
 - This is fully operational
 - In addition to staff, school also has access to a social worker and child youth worker
 - Student referrals to Guidance can be made by a parent, teacher, or the Vice-Principal
 - A parent asked about initiatives to support student mental health
 - School has staff and student wellness team
 - A parent asked about what constraints exist on fundraising by the Council
 - It was clarified that fundraising per se is not prohibited but funds cannot be used to directly acquire learning resources and that there has been a long-standing concern about the impact of fundraising by Council on funds raised by student groups
 - A parent asked about acquiring or fundraising for air purifiers
 - Principal McLaren advised that the school had been informed that this not permitted but recently, some schools have accepted donations – this question should be directed to the Ward 7 Trustee for clarification

7:10pm Adjournment of meeting

- The next HCI School Advisory Council meeting will take place Monday, December 7 at 6pm on Zoom