

PHS School Council

April 27, 2022

7:00 - 8:00pm

Virtual Meeting

1. Welcome

C. Kimpson

- 14 attendees
- Staff - great turnout - thank-you so much for all the support!
- Lower total attendance than last year at 30 people total but circumstances are different and regardless, this year has been a banner year in terms of total school council attendance.

2. SAC Update

SAC Students

- Students are not available, P. Bender presenting on their behalf
- **Competitive Games** - spirit events, fun low-key events have students earning points for their grade in friendly competition
- **Blood drive** - May 10th, 1:30pm-2:30pm, students have to be 17 or older, a popular event
- **Pollinator Garden** - a huge success, popcorn sales used to raise funds
- **Colour Run** - a student fun run where teachers get to throw chalk at the kids! The kids enjoy this annual tradition (but as an editorial note, I suspect that the teachers enjoy it more)
- **PROM** - May 26th - excitement at being able to celebrate together
- **Grad Breakfast** - secret at this point - in the planning stages with staff
- **Athletic Banquet** - in June
- **Gym** - opened up, basketball is popular
- **Commencement** - in-person October 14th, 2022 (tentative date) for current 2022 grads

3. The Thinking Classroom

L. Kingston

- An informative and interesting presentation, great discussion
- Math Grade 9 single stream this year, next year Math Grade 9 and 10 will be single stream
- Curriculum was reviewed and noted that it has changed significantly
- Destreaming goals are broad and inclusive
- Lots of group based problem solving including discussions, white boards, random groupings to foster engagement
- Overall, students overall are very engaged in this model and a video shown nicely captured this observation

- The goal is to get students to “think” through problems which research shows that they are learning more
- One of the challenges is meeting the needs of the full range of learners - destreaming and pandemic has caused such a huge spectrum of entry level skills at grade 9. To tackle the challenges, some strategies used include collaboration, risk taking and perseverance, giving choices based on readiness level, enrichment opportunities including math club, contests and self-selected level of challenge within assigned classwork
- While at the white board, students love the group work, questions get asked, collaboration works, engagement is evident in their groups plus it's easier for the teacher to see who is engaging or not to help address that
- This year, there has and will continue to be continual tweaking to the curriculum
- Will this style expand to other programs? Yes, the WDRSB and school are looking at this for science for example.

4. Staff Report

L. Brennan

- Teams / Clubs Update - snapshot of some of the many clubs and sports activities run...
 - Indigenous Student Association
 - Book Lovers Club
 - Feminist Coalition
 - Math Club
 - Advocacy Group
 - Chess Club
 - ACBI : African Caribbean & Black identifying Students
 - Ultimate Frisbee
 - Preston Drama council
 - Games Club
 - Dungeons & Dragon Club
 - Medical Field Club
 - PHS Blood Drive, after school
 - Track and Field
 - Rugby
 - Soccer
 - Badminton
 - Tennis
 - Slow Pitch
 - *The Guidance Department can direct students to the location and the staff contact for more information

- Summer School
 - Courses will run online from July 4-July 28; students are able to take one course only
 - Registration is open until May 19, 2022
 - Students may be registered with a different school board based on availability.
 - Details about Summer School and instructions on how to log in to any course, can be found on the [PHS Guidance Summer School Webpage](#)

5. Principal's Report:

P. Bender

- Literacy Test, May 5, 2022
 - VP Ryan Gibb provided an update
 - New this year - an online model
 - Format is much more student friendly
 - A graduating requirement for students who will graduate next year or beyond (was suspended during COVID)
 - About 300 students participating - only Grade 10 students will be in school on May 5th
 - In the future, students will be offered the test a second time if they are not successful in the first go.
 - Tab on the PHS website which has information on EQAO and literacy preparation
- 2022-23 Planning Update
 - Broad demographic shifts, local population of HS students is actually declining
- Blended Learning / At Home Learning Days
 - Typically in a year, there are 5 exam days in semester 1 and 5 exam days in semester 2. During COVID, exams were eliminated and so the 5+5 days were split out through the year to catch people up.
 - Additionally, the Ontario ministry gave teachers four ½ days to take mandated training. The half days were too hard to manage for parents, staff and students so 2 full day training days were created. This is probably a one time event for this school year based on ministry directives.
 - And then weather impacted learning days added on to it.
 - So, for this calendar year, a total of 10 exam days, 2 training days and ~3 weather days created a sense of students being at home at random times.

- Suggestion made to remind parents of the calendar and at home learning days at the start of the school year, just to get everybody in sync.
- Health and Safety Update
 - Higher than usual staff absences like many workplaces
 - But surviving and keeping students safe is a priority

5. Other Business / Parent Questions / Future Agenda Topics J. Vivegananthan

- **Students are engaged and excited** by the events while perhaps stressed by all the normal academic pressures. Feels like a more “normal” i.e. pre-COVID. Some real evidence that students were hunting for activities to engage in. For example, the book club that meets twice weekly has 40+ students! Sports events too are big draws.
- **Return to 4 class term has been a success** - Students all seem to be engaged, the pacing etc. P. Bender sampling showed 29 of 30 students indicated the same. All 30 students wanted a longer lunch.
- **“My Student is not a joiner”** - loves stuff but doesn’t always “join” clubs and sports and parents get frustrated because students don’t reliably share the options. Suggestion: A school day calendar with dates and reminders. Posted on Google Classroom but some sort of solution that parents can refer to gently prod their children.
- Clubs are listed on the PHS website but this list is not always accurate. However, that list can be a starting point to get students to get engaged.