

Bell High School  
Council Meeting - Virtual  
January 31, 2022  
MINUTES

**Attendees:** Jon Harris, Fred Schultz, Karyn Curtis, Jing Wu, Cherise Elliott, Paul Elliott, Maris Stasko, Laura Wang, Simon Yang, Brad Campbell, Mo Tait, Jen Jarabek, Shannon Harrison, Caitlin Cooke, Donna Owen, Jen Samuel, Mary Clement, Ann Matejicka, David McCormack

**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: Karyn Curtis; seconded: Cherise Elliott

**Approval of Minutes – Fred Schultz**

Minutes from the November meeting were approved, with a correction to the date. Motion to approve: Karyn Curtis; seconded: Donna Owen

**Student Council Report – Laura Wang, Simon Yang**

- Student senator Jules will host a virtual town hall on February 17, with Principal Harris and other staff, to provide updates and answer students' questions. This will be a Google meet.
- The ever-popular Leadership Camp will take place February 26-27. It will again be virtual. Registration will close on Thursday. It will have a similar structure to in-person camps, but will be condensed to two days and one night., and provide the most memorable activities from earlier camps. There will be small groups, which will play different games and participate in various activities, and an opportunity for the groups to merge as well. Last year featured baking, stories and other bonding activities.
- On February 14 we will have a Valentines Spirit Day, where students are encouraged to wear red and pink. We will be selling candygrams, as well. The goal is more to provide a fun, spirit-boosting activity than to raise money. More information will be made available soon.
- Student Trustee elections for the OCDSB will be held on February 28. All schools in the board can elect one nominee. Grade 10 and 11 students are eligible to apply, and must submit an application and practice speech. Registration closes on Friday.
- Grade 12 reps Isabel and Edward are developing a post-secondary guide, which provides information on Ontario college and university pathways. It will be available in PDF format on the school's Google classroom.

**Principal's Report – Jon Harris**

- Wednesday is student success day for virtual and online, the purpose of which is to get any outstanding work in to salvage credits.
- Semester 2 starts on Thursday, with 4 classes per day, on a Day 1 and 2 rotation. The Day1/2 schedule is based on the availability of supervision and is standard in High Schools.
- March 31/April 1 will have concurrent Day 1 classes.
- We are reintroducing travel time between classes, so students will have a 10-minute break between classes, which start at 9:05.
- There will be two 75-minute classes in the morning and afternoon, separated by a 50-minute lunch break.

- February 10 we are hosting a Welcome to Grade 9 virtual event (via Google meet), to give incoming Grade 9 students information about high school, what to expect, de-streamed classes, etc. There will be significant changes to the Grade 9 curriculum, as Math is de-streamed, and there will be no Applied Geography or English.
- Course selection is continuing with Xello. We will be using a new database, on which we are getting training. The opening times for Xello will be out this week, and Guidance staff will be visiting Grade 8 classes to provide information.
- We will be assigning lockers to Secondary students this week. Students will receive an email on Wednesday with their locker assignment. Grades are cohorted to separate halls. Locks will be provided to those students who do not have one. There are not enough lockers in the Intermediate wing to provide them to Intermediate students.
- All in-person clubs and activities are on hold, but clubs are still meeting virtually.
- Lunches are cohorted, with each grade eating in their assigned hall, except for Grade 9s who are in the cafeteria and their hall due to their larger numbers.
- Rapid Antigen Test kits are available and will be sent home with students today. Students may also pick them up at the office.
- There have been several staff changes:
- *Retirements*: Catherine Sedore (Education Assistant); Elzbieta Mirecka (Guidance Technician)
- *Transfers*: Cheryl Szebedinszky - Head of Science (VP Earl of March); Rohan Holligsworth - Long Term Occasional Teacher (VP Merivale); Tanya Black - Office Administrator
- *LTOs*: Nicole Bryant, Julia Endicott, Blair Killoran, Chris Metzger, Mark Vatsis
- *New Staff (Contract)*: Shane Kelly (Student Success Lead); MacKenzie Leduc (Student Success Teacher)
- *New Staff (LTO)*: Aly Dandach (Business and English); Mike Kroeker (Construction)
- Report cards will be distributed electronically. Information will be provided regarding how to access the marks.
- Grad is tentatively scheduled for June 28, depending on Covid restrictions and policies. We will have more information as details become available. We are hoping to offer a special event for our grads.
- We are looking at having a low-cost yearbook this year; details are to be determined. A small team of students is putting together photos. More information will be made available.
- In response to Mary Clement's question regarding support for students learning from home, Jon indicated that there is no blended learning program but staff are encouraged to offer a robust learning environment. It is difficult to transfer from in-person to virtual learning at this point. Students who are quarantining or sick with Covid will be treated as those with any acute illness. Staff will try to enable asynchronous learning, and will consider priorities for completing the work. Marks will not be frozen, but situations will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.
- In response to a question concerning Co-op students missing work due to Covid, Jon indicated that Co-op credits are based on the number of hours completed. Students lacking sufficient hours will be treated on a case-by-case basis.
- In response to a question regarding the protocol for students returning from vacation, Jon indicated that anyone who has travelled internationally should not attend school while waiting for test results. Information is available on the daily screening tool.

### **Music at Bell – Brad Campbell**

- The pandemic has been very challenging for the Music department and students.
- We would normally have a regular cycle of performances and work on pieces, but not now.

- In September 2020 we decided to try to keep music classes and ensembles as normal as possible, and focus on developing performance skills.
- In Fall we performed outdoors, but were unable to do so starting in November due to the colder weather.
- Last year we were fully virtual, and aimed to maintain a schedule of four concerts per year. We succeeded in this, but it was a tremendous amount of work for the students.
- Anyone interested in seeing what we are working on can go to the Bell Music site and our YouTube channel: <https://sites.google.com/view/bellhsmusicdepartment/home>
- We remain optimistic that we will get back to our regular cycle of live performances soon.
- We are following all safety guidelines, which include distancing, HEPA filters in the music room, maintenance of instruments, etc.
- Senior and Junior band performed for each other before winter break, a video of which is available on the website.
- We provide an inclusive environment where students are able to express themselves through music.
- In response to a question concerning the balance of music theory vs performance, Brad indicated that the curriculum has changed significantly over the years. It focuses on three areas: performance; history and analysis; and theory. Classes would normally be divided equally between performance and history/theory. However, given the restrictions on performances and the fact that students are performing at home, the balance has shifted and more time is being spent on the latter.
- Although it is difficult to make progress when all are playing virtually, students have nonetheless made significant strides.

#### **Staff Report – Maris Stasko**

- Marks go in next week, staff are finalizing assessments and preparing for new classes.
- We have been struggling with athletics and sports, as everything is on hold.
- It is challenging keeping up with sanitizing, maintaining distance, wearing masks, etc., and we are doing as much as possible outdoors.
- It is very challenging supporting kids doing virtual learning, when running an in-class athletics program. It is difficult to create interesting, novel ways to get kids moving, and is hard to document and assess.
- In response to a question, Jon indicated that staff absenteeism is low and we haven't had unfilled classes. Our DDP staff and students do a healthy snack program, and make 140 brown bag lunches for students. This is funded through the Board and is great way to help students learn important life skills
- In response to a question concerning students' fitness level, Maris indicated that kids who are active outside of school, participating in club and league sports, have maintained a consistent fitness level, but those who rely solely on school sports are struggling. The fitness level for the average child has decreased as lifestyles have become less active generally and more computer-based.
- In response to a question regarding virtual learning—either short-term or for all of Semester 2— Maris asked that parents advise teachers as soon as possible if their child is choosing this option, and also let office staff know. We are expecting more direction on this soon.
- There will not be exams in Semester 2, to balance it with the first semester.

#### **Treasurer's Report – Jen Samuel**

There is \$2,883 in the Intermediate account, and \$5423.21 in the Secondary account. No incoming or

outgoing funds.

## **Other Business**

### **Virtual Speaker Nights – Fred Schultz**

- The Board is providing more virtual speaker nights this year, on various topics.
- Last year we arranged a virtual speaker on parent child engagement, and had 52 participants.
- The Board will advertise the topics in March and will circulate a list of speakers, which will be assigned on a first-come first-served basis.
- We will discuss this further at the March meeting.
- Information will be provided as it becomes available.
- In response to a question regarding mandated e-learning (as dictated by the province during contract negotiations), Jon indicated that this seems to have become less of a priority, as the difficulties many students face with online learning have become apparent. The Board is focusing on de-streaming, as Grade 10 Math, as well as Science, Geography and English, will be de-streamed next year. This will present a significant change for Grade 11 students, and staff are working on ways to support them. With an upcoming provincial election and contract negotiations approaching, discussions on this are to be expected. Jon will look into e-learning and provide an update at the next meeting.
- In response to a question regarding virtual learning via TVO ILC (an online High School), Jon indicated that this costs money and, as we cannot charge parents, we would not likely pursue it.

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m. Motion to adjourn: Karyn Curtis; seconded: Jen Samuel

**Next meeting Monday, February 28, 2022**