



DRYDEN HIGH SCHOOL

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School Council Report 2012-2013 School Year

Respectfully submitted by Kathy McConnachie

September – We were pleased to begin the new school year as a school council. A chair has not been chosen and this was deferred to October’s meeting. Introductions were made around the table, two new student reps (Megan and Tamara) and two new VP’s (Brad Bartlett-permanent, Jen McMaster-acting) were made. The school year started off very successfully, students were into classes quickly and routines of the new school year established quickly. August 27th was a professional development day for the teachers. Teachers participated in learning skills activities for report card writing, sharing of the BSIP and completed SIP activities. The teacher professional learning model for the school year has been established, teachers will complete their cycles of inquiry within their departments. Board meeting took place on Tuesday, September 11 – two of our DHS students made a presentation for Seeds of the Future – Garrit Mann and McKenzie Kohut – they attended a student leadership conference in Southern Ontario for special needs students and shared their experience with the Trustees. Our annual school-wide welcome back assembly took place on September 6. The Net Book rollout for DHS students took place on Sept. 26th. All students that brought in their signed forms were given a Net Book – students will continue to bring in their signed forms and as they do this they will receive their Net Books. The next professional development day is Sept. 28th. All DHS sports teams are up and running. The SAVE group has begun their monthly meetings and for the first time at DHS a Gay, Straight Alliance meeting is going to take place on a monthly basis. October 3rd is our scheduled picture day. Our two new student reps for this year shared their report and they will also be the reps who will meet with the student Trustee, Braydon Moore. Megan and Tamara shared other activities that are going on for the next few months. Letters and announcements have gone out for the Terry Fox walk and BBQ, Ben Johnson visited our students for two assemblies and talked to athletic teams, Steve Levin did a “Funny Money” presentation for students – this was well received. The leadership class is preparing for the November 9th Remembrance Day school ceremony and Spirit Week. They also explained how the course works and the organization of activities. School Council meeting dates were established for the year as follows:

Meeting #1 – Sept 25th
Meeting #2 – Oct 30th
Meeting #3 – Jan 29th, 2013
Meeting #4 – Feb 26th, 2013
Meeting #5 – Apr 30th, 2013
Luncheon – May 28th, 2013

October – spoke with a council member about taking on the role of chair. This person will get back to us at the January 2013 meeting. The principal’s report was given verbally. A quick update was given about the DHS construction and transportation shops. Audits were completed in the summer with recommendations being made for equipment upgrades, removal and replacement. These audits were completed in all secondary schools across the Board. Work is scheduled to begin in the middle of November and the hopes are that the shops will be fully functioning as soon as possible. A complete listing of work being done is available from Kathy McConnachie if someone should request it. Mrs. McConnachie took several secondary DHS girls to a “Women in Skills Trades” dinner on October 18th. The girls were able to network with female adults working in our communities in various skills trades’ areas. The girls gave DHS positive feedback and enjoyed the evening. A quick update was given on extracurricular sports events for first season, the Honour Roll Breakfast was well attended (members present expressed their thoughts about this activity honouring our academic students saying that it was a nice way to recognize the hard work by students to maintain honour roll status).

The theme for this year’s safe grad celebration will be “Enchanted”. Minutes from the next meeting will be reported at January’s meeting.

Tamara and Megan gave the student update. Many activities were planned and delivered to the student



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body by the leadership class during the months of September and October. The following activities were reported on: Terry Fox walk and BBQ raised over \$1600.00. Students expressed that they would like to set a higher goal and raise more funds for next year. Spirit week was very successful and there were a wide variety of activities that the students were able to participate in. The pep rally was a good student turn out and all teams were represented in the assembly. The class also organized a food bank drive, Mrs. Griffith's class won with over 200 items collected and they celebrated their win with a pizza party. Again this year the students are planning a Remembrance Day ceremony for the whole school. Christmas activities were also being organized and the students were preparing a float for the parade to take place on December 7th. Domtar was donating the float truck. Door decorating competitions and dress up days were also being planned. The leadership class was also preparing to host the Snowball Dance along with parent volunteers for supervisors and administration.

The school improvement plan was shared with members. There are three main goals for DHS that align with the Board Strategic Improvement Plan. These goals address the following areas: purposeful design and implementation of authentic learning experiences that engage student in higher order and critical thinking across all curriculum areas. The use of integrated assessment and instruction model based on strategies contained in Growing Success, which must include all of the following: Learning goals and success criteria; teacher feedback; student goal setting and self-assessment; learning skills; multiple opportunities. And priority area number three, the use of intervention strategies for any student not achieving success. Members also asked about how the implementation of the student Net Books went. To date all students that wanted a Net Book brought back there permission forms filled out and were given a Net Book. Protective cases were to be delivered to the school sometime in January and will be distributed to students.

January - The chair position for school council has been filled. Gwen Kurz has accepted the role. We thank her for stepping forward. At this time control of the agenda was passed over to Gwen.

The principal's report was given verbally. Exams took place the week of January 21-24th, 2013 and first semester began on Monday, January 28th for the students. Exams were a success. Extracurricular sports activities for sports teams at DHS and within the board have moved forward for the rest of the winter sports session. Senior Administration, Administration within our schools and especially with the collective work of the Athletic Directors in our secondary schools have made the decision to go forward with providing opportunities for a sports schedule. The schedule has been put together to finish of the season for girls volleyball, boys basketball, and boys and girls hockey. Volunteer coaches will coach these teams. The OSSLT will take place for first time eligible writers (FTE) our grade 10 students and previously eligible writers (PE) who were not successful on previous attempts at the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test on April 11, 2013. At this time the present grade 9's will write a practice test. Classroom teachers, the Literacy Coach and SERTs are busy helping students who require the extra attention to succeed on the test prepare. Data from previous test attempts and practice tests are used to develop school wide and individual plans to help students prepare. Members asked about the DHS website as we recognize that it is not "up to date" and it was explained that we are searching for an alternative plan to update the website. It was asked if a school yearbook will be completed and at the present time a small group of students has shown interest but we are not sure if they are continuing to pursue completing one. Members asked about teacher sanctions and information was given in regards to public information from media and the OSSTF website that has been posted. Members were updated on a Compass for Success survey that all students will be participating in on February 4th. It is much like the Tell Them from Me survey that students throughout the Board have participated in before. This study is a partnership between KPDSB, the NWHU and the University of Waterloo. The DHS Coop Job Fair was a great success in January – students who participate in coop credits had the opportunity in the library to publicly share their job placement opportunities. Also during this month a group of grade 12 students planned and organized an Art Fair – it was visited by many students and community people. Mike Wood continues to raise awareness for the building of the race track behind DHS. Donations are now being accepted for the "Eagles on Track" campaign. Also in the coming months the "Music in Motion" tour will begin, our music students do a small road show to our feeder schools here in Dryden and Vermillion Bay. Sue also thanked and commented on the beautiful work that the grade 10 construction class did for the Vermillion Bay Community Garden. Benches will be



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installed in the Vermillion Bay area that the students planned and constructed. And one final big thank you to the students who planned and the parents who chaperoned the Snowball Dance in December, it was a great success. The parents who chaperoned were very impressed with how the students who planned and ran the dance conducted themselves.

Tamara and Megan sent their regrets for the meeting but forwarded an update a couple of days later. This is what they reported: After coming back to school after Christmas, not a lot took place due to everybody was finishing up the last little bits of their classes, and started preparing for exams. Coming up, there will be stuff going on for Valentine's Day, etc. Megan and I plan on keeping in contact with the leadership class to see what they will be planning throughout next semester, to keep you informed, due to we are finished the course. But we are planning on keeping the roles of the DHS Student Representatives for the rest of the year. As for the net books, a lot of students are complaining and don't like them, and as for myself, I do not like them either. It's hard getting used to the new software after being taught with different ones throughout our earlier years. However, there are some benefits towards them, every student is guaranteed a net book and can't use "not having a laptop" as an excuse anymore. I think students are going to continue not caring for them, and they don't handle them carefully so I think the net books are going to be broken, and will need many repairs throughout other years. I think in order to improve them; they will need the normal software like (Microsoft Word, etc).

February - OSSLT information was given to School Council members including the prediction data that was gathered from the grade 9 practice test from last school year and trend data from years past. This data prediction was shared with staff at a staff meeting and at this meeting. Data suggests a 60% pass rate; however a target of 75% was set. Next steps were shared on how this target might be reached including small group, one to one and classroom instruction/tips to prepare for the writing of the OSSLT on April 11, 2013. The day was going to be set up like last year with grade 9's writing a practice test again. Classroom teachers, SERTs and the literacy coach will move forward to work with students. Also discussed were Caryl Hron's (Superintendent of Education) visits to DHS and their purpose, which is discussion around priority area #2 (BSIP and SIP) - "We use an integrated assessment and instruction model based on strategies contained in Growing Success, which must include all of the following: Learning goals and success criteria; teacher feedback; student goal setting and self-assessment; learning skills; multiple opportunities". There were a few questions around OSSTF sanctions and "return to normal". It was reported that teachers were beginning to again volunteer for things. We also talked about student mental health – if there was increased incidence, which I believe may not be the case but that students are feeling more comfortable discussing what the issues might be around mental health issues. Firefly, NWHU and Dryden Hospital (Addictions and Mental Health) continue to support our students along with Guidance and all staff.

As chair Gwen took a moment to express that she over the policies around school council and wondered how we might other parents to become involved i.e.) incentives – expressing an invite in relation to learning opportunities.

Tamara and Megan presented what is new/happening – Valentine's Day – heart hunt with prizes, Spirit Week took place – valentine colours day, blue and gold day, Match Maker and student challenges were going to be planned. Easter activities as well as St. Patrick's Day activities were also occurring. There is going to be a Spring Fling Dance on May 9th.

April - Kathy shared the OSSLT data for participating students in grades 9-12. In grade 10-12+ there were 251 potential writers. 202 students wrote/13 were absent/29 students were deferred/3 students wrote who were over 18 and there were 4 exemptions. Of the deferred students 1 was an exchange student, 16 met the requirement through passing of the OSSLC, 2 students have no grade 9 English credit, 10 students will be taking the OSSLC in the 2013-2014 school year. Our grade 9's wrote a practice test (each student will receive a report card in the fall for areas of improvement and next steps). There were 182 potential writers, 171 student wrote and 11 students were absent.



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Report cards were mailed out to students on April 16 and parent/teacher interviews took place on April 18 (this session is not as well attended as the anecdotal visits so the leadership team of DHS is looking at different ways that we could have this session). After administration reviewed and signed report cards a follow up email was sent by Kathy to review requirements for report card writing as indicated in Growing Success.

Graduation preparations are well under way. Caps and gowns are ordered and potential graduates are working hard along with staff to meet the requirements for graduation. Safe Grad Committee continues to conduct their monthly meetings and preparation for this event is moving forward. DHS is very proud to have a GSA (Gay Straight Alliance) group this year. The group has been meeting since September and they planned an event on April 19th – Rainbow Day. Many students participated in the event that took place in student square. Also the SAVE committee planned an anti-bullying event on April 26th, many students participated in a live band performance at the DRCTC called Live Different. The student leadership class is moving forward with organizing this year's Spring Fling which will be happening on May 9th.

The school leadership team has begun the staffing of classrooms for the new school year. All option sheets are completed and preliminary staffing process has begun. We hope to have everything completed by the beginning of June.

The last item as reported by Kathy was a quick discussion in regards to the DHS website and yearbook. Good news for our students, Paul Darling and his senior communications technology class are going to put a 2012-2013 Argosy together for distribution in the fall. The solution for future years is that the yearbook will be attached to a classroom curriculum; this discussion is still taking place. We are still seeking out ways to update and manage the DHS website. A couple of ideas discussed were to hire someone to manage the site, attach it to a course curriculum, likely senior communications class or to have a couple of coop students do a school placement in the technology area. For certain we know that the community appreciates the DHS website and we have to find a solution. The website is up and running, some things are up to date, but the site needs a "face-lift". DHS is becoming an EcoSchool, through the application process and a school visit which will occur on May 13th. The environment club along with Ted Mitchell and one of his classes put the application forward. This group works diligently in reminding us to be "environmentally friendly". The group is seeking bronze status – we have now received word that we have attained silver status. Presentations will be made at our school-wide at our student recognition assembly on June 4th. DHS was given a Ministry of Education attendance audit in May. Recommendations were given and will be followed up on by a board perspective and a site/school perspective. Verbal follow up after the audit was favourable (good report) with some recommendations being made. Jen shared the data gathered from the Compass Study which is being conducted in partnership with NWHU and University of Waterloo. The study will take place over four years. The next steps will be to move into planning for areas that are flagged. As a whole school process some of the next steps can be addressed in the school improvement planning process.

Jen also shared the case management project that we are involved in. This is a provincial initiative that addresses specific strategies to try with students in classrooms that are deemed at risk. A team of teachers along with Jen's guidance are collecting the data and it will be presented in Toronto at the Compass for Success conference. This was the last meeting of the year, pleasantries were extended to all, and the last meeting is the school council luncheon. We look forward to meeting as a group in the new school year.