

May 22, 2024 – School Council Meeting Minutes Duke of Connaught Junior and Senior Public School

Location: School Library – in person

Last Meeting: April 25, 2024

Council Members Present: Jill Hollingsworth, Jeffrey Hackett, Marilyn Lacroix, Chris Hazard, Robin Switzer, Jennifer Huang, Erin O'Donnell (Staff Rep), Bill Vatzolas (P), Delphine Rule (VP)

Council Members Absent: Jason Davie,

Parent Attendees: Bob Sexton, Rosalie Fine, Melissa Kluger, Lucy Mann, Pauline Larkin, Emily Nichols Angl

6:35 pm – Welcome

Jill opened the meeting, welcomed everyone, then read the Land Acknowledgement

Please note: Parents can always reach SC at dukeschoolcouncil@gmail.com (and/or check info on website: dukesac.ca)

We went around and everyone introduced themselves

6:40 pm – Other business and announcements/updates

Jill asked for additional business then we went through updates/announcements

Nuit Blanche at Duke:

- May 30 5:30 - 7:00
- Come out if you can, even if your kid isn't participating
- **Question:** Will they share the program in advance? Principal said he would look into that

Annual staff appreciation lunch

- Tuesday, June 4
- For all staff in the building and it is hosted in the staff room
- Several communications have gone out to the community – we're calling out to families at Duke to contribute food, drinks and other items to the event
- There's a sign up link in the Need to Read

Question: Do we bring it only on the day of? If it's something you can bring the day before – drinks, plates, packaged goods – you can bring it into the office on Monday June 3. Hot food, fresh food should be dropped off on Tuesday June 4 between drop off and 10:30 am.

Previous minutes approval

SC needed to approve minutes from February, March and April 2024. Chris Hazard moved to accept the minutes, Jeff seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved.

Dismantling Inequities Committee Update:

The committee was planning to run a second workshop in May, but schedules for our approved workshop providers did not align with dates available for the school and the SC. As a result, we will return the grant money for the second workshop ... then we'll carry on with our work.

Grad committee

- Committee of parents has formed and has already had a meeting
- Working on the ceremony itself (June 24, 4:30 pm at Riverdale)
- Council set aside \$2,500 for Grad
 - \$1,000 for buses for Boat Cruise
 - \$1,500 - the bulk of this is going to snacks and drinks (casual) for the ceremony ... and bags of snacks for each family plus a memento item for the Grads (magnet - We are Duke)
- Decorations
 - East End garden Centre will lend us plants for the stage
 - Theme - glamour and the stars similar to last year (grad names on gold stars on the backdrop, will be given to the kids)
 - Allows us to be a little more frugal and reuse some items
- Grade 7 ushers
- Need some volunteers (will call out for more volunteers in NTR)

Question: How many tickets? There will be 2 tickets for all families, then some extras available so parents can request an extra seat. It is completely dependent on Riverdale and how many seats are available. A communication will come shortly about the process, etc.

Question: On the cruise last year, the cost was \$90 per person, had heard food ran out at the buffet and not everyone got food. School/SC had not heard this before (Ms. O goes on the cruise) Action: follow up with Ms. O re: food supply.

6:43 pm – Community Partner Update

Emily – SH Armstrong

1. Fall registration for after care opens June 7
2. A few summer camps still have openings (mostly in Arts and Crafts). You can register online.
3. Birthday party packages ... a few are still available for Fridays from 6-9 pm, but that ends once the summer starts

6:47 pm – Treasurer's Report - Budget update

The current balance for the Alterna Duke Cares account is \$23,227.

Since the last meeting, here is what has come in and out of the account.

Incoming:

- \$91 - Pizza Lunch money
- \$51.29 - Mabel's Label Cheque

Outgoing:

- \$648.50 - Kindie Steel Pan Performance
- \$1500 - Speaking Engagement by Roland (cost to be shared with school accounts)
- \$16.98 - SC Expenses

Duke Cares - Balance is currently \$400

- \$600 out in the past month
- Duke Cares helps families with food, school trips, other needs,
- We've needed to help families a lot more this year - concerned with the level of help required in the community
- Jill moved to designate an additional \$600 to the fund. Unanimous approval by council members.
- We are planning to do a one day sale of popcorn and juice - we can put any profit toward Duke Cares - everyone agree to this idea

There will be several payments in the upcoming weeks for events like grad and and settlement of funds with the school line accounts.

Questions: No questions for Jeff.

SC Members and Community Discussion 7:12 pm

Outdoor beautification:

We're on board and want to move forward

And the TDSB has rules about what we're allowed to do ... so we're continuing to work on this with the school admin.

We are still waiting to hear from the Board about the basketball courts ... Principal Vatzolas will follow up

Kindness initiative:

We've been putting up banners inside/out and some of the classes have begun conversations about kindness: what is it, how do we show it, etc. Some classes have done art that has been put up in the halls, and shared in the Parent Update and NTR.

Clubs:

Question from parent via email: What is the process for starting a club?

- Bring it forward to a staff member
- Start with home room teacher.

- If the teacher can't support, they can reach out to admin who can then reach out to staff to find someone who is willing to manage the club

Question: Is there a list of all clubs? No, but the school website includes updates (daily) about clubs and when they happen (if they are ongoing)

Question about French high school pathway at Danforth Tech for 2024-25 school year: French is moving ... is there more information?

- It's new. The Principal is waiting on information to be able to answer questions
- Riverdale is way overloaded, so they need a new option. If your kid is on that pathway, attend the virtual session happening this week (as per the school newsletter, TDSB communications, and Trustee Updates)
- TDSB are trying to bring people closer to home for school
- Online meeting tomorrow night and another night this week, link in NTR and you can email council

Question about sports: What is the procedure around teams and tryouts? What are the rules? Some kids who are athletic would like to be part of teams, don't make the teams.

Related question: can there be intramurals? Or another way for them to participate

- A parent brought a scenario up because they thought their kid was only one cut from the cricket team
- Intramurals would mean everyone could be included, it seems like some kids make all the teams, some don't make any - School: there is intramurals for the younger grades
- Answer: they do their best, there are only so many teachers to manage teams and only so many spots for students. Sometimes it is not safe for students to be on team given their skill level
- Additional answer: kids are taught the sport and get coached during gym to make tryouts fair.
- Additional answer: In track and field, kids are limited to 2 track activities, and at a recent track meet, 102 kids from Grade 4-8 participated.
- Principal Vatzolas can take this question back to teachers for input.

Update on the TDSB Scent free Environment: ask people to be mindful of the effects of their scents on others - particularly those who wear layers of scent or lots of a scent. Some staff and students are impacted a lot, especially when hot & stuffy in the classroom.

- It's really a voluntary scent sensitive policy vs. Scent free policy
- Parents can support students by discussing this topic with them:
 - Just wear one layer - of the scent itself and then also just the cologne (not cologne, plus body wash, deodorant, etc in same scent)
 - Put it on in the morning
 - Don't bring it to school
 - Don't spray it on other people
 - Don't spray it in the bathrooms, hallways, classrooms, lunchrooms

- Don't mix a bunch of scents

7:30 pm – Principal's Report

Class Org Chart for 2024/25 school year

- 33 classes next year

Duke – Class Organization 2024-2025

CLASSES:
English JK/SKA
English JK/SKB
English 1
English 1/2
English 2/3
English 3/4
English 4/5
English 5/6
English 7/8A
English 7/8B
English 7/8C
FI JK/SKA
FI JK/SKB
FI 1/2A
FI 1/2B
FI 2/3
FI 3/4
FI 4/5
FI 5/6
FI 6/7
FI 7/8
FI 7/8
FI 7/8
Middle FI 4/5
Middle FI 6/7
Extended 8
Gifted 4/5
Gifted 5/6
Gifted 6/7
Gifted 7/8
Gifted 7/8
ASD A
ASD B

Class rosters are being created

- VP Rule is taking lead and parents were able to give input via google form.
- They'll be working on this until the day they send it out, as changes come in all the time – new students, departing students, staff changes, etc.

Heritage Fair

- The students showed their projects at Duke - they swapped classes and presented them
- Each class selected a group to attend at the Heritage Fair
- Two students chosen to the provincial levels (project on the Death Penalty from Ms. Frost class) - Congratulations
- Ms Austin supported the students with their projects

Interactive Indigenous map – Kids get to explore the interactive map during library period

Math contest:

- Ms. Austin, Mr. Villeneuve, and Ms. O'Donnell ran the Gauss math contest for Grade 7-8 students
- They ran practices at lunch and competed against each other
- 35 kids participated - they did really well - some students got top marks
- Certificates will be presented this week
- It was another club - something different for them to try, open to all and there were a range of kids from all streams
- Gauss is an international competition run by the University of Waterloo

Update to Indigenous mural

- Centennial College to connect with someone to move forward
- Planning process with students
- Painting in June - hope to complete by end of June
- It will be installed in lobby and teachers can use the mural to support lessons

Question: How do we protect it during construction through summer?

- Faculty member from Centennial will visit school and discuss details, will talk about that
- it'll go on a large board as opposed to on the wall, can be stored, to keep it safe
- They'll work with artist to ensure it's protected

Construction Continues:

- They'll replace the fence soon around the deck - move it in closer if not gone
- They have lined up addressing the stone finish around the trees in next few weeks
- The 2 year boiler continues project:
 - Extensive and invasive
 - This summer the Library shelves will be removed for the work and then replaced once boilers are done
 - Working with board and contractors to keep things moving smoothly

- Big waterproof containers, tarp everything and keep it safe

Question / comment: During construction, our experience has been that we put away things and when we come back in August, everything is gone. Principal agreed there have been challenges, and while he can't guarantee anything, he will do his best to mitigate those risks.

Question / comment: They need to do more work on the pipes around pool ... but there's concern that the pipes go through the cafeteria. What happens if the cafeteria isn't ready for school starting?

Info: staying in the know

In a recent message, our trustee Sara Ehrhardt shared that the government has changed the way it is funding education. The current funding model means that TDSB has to wait for grants. They're working on their budget now and have to vote on it before the end of June. Not a lot of details out yet about the changes and what it means for Boards.

To follow along, you can sign up for Sara's emails on her website: <https://www.saraehrhardt.ca/> Or you can attend TDSB Budget meetings (which are public) in person or on zoom ... sign up on the TDSB website. The meetings can be interesting, especially to see what they are cutting, supporting, etc. It impacts everyone.

Also - the TDSB site is full of information.

7:57 pm – Questions and wrap up

Jill asked the group if there were any questions and thanked the group for joining.

Next meeting will be held Monday June 17 – we'll need to choose our election night for the new council and discuss planning for the fall.

We encourage people to participate, to volunteer, as we move forward. We want to keep things going, but need more people for that. Consider joining council.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:58 pm.