

PHS School Council Minutes

Date: November 25th, 2020, 7:00pm – 8:00pm (Virtual Google Meet)
Present: Paula Bender (Principal), Corey Kimpson (Co-hair, host), Jeevan Vivegananathan (Chair), Linda Brennan (PHS Staff Rep), Total virtual attendance: ~18 people

Next meeting: **Wednesday, January 20th, 2020, 7-8pm, Virtual (Google Meeting by invite)**

*Please remind other parents that they must **sign-up in order to receive the invite to the virtual meeting** at [PHS School Council 2020,2021 Sign-Up Form](#). Only people who are signed up will be admitted into the next virtual meeting. The link alone is not good enough as Principal Bender will not admit anyone who is not signed up from the virtual waiting room (for security reasons).*

1. Welcome (Corey Kimpson)

- Welcome, great attendance once again.

2. SAC Update (Students Jacob O & Karishma P)

- Council continues to enthusiastically adapt to what they can and can't do under COVID19 restrictions, innovating wherever they can with some great results.
- Acknowledging that Grade 8's could not visit PHS in person for an open house, SAC tried to give the Grade 8's a virtual PHS experience by making creative videos and posting them on December 3rd for students and parents alike. SAC shot the videos to give the Grade 8's a snapshot of what Grade 9 life is like, showcasing why students should come to Preston, the variety of clubs, arts, sports teams that are available, taught some PHS history and explained why PHS is an essential part of the community.
- A winter drive-thru holiday plan had to be cancelled due to being in COVID red zone
- Instead, SAC cleverly re-created the idea of the four houses in the Harry Potter movies. The houses will help focus spirit and will be introduced to the school at the start of Quadmester 3. At present, SAC isn't planning a competition between the houses but anticipates that this could eventually be a part of the fun, COVID19 restrictions notwithstanding. For now, the house focus is towards Spirit Days and bringing the community together.
- Spirit Days continued with Kahoot on-line games with class at lunch, maroon and grey colours day as well as writing holiday cards to seniors in the community with the cards designed by our PHS art council
- Morning announcements were kicked off as a great way to start the day with a bit of music and good messages to go out with announcements
- The annual Seniors Dinner was obviously a non-started so SAC is working with staff on how to share holiday cheer
- Parent council noted that it was so nice to see the students taking such an active role trying to bring some fun and sense of community in these challenging times
- Spirit Days calendar events might be sent out monthly so that students can prepare in advance and are also mentioned in the morning announcements

3. Staff Report (Linda Brennan)

- Post-Secondary Information
 - September to November, focusing on university and college applications

- Ontario College Applications
 - Apply by February 1st, 2021
 - \$95 fee
 - Start researching October, November and start applying December and January
 - 5 ranked college program choices are made by students
 - **Tip!** If you want to stay in the same locale, you can apply to the same college multiple times choosing a different program for each entry
 - **Tip!** Definitely consider your ranking carefully and pick the key program you want first. The ranking is important whether by locale or course.
 - **Tip!** You can only say yes to one college!
 - **Tip!** Great search by subject keywords on the websites which allow you to explore by topic rather than dive down starting from a program name e.g. if you like business, click that and then see what programs are associated with business courses and elements
 - **Tip!** Make sure that listed pre-requisites are met. Mostly Grade 12 English but for certain programs, Grade 12 science and/or Grade 12 math is required.
- University Applications
 - Apply by January 15, 2021
 - \$156 fee, 3x choices
 - **Tip!** Can apply to more than the 3x normal, but have to pay \$50 per additional application
 - **Tip!** Do your research and know what your ranking criteria is and why
 - Good FAQ on the websites and lots of tutorials and step-by-step instructions on how to apply. It's not hard. But choosing programs themselves can be a daunting task.
 - **Tip!** Key issue is doing your research. The application process is not hard.
 - **Tip!** Go to Ontariouniversitiesinfo.ca for good info on programs including last years entrance mark admission requirements
- MyBlueprint available to students and on the PHS website
 - A great beginning to career and post-secondary planning
 - Planning typically starts in Grade 10
- **Tip!** Students have to think about some tough choices when planning their future. Some good questions to ask students to help them focus...
 - What is important to me?
 - How can I use my talents?
 - What can I do to earn an income?
 - What income do you need?
 - What does the world need?
 - What problems would I like to solve in the world?
- **Tip!** It's never too early to explore post-secondary and the time passes by fast
- Google Classroom
 - Parents were shown an example of what a Google classroom looks like
 - Good messaging system with links, teachers to students
 - Other learning options (e.g. career workshops) are put into the classroom

4. Principal's Report (Paula Bender)

- Q2 Calendar
 - It is confusing 😊!
 - Distance Instructional Support Day – 2x days at end of Quadmester where final summatives are done and all students operate in remote learning mode
 - Transportation and changes to learning modes (remote vs in-school) make planning and logistics very complicated hence the relatively late announcement of cohort membership. It's almost impossible to go any faster than currently practice because of the parent changes though the school does try as best as possible to keep all kids in the same cohort.

- Mid Term Mark Update
 - Level grade check-in between December 14-16 for students
 - **Important!** Make sure the teachers have your e-mail so that you can see the “check-in” to the student. Nothing formally goes home so do check in with the teacher.

- Student Success in a Hybrid Model
 - Virtual Learning Environment
 - Every day between 12:35pm and 1:50pm teachers are available
 - Teachers are learning what's best for students – increased used of Hyperdocs and Checklists for example. Kids who are bussed are missing part of that window so mostly, it's the remote kids who use the teacher support. Available to anyone though.
 - **Tip!** Encourage students to reach out to their teacher if they are confused or unclear about the teachers expectations
 - **Tip!** The pace in a quadmester is really fast and so it's easy to fall behind. Don't wait till it's too late. Reach out early.
 - Executive Functioning and Remote Learning
 - High level cognitive functions that help you regulate and organize and direct one's own behaviour are essential, especially for remote learning.
 - This function is tied to development of the brain and development goes well into adulthood. Teens are just going through this learning skill and it is not fully developed hence, the sometimes struggle to stay focused.
 - The good news is that the skills can be taught and improved with practice!
 - Some executive functions include attention control, initiation, emotional control, working memory, task completion monitoring, inhibiting behavior, ignore distractions
 - Remote makes for different, more challenging demands on executive functioning. Less structured, supervision less immediate and frequent, absence of peer models, more distraction, less immediate accountability
 - Looking at the executive functioning of INITIATION:
 - A struggling student might look like: Can't get started, not coming up with good ideas, lots of reasons for work not getting done, good intentions but a lack of follow-through
 - Strategies to support: Make expectations clear, break tasks into smaller chunks, set specific times for starting, develop a cueing

system to remind teen to begin a task, model and encourage self-talk (e.g. "time to get started"), encourage physical activity before task initiation

- Parent / Caregivers guide to Executive Functioning (developed by WDRSB) is available
- Not often a lack of motivation, just need help getting started! (i.e. Initiation)
- Communication with School
 - Keep lines of communication open with teacher
 - Firstname_lastname@wrdsb.ca – best bet to get teachers, phone tough
 - Guidance counselor, special education teacher or Vice Principal
 - Teachers are reaching out if they have concerns but the parents and students may have a concern that the teachers don't immediately recognize so it's vital for parents and students to reach out
- Supports for Students (both DLP and Hybrid Adapted)
 - The following are available...
 - Nutrition for learning
 - Guidance
 - Special Education
 - CYW and Social Worker Support
- Diverse Text Initiative (Diverse Library Collection)
 - Resources should reflect our student body
 - The aim is on-going diversification
 - Students can request books that the library does not have
 - Library is closed but students have access to all library materials with delivery to their classroom
 - Curated lists for students are available
- EQAO Math Assessment
 - May happen for in-person for Grade 9 math learners in Quadmester 2
 - Nothing else has been determined, math teachers will advise if our school is selected

5. Parent 2 Parent Advice (Jeevan Vivegananthan)

- A fair bit of time was spent on the helping students learn in a remote environment so the time for additional discussions was limited

6. Other Business / Parent Questions / Future Agenda Topics (Jeevan Vivegananthan)

- Next Meeting – will be virtual

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/jv