

Ancaster School Council Meeting – Monday, June 6, 2022

ATTENDEES

Beth Woof (Principal)
Stephen Wilson (Student Success Teacher)
Natalia Bourenane
Joanne Thompson
Roxane Dunmore
Khola Khan
Barb Love

REGRETS

Shelly Ferney (Vice Principal)
Mark Currie (Vice Principal)

Welcome

- Land acknowledgement
- Introductions of Beth Woof, school principal, Stephen Wilson, student success teacher, filling in for Venetia Fletcher
- There are no students tonight to give their report; Beth will give an update on their behalf

Reports

1. Staff Report – Stephen Wilson (Acting Student Success Teacher)

- The Hamilton Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) granted additional lines for student support – Ms. Murray is a 1:1 support teacher for any students needing help; in particular, the target was for any grade 12 students who had slipped and needed support for graduating.
- Flex days were used on an as needed basis. For example, there was a flex day following Grade 12 Prom.
- Student success days will be June 17-21; June 22-24th; and June 27th and 28th. Any student who has a mark under 50 will receive a message from their teacher, and a plan will be implemented to see what can be done to help those students pass their course.
- Transition Day – Mr. Wilson, along with 12 Ancaster High students, went to feeder schools to help with the transition program for grade 8 students. The Ancaster High students talked with grade 8 students and shared their own experiences of what it was like starting high school.
- There will be a Grade 9 orientation event in the summer as well as “Grade 9 Night” in September 2022. So many students, just under 100, applied to volunteer at these events and 65 students were selected. The 30 students who were not selected have since been connected with and have been offered the opportunity to help out with a “Day in the Life” event when the Grade 8 students visit Ancaster High.
- Mental Health Week – at lunchtime there were a number of activities that students participated in with great enthusiasm.
- Music/Coffee House – student-led performances were enjoyed by over 100 guests
- Cherry Pie Event will be held Monday, June 13 at 7 pm

2. Student Report – given by Principal Beth Woof

- Student council is a blended team of students. There are two co-presidents, two vice-presidents, social convenors, and Grade reps.
- 200 students enquired about student involvement this year and there was space and events for all to participate.
- Major events this year – Transition Day; Fall Festival; Winter Festival; and Mental Health Week.
- Many supplemental clubs and sports were offered this year for students.
- Elections were held for student council last Friday June 3rd, but results have not been posted as of tonight.
- *Frozen Jr.* performances are being held in the auditorium this Wednesday, June 8 for Ancaster High students – 9:40 am for grade 9s and 10s; 1:25 pm for grade 11s and 12s.
- Triathlon – 450 participants including both elementary and secondary students.
- Cultural Day – Friday, June 3rd – students came to school in their traditional dress of their country and explained the significance/importance of what they were wearing.
- Fundraiser – Yassine Bourenane, a grade 9 student, approached Ms. Woof with an idea for a fundraiser for the people of Ukraine – he decided the Red Cross would be a good choice – Ancaster High School raised over \$3000!
- “Friday Night Lights” - over 1000 people attended in April. The intention is to continue the tradition as an annual event.

3. Principal’s Report – given by Principal Beth Woof

- School Safety – Events around the world have had a strong impact on our community. Any sort of threat to the school and/or school community is immediately dealt with; the HWDSB and the police go into high alert. The recent threats at other schools were fully investigated by the police and consequences were laid. Ancaster High has a "Safe School Reporting Process" - there is an anonymous help line, "We Help Line," that anyone in the community (students, parents, bus drivers, and neighbours) can use to text and report any safety concerns, any rumours that have been heard, or to offer any information that would be deemed helpful for the safety of the school community. The number for We Help Line is 905-963-0066. This number is posted everywhere in the school for students – this help line is not a “snitch line” it is an anonymous procedure for anyone with any concerns.
- If parents have any questions, they can contact Principal Beth Woof by email at bwoof@hwdsb.on.ca, or on her work cell phone at 905-536-0918.
- There was a lockdown drill today, Monday, June 6, which had previously been booked before the recent incidents that have occurred in the community.
- Summer school – there was an overwhelming response from students regarding their preference for online summer school, so as of last week it was announced that there will be no in-person learning for summer school. There are multiple options for courses for online learning.

- As per the Ministry of Education, two (2) e-learning credits will be an expectation as part of students' graduation requirements starting next year. There is an opt out process that will be communicated to parents in months to come.
- Specialist High Skills Major Courses – two (2) new courses have been added for the Fall of 2022: an Arts and Culture credit course; and a Wellness credit course. There will be information sessions for students and parents in the Fall.
- Mental Health and Wellness – there are many resources (links) for both students and parents on the Hub under "Mental Health and Wellness." In addition, mental health and wellness is imbedded into the programs and courses here at Ancaster High.
- September Start-Up – There will be individual grade assemblies in September 2022 where students will learn about the many activities being offered as well as what the expectations and student responsibilities are at Ancaster High.
- School Assemblies – there has been a rise in social media being used in inappropriate ways, so there will be lessons and programs given to the students with explicit instructions such as how we speak and behave online; media addictions; and bullying online. Content will include student input. There will be guest speakers discussing topics about what happens if you misbehave online, identity theft, and online bullying.
- School Council \$500 grant – Principal Woof made a proposal to school council as to how the money can be spent. The grant is for parents, so the suggestion was to have parent workshops on topics such as "How to Protect Your Kids with Social Media." With the rise in inappropriate use of social media, it seems prudent to offer parents the tools necessary to help equip them on how to manage their kids' use of social media as well as how to protect them.
- Grad Ceremony – Monday, June 27 in the auditorium at Ancaster High. There will also be an outdoor procession onto the football field where the students will listen to the valedictorian speech and then throw their caps. The students gave a list of their "must haves" for a graduation ceremony: valedictorian, cap and gowns, no restriction on number of tickets so that even grandparents can come, and to have it on campus.

Questions from parents:

Q – About the Specialist High Skills Major courses – What if my child needs a prerequisite for these courses and we have already chosen our courses for next year?

A – Most students will have the necessary prerequisites for these courses as they do not start until grade 11. If students would like more information on them, they can make an appointment with their guidance counsellor and they can discuss long-term planning.

Meeting adjourned: 7:30pm