

For posting on Ryerson website

Notes on Ryerson School Council Meeting, October 13, 2020, 6:30 pm via MS Teams

In attendance: Tobi B. (Co-Chair), Gay Y. (Co-Chair), Stephany A.(Treasurer), J.Durajlija (staff representative), E. Jones (Principal), MW, DH, LA

After the Chair's Welcome and the Principal's Land Acknowledgement, the attendees introduced themselves, and the agenda was approved.

Tobi B. explained the purpose and role of the School Council. There is a School Council Handbook, which has been updated in 2020, and can be found on the board website <https://www.hwdsb.on.ca/elementary/get-involved/councils/>

Gay Y. presented the 2019-2020 Annual Report: The last meeting of the School Council had been in January. \$2200 was collected (which was lower than in past years, but not bad given that the 2019-20 school year activities were halted due to the pandemic). These funds were used for technology and for the Makerspace. \$300 have not yet been disbursed but were earmarked for an arts and science project. The School Council was active in the areas of road safety (pertaining to Locke St.) and in connection with the Grade 8 graduation (e.g., distributing the sweatshirts).

Nomination and Election of Officers: Tobi B. and Gay Y. will continue as Co-Chairs. Stephany A. will remain as Treasurer. A Secretary is being sought. The nominated Officers were approved by those present.

It was agreed that meetings would be held bi-monthly on the 2nd Tuesday of the month, beginning with Nov. 10 and Jan. 12, and then subsequent meetings in March and May. However, it was agreed that should a need arise, it would be possible to schedule an ad hoc meeting one month after the previous meeting, instead of waiting for two months to elapse to the next scheduled meeting.

Principal's Report:

348 students are enrolled at Ryerson. Last year at this time there were 425, so this represents a decrease of 75 students. There are 17 classes, one of which is a self-contained special education class, plus two special programs: an ESL program and an Empower reading program.

By Oct. 12, families notified HWDSB if they wanted to change from in-person to remote learning or vice versa, as of Nov. 3. In one week's time, we will have the new information about these changes, which may lead to adjustments to the classes. There will be two future dates at which students can switch, in January and in March.

The Principal referred us to the HWDSB reopening procedures, in particular the screening checklist, which has been updated, along with the guide to what will happen if a child fails a screening: the new flowchart, "Symptomatic Child At Home"—which represents a big change from the procedure one month ago.

Extracurricular activities, including clubs and teams, are all on hold, because Ryerson is trying to keep students in their cohorts and cohort-specific outdoor play areas. Students have been doing a good job on this, though it is challenging and they need many reminders. Ryerson has introduced some new outdoor equipment suited to the new parameters for outdoor play; this has

For posting on Ryerson website

been very engaging for students. In the Newsletter, Ryerson has shared some extracurricular opportunities outside the school: (1) Mathstronauts coding (for a fee); (2) McMaster offers coding, but for a fee and free of charge.

A question was put to the Principal whether we can find out what standards are being applied in ensuring that sufficient fresh air enters the spaces in the building that are being used by students, teachers, and staff, since frequent replacement of air is essential to reduce the chance of virus transmission (aerosols). The Principal replied that while the HVAC equipment has been inspected and is known to be working as it is supposed to, she will inquire as to what criterion is being applied for the amount/frequency of fresh air that is supposed to enter those spaces, and how that is being measured.

Fundraising: The practice at Ryerson is typically to solicit direct donations, but fundraising is on hold/not permitted at the moment. We have some funds now and are in a good situation. The Principal has had a request for more outdoor equipment – and it should meet the requirement of being easily sanitizable.

Certain immunizations could not be completed for the Grade 8 students in 2019-20; this is going to be done instead for students born 2007 and 2008 at Westdale. Tentatively scheduled for December 7, 2020.

The Nutrition Program has been on hold but will resume shortly. We made our orders this week. It will be “grab and go,” monitored by staff, and regularly sanitized.

The Principal shared a call to join the HWDSB Human Rights and Equity Community Advisory Committee – 2 parent/guardian/community members are sought.

Staff Report: Mme Durajlija reported that teachers and students are very happy to be back at school. When it has been nice weather, teachers have been taking their classes outside. She called on parents to please keep reminding students to follow the distancing rules.

Treasurer's Report: Stephany A. began by conveying thanks to Principal Jones and Mme Durajlija for their work on behalf of students at the school. As of March, funds were frozen, and she was not able to get an update on the account prior to this meeting.

Principal Jones filled in that there is about \$2415 in the account.

Currently, there is a need for outdoor equipment: new types that are easily cleaned, can be used in smaller areas, and are portable to take outside and inside. Cost is not known and could be brought to the November meeting.

It was agreed that the School Council would pre-approve \$500 to be spent for this purpose.

Grant money: Gay Y. reported that this program will likely not go ahead; and Principal Jones reported that she had not heard anything about it.

School Communication and Website Calendar: Principal Jones reported that paper documents, e.g., the Newsletter and the School Council Minutes, are not currently being sent home. She is mindful of the many phone messages families receive from HWDSB and doesn't want to add to that unnecessarily. She will send any school-specific information to families as needed.

For posting on Ryerson website

For example, Westdale S.S. also uses that method for communicating school-specific information, and to remind families to check their email for details.

Principal Jones will make minutes of School Council meetings on the publicly accessible Ryerson School website, but as requested, full names of members without official positions would be removed from the minutes before they are publicly posted.

Capacity and Reorganization: The Principal expects that classes might be reorganized. The Remote School is short-staffed. HWDSB has been working to use resources optimally all around.

The agenda items “Graduation” and “School Council Priorities” were postponed to the November meeting.

The Co-Chairs asked whether parents can help teachers in any way, e.g., with programming. Mme Durajlija said she would convey that offer of help to the teachers. The Co-Chairs are also hoping to attract more parents to get involved in the School Council.