

## Ancaster School Council Meeting - Monday September 28, 2020

### ATTENDEES

Rosemarie McCutcheon (chair)  
Beth Woof (Principal)  
Shelly Ferney (Vice Principal)  
Mark Currie (Vice Principal)  
Venetia Fletcher (Staff Representative)  
Scott Rancourt (Staff Representative)  
Victoria Lee (student council)  
Rida Siddiqui (student council)  
Rhu Sherrard  
Barb Love  
Brenda Crickmore  
Carolynn Younger  
Kim Strecker  
Lisa Mancini  
Manju Dahal  
Mohammad Sajjad Khan  
Nyrin Fagan  
Tamara McKenzie  
Sarah Gallagher  
Karen Lane-Groen

### REGRETS

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### Welcome

- Land acknowledgement
- Introductions of school council president Rosemarie McCutcheon, the Ancaster High Administrative team and staff representatives, and other attendees listed above
- Approval of February 3, 2020 minutes – Rhu Sherrard and Barb Love

Any parent who would like to be a voting member of the school council needs to fill out the self nomination form and submit it to Ms. Woof (see attachment at the end of the minutes.) Parents can attend any of the school council meetings at any time and do **not** need to recognize themselves as a member, it's only if you want to be a voting member that you need to submit the self nomination form.

Chair – Rosemarie McCutcheon put her name in to again be the Chair for 2020-2021. As there were no other interested parties, a motion was carried to have Rosemarie continue to hold the position.

Secretary – Barb Love was willing to continue to take on the role of secretary. As there were no other interested parties, a motion was carried to have Barb continue to hold the position.

## **Reports**

### **1. Student Council – Co-Presidents: Victoria Lee and Rida Siddiqui**

Victoria and Rida introduced themselves (Victoria is in grade 12 and Rida is in grade 11) and then alternately presented their report on different topics:

#### **Boot camp/Orientation/Grade 9 Night Events**

“Ancaster High has amazing staff and student volunteers who create events for grade 9s each year to ensure smooth transitions from middle school to high school. We usually host in-person Summer Orientation in August and Grade 9 Night in September. However, due to the circumstances we have decided to host these events virtually this year as health and safety of students and staff are our priority at Ancaster High.

The summer orientation is an informative event where the grade 9 students got to meet some of their teachers virtually in advance, learn about how class will look like in September, requirements to graduate such as volunteer hours and course credits and learn about the importance of physical and mental wellbeing.

As for our Grade 9 Night event, we wanted to take the opportunity to build a stronger connection and relationship between teachers, senior students and the grade 9s. The majority of this night was story time based on embarrassing stories, tips and tricks for high school and sharing what Ancaster High is like. This program was much more interactive, the students turned their mic’s on to ask questions and tell their stories. We wanted to send a message out to the grade 9s that we have a fantastic support system here at Ancaster High. We have many people that they can contact if they have any questions or concerns. They are able to email us, or DM us through Instagram – further information on this is in the next section of the report.”

#### **Social Media**

“We use social media as a resource to Ancaster High Students. We have an Instagram account @ahsgrade9s and we use it to inform them about opportunities, resources, and events. The account is made by and managed by the Fab 5 leaders. We also communicate with them if they have any questions or concerns through the direct message or comment functions.

There is also a main Instagram account for Ancaster High @ancasterhighroyals and it promotes events going on in the school, recognizes students’ work, and helps students with answering any questions that they may have. For example, @ancasterhighroyals answered questions submitted by students regarding the COVID-19 reopening! And this account did a really good job using their Instagram platform to communicate with our Royals. I really encourage students to follow and stay updated with these accounts.”

Pictures of the Instagram accounts were shared at the meeting through screen sharing function of MS Teams.”

## **Bulletin Boards**

The student leaders have decorated the school bulletin boards with motivating and inspirational messages. Also, we drew on the side walk to specify the coloured zones for those who are unfamiliar with the system, and wrote welcome messages to spread positivity and the excitement of a new school year!

Photos were shared at the meeting through screen sharing function of MS Teams.

## **Future Plans and Events**

“In regards to future plans and events, we really want to make the most of the school year and ensure our staff and student safety along the way. Events are and will be adapted in a way in which we are all making the best of our situation during COVID-19. In the near future, we plan to have more fun events for our grade 9 students. We as student leaders are here for the new Royals as their senior friends, to guide them through everything they need to feel welcomed and comfortable.”

“Ancaster High has regularly participated in days such as Orange Shirt Day and Day of Pink. We plan to incorporate such events into our mixed learning. The international day of pink is in April, but this Wednesday, September 30th, staff and students are encouraged to wear orange digitally or in-person to recognize the impact of the residential school system on indigenous communities. There is more information on our Instagram accounts, and announcements will be made for further awareness. We plan to have more safe events this year while being safe at Ancaster High.”

## **Fundraising in the Future**

In regards to fundraising this year, there can't be any fundraising events as the health and safety of students and staff is the most important issue to consider. The distribution of goods and transaction of money is a risk factor to COVID. Therefore, the school/student council will not host any fundraising events until further notice.

## **Thoughts of the School from Student POV: new protocols and systems**

Victoria: “The new protocols and systems are in place to keep everyone safe at Ancaster High. Each student is assigned to a specific colour zone when we are attending in-person class. For example, I am in the blue zone, which is the science hallway. I have a staircase, a set of doors and washrooms that are assigned to my colour zone. This organization keeps everyone safe. There are many sanitization materials in each classroom which we are allowed to access at any time such as hand sanitizers, disinfectant wipes, and sprays, which I really do find convenient.”

Rita: “I am in cohort A and for me personally, when I attend my grade 11 chemistry class, there are 9 students and one teacher in my classroom. All the desks are assigned and spread out. And overall, the combination of these new procedures in the school and classroom provide a strong sense of a safe learning environment. It makes me feel comfortable to be there and attend that class, getting that opportunity to learn in-person.”

## **The School Being a Positive Space**

Rida: “If I had to describe Ancaster High in two words, it would be inclusive and supportive. Among our years in high school, we have observed that staff members have one priority: the success of the students. This includes our safety, academic success, and supporting our mental health. Ancaster High supports you when creating and working towards your dreams and goals. During my first week of school, our principal, Ms. Woof, came to my science wing in the morning and individually asked all the students their thoughts of mixed learning, how their summer was, and how they were adjusting. This simple yet thoughtful act of hers is a great metaphorical example of the care and support at Ancaster High.”

## **Personal Thoughts about Mixed Learning**

Victoria: “Although students are spread into two different cohorts, and classes are much smaller, it’s just been great to be in school. The coloured zones make me feel safe as there won’t be any cross contamination between the zones. All students sanitize their hands as soon as they get into the building and then again when they go into their classes. Before school started, I was unsure of how this in-person and online learning system was going to work. But after two weeks of going to school, I can confidently say that this system is a simple, easy and safe model for students.”

Rida: “My personal thoughts about this mixed learning experience is that I honestly believe this is the best case scenario that our HWDSB board and Ancaster High could come up with. I feel like mixed learning ensures our safety and security, but also shows the dedication to our academic success and the coursework. Personally, I am the type of learner who may struggle if all my classes were only-online. However, this system allows it so we’re able to learn a bit in person, and online as well. So, my thoughts are that mixed learning maintains such a crucial balance and that is why I like it so much as a student. However, things may change in the future, of course, as circumstances are very uncertain at the moment. But I have no doubt that Ancaster High will adapt and I am confident we will persevere through any possible challenges or changes that the future may bring.”

## **2. Staff Report - Venetia Fletcher (Staff representative)**

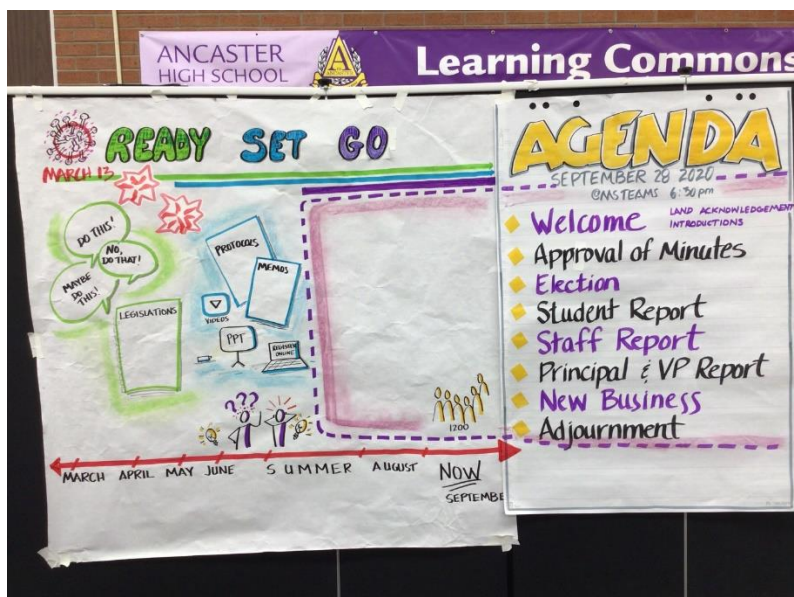
- **Transitions support for Grade 9s.**(Grade 9 Summer Boot Camp & Grade 9 September Welcome / virtual & real school tours- LRT&SS) Amazing student leadership- issues with CE Teams invites- but overcame obstacles
- **Staff Preparation Prior to Students’ Return.** Great to have additional PD days to adjust & prepare- learning safety measures/planning for a virtual classroom (new School Contingency Action Team / Parking Lot Crew )- staff volunteered in the parking lot to direct parents, showing parents and students where to go, and proper sanitization procedures. Staff have come together and work as a team – very supportive. Cross-curriculum conversations/supports (arts/phys.ed) - staff rallied - great environment of support and learning /self-directed learning HUB1/HUB2 etc.

- **Remote teaching.** It is a learning curve for everyone. Staff is skills-building: new LLC staff taking lead on sharing tech supports & how to navigate Teams/ various levels of expertise / team-effort - adapting to virtual classrooms - getting to know students
- **IPad & Musical Instrument Roll-Out.** Staff volunteers distributed iPads to grade 9s. Ms. Wylie- music (quite the process) involved with instrument roll-out
- **Staff Advisors** awaiting direction regarding **co-curricular activities.** Updated Guidebook is on hold- some groups have met virtually to discuss what things might look like moving forward (Royal Gazette/Student Voice). It is an adjustment for staff and students.
- **Terry Fox.** From Mr. Schurer: It will not be what it has always been, but yet it **MUST ALWAYS BE** part of Ancaster. Socially distanced and masked at all times, designated arrival times for specific classes wishing to participate and staying times will be managed to make sure we keep numbers under control outside. There will be socially distanced game areas. (Timed length of stay and limited number of people in game areas). The event will be held on both October 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> so that each cohort can participate.

### 3. Principal's report - Ms. Woof

Ms. Woof gave a visual presentation (a historical look with a time line of COVID-19) of the process that the administrative team and staff of Ancaster High had to go through in order to open the school safely for the staff and students.

The presentation was colour coded in order to represent who was the main authority involved in the process:



The Green Zone represents the Province of Ontario (Premier Doug Ford and Education Minister Steven Lecce). In March, Ancaster High's administrative team was constantly waiting for the next press release in order to know what next steps were to be taken. There were many conferences at the government level and finally a decision about school procedures was made in May.

The Blue Zone represents the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board. This section involves the specific protocols from the HWDSB; for example, distributing iPads and getting internet for those families who didn't have it.

In the summer months there were so many questions. During this time there was a lot of angst for many people. Ms. Fletcher collected staff questions over the summer. In the middle of the summer, 12 sub committees were set up at the Board (transportation, health and safety, etc.) to deal with each of those departments. By mid August the HWDSB developed some protocols.

The Purple Zone represents Ancaster High. This area represents the things that the school admin team could work on. It gave them clarity as to how they were going to function at Ancaster High. In this zone, students would be able to come and function well at school.

Ancaster High waits for direction from HWDSB and then communicates to the school community accordingly.

Ms. Woof asked the attending members if there were any questions about her presentation and the different colour zones. No questions were asked.

## **Facility Updates**

There have been many incredible upgrades at Ancaster High:

- Window project is now complete
- The roof does not leak anymore
- The temperature is stable

These upgrades are a result of a huge commitment from the Board. A further 3 million dollar turf and track project is under way. Projected completion date is December 2020 - details to come on the party to celebrate its completion.

## **Graduation 2020**

An outdoor graduation celebration was held for the 2020 grads. Unfortunately the date of October 5<sup>th</sup> which was being held for the 2020 grad celebration at Carmens is not going to happen. After our meeting, on Wednesday, Sept 30<sup>th</sup>, HWDSB CANCELLED (not postponed) all grads. We still have a deposit on file with Carmens and selected the only date in June that is still available – June 28<sup>th</sup> – Ms. Woof will confirm that date at the next meeting. There are, however, no details about the grad at this time as there is no confirmation that we can actually have a grad. Ms. Woof conversed this week with the past Student Council president, and he understands the situation and that no planning can take place at this time.

Special diplomas will be coming soon as well as yearbooks.

## **Equity Audit**

HWDSB is holding an Equity Audit – Hiring practices will be reviewed for racial inclusivity.

Learn, disrupt, rebuild @HWDSB – an HWDSB initiative for schools to take a look at what it truly means to include people of all racial backgrounds and to rebuild our structures in our system that are excluding students. It involves developing safer and more equitable, inclusive learning environments.

## **Bullying/Safe Schools Review**

Sir Winston Churchill incident – the School Board started a Bullying review and Safe School Review. There will be invitations to continue participating in those reviews.

## **Questions from Parents**

Ms. Woof answered the following questions that were sent in from parents by email:

*Q. Are there any active COVID cases at Ancaster High?*

A. No.

Ancaster High has 2 Public Health nurses on site. If a student shows signs of Covid, there is an immediate response strategy which also involves an immediate call to Public Health. If a student contracts COVID 19 – the school will more than likely not have to close down due to the Cohort system. As an aside, Ancaster High students are following the safety protocols and sanitation rules very well.

*Q. What about exams?*

A. Ancaster High Administration is waiting for information from the Board. We do not know what the universities and colleges are expecting. We will make sure students are evaluated, assessed, and prepared for post secondary. IB exams are set for the beginning of May.

*Q. Is there Tutoring available?*

A. There is a Volunteer tutoring club as well as a list of tutors that parents can contact for paid tutoring service. Parents and/or students can contact Student Services

*Q. Will there be a yearbook?*

A. We are not sure – there is a pause on school pictures – no photo day until further notice. There is also a pause on all sports and clubs which is a significant part of a year book.

*Q. Students who were marked absent but are doing remote learning - has that been changed to reflect that they were present or do parents have to contact someone about that?*

A. Schools have not received direction yet as to how attendance will be marked on report cards for remote learning students. Be assured that attendance records do not go to universities and colleges. Only the high school sees the attendance record.

Q. *The School Messenger absence notices are also an issue for students who are registered for in-person learning. I have confirmed with my daughter's teachers that she has not missed class, but I receive a notice almost every day. To whom should I direct an inquiry about this?*

A. Amy Grant is the attendance office administrator – she can be contacted through Ancaster High's main telephone line 905 648 4468.

Some teachers were marking students absent even though they were present. Students need to refresh their login to make sure they are connected.

Q. *Are school boards making a pandemic protocol (what works and what doesn't) if this happens again in the next 5-10 years?*

A. A digital protocol binder is in place right now. There are memos from the HWDSB every day, and the binder is constantly being updated.

Q. *The Ministry of the Attorney General developed a number of protocols related to the re-opening of the courts. Was that experience shared with the re-opening of schools? Was the PSHSA involved in inspections?*

A. The Ministry of Public Health mandated the PPE standards for the school boards and although they did not complete any inspections, Public Health works with HWDSB to create the protocols, then the school must follow the rules.

## **New Business/Correspondence/Announcements**

- No new business this month

## **Next School Council Meetings**

Monday, October 26, 2020  
Monday, November 30, 2020  
Monday, January 25, 2021  
Monday, February 22, 2021  
Monday, April 26, 2021  
Monday, May 24, 2021

Adjournment 8:32pm



## SCHOOL COUNCIL PARENT SELF-NOMINATION FORM

I wish to declare my candidacy for an elected position as a parent/guardian representative on the school council.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Business phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

I am the parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_, who is currently registered at this school.  
*(name of student)*

I am an employee of the board.

Yes       No

\_\_\_\_\_  
Candidate's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Please include a brief autobiography, if desired.**

## ADDENDUM

The Parent Involvement Committee is currently receiving applications for 2020/2021 school year. Application deadline is Oct. 13, 2020 at 11:59 p.m. As a member of a Parent Involvement Committee, parents have an opportunity to become part of a dedicated team committed to helping every student achieve.

Parent Membership Criteria:

- Parent or guardian of a student enrolled in HWDSB
- Selected to ensure broad representation & diversity across the district
- Committed to a two year term
- Able to attend monthly meetings (second Tuesday of each month)
- Demonstrated commitment to school and community involvement Find full details on the application process on our website and the online application at:

[https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PIC\\_Application20-21](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PIC_Application20-21)