

Bell High School
Council Meeting - Virtual
April 26, 2021
MINUTES
DRAFT

Attendees: Jon Harris, Fred Schultz, Karyn Curtis, Jen Samuel, Cherise Elliott, Roslyn Bryan, Khalid Naseemi, Vivian V, Jeffrey You, Mary Clement, Jeremy Laliberte, Jing Wu, Ilhaam Barrow, Julia Wong

Welcome and Introductions – Fred Schultz

Fred welcomed participants, each of whom introduced themselves.

Approval of agenda – Fred Schultz

The agenda was approved. Motion to approve: Jeremy Laliberte; seconded: Cherise Elliott

Approval of minutes – Fred Schultz

Minutes from the March meeting were approved. Motion to approve: Fred Schultz; seconded: Cherise Elliott

Student Council Report – Ilhaam Barrow/Jeffrey You/Julia Wong

- Council representatives have been busy with online learning, supporting students, and spirit and outreach activities. Battle of the Grades (BOTG) was a highlight, with great participation.
- Julia Wong, our Spirit Rep, reported on some of the BOTG activities. This competition between the secondary grades is a fun way to promote school spirit and raise money for charity. This year students raised \$445, which will be donated to the Education Foundation of Ottawa and Conquer Covid. We are planning on including Intermediate students in future BOTGs and other spirit events.
- Bell's Student Senator Laura Wang, and other representatives, have been competing with area schools in Battle of the Schools. There are five Spirit Days, the first of which was Formal vs. Comfy wear. The rest will take place this week. Results will be posted on the website.
- We will have elections for next year in May. This will be done by Google meet.
- Springo will revert to Bingo.
- InterClub heads will be doing a workshop in May to give more information on the various clubs offered at Bell. We want to include Intermediate students in more activities, and give them access to the clubs.
- We are planning on surveying students soon on virtual learning and the two-class/day model of instruction.

Principal's Report – Jon Harris

- We have returned to virtual learning, with teachers available for 112 minutes of instruction.
- We have increased the time between blocks of instruction, based on feedback received.
- There is a Remote Support link on the Student Information page of the Bell site: <https://sites.google.com/ocdsb.ca/bellstudentportal/home>, where students can get tutoring and support from teachers, from 2:00 to 3:15 each day. This is a great resource and is not well-used. Any students looking for assistance are encouraged to check it out.
- Grad photos are on hold due to increased lockdown measures. Some schools were able to have theirs done in the Fall. We are following Board requirements, and hope to get them done before

year-end.

- Grade 9 Math is being de-streamed, so there will no longer be Academic and Applied classes. Classes for Gifted and ESL students will not change. We are considering de-streaming other Grade 9 classes as well. Some schools have already adopted this approach. This was done in the 1990s, and resulted in some improvements, particularly in graduation rates. Jon would like feedback on this initiative.
- Staff have identified incoming Grade 9 students who will potentially be struggling, and will offer Learning Strategies classes and experiential learning credits to help them succeed in High School, and graduate.
- Staff will also be doing diagnostic testing to identify gaps in learning and areas that require more focus.
- Students who are lacking credits may be able to take co-op placements and experiential learning to help them gain credits.
- Course selections have been made. The new platform, Xello, created some challenges. We are now building timetables and trying to balance classes. In response to a question, Jon indicated that student satisfaction with course selection and availability is not tracked, though a poll might be feasible. As a smaller school, Bell has more split classes. Most electives in the senior grades are 11/12 splits. It was noted that there are quite a few Grade 11 students in compulsory Grade 12 courses, too. If students are not able to take a course they want, they can pursue e-learning. Students in the meeting reported that there are more complaints about balancing courses than about availability.
- Thank you to the Art Department and students who created impressive windowscapes for our school. We have some very talented artists. It is important that our halls reflect the art and culture of our student population, and feel like home. An Art Club competition was suggested so that students could vote on what art and murals are put on the walls. Jon agreed, and will work with the Art Club on this initiative.
- We will have 260 Intermediate students next year and 686 High School students. A higher proportion of Bell students have opted for virtual learning than in the rest of the Board, likely due to the Gifted Program.
- Changes to teachers' contracts will result in slightly larger class sizes. There will also be slightly less choice in classes.

Staff Report—Jon Harris

Two Bell students, Anders and Laura, qualified for the DECA Internationals and are in the finals, a very impressive feat.

Vice-Principal's Report—Jon Harris

Virtual learning is different in Special Education classes. We are looking at how to support our Special Education students. Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher with any questions or concerns.

Treasurer's Report – Jen Samuel

There is currently \$2,883 in the Intermediate account and \$4,923.21 in the High School account. There have been no income or expenditures. Anyone with suggestions on how best to use these funds should contact Council at bellsc50@gmail.com.

Jeffrey You suggested making school supplies available for students who forget theirs. Another suggestion was cleaning the school and painting lockers. Jon indicated that painting lockers is very expensive and rarely lasts. However, he will look into replacing them, as they are old and in disrepair,

and there may be funding available from the Board to cover this. Some improvements have been made, and others are planned, such as outdoor classrooms and the inner courtyard.

Parent-Child Connection Speaker – Fred Schultz

We will be hosting a Parent-Child Connection session on May 10, under the auspices of the Parents Reaching Out program. Jon has sent an email to parents and to feeder schools with information. Fred will give Jon the registration link to go in his next email on this. We will put information on the Guidance Twitter feed, and students will post it on Instagram and other platforms.

Motion to adjourn: Karyn Curtis; seconded: Jen Samuel. Meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Next meeting: Monday, May 31, 2021