

Trustee Stephanie Donaldson Ward 9

School Council Round Table

Monday June 21, 2021 7-8:30pm

Via Zoom

Minutes

- Meeting called to order at 7:01 by Trustee [Stephanie Donaldson](#)
 - [Land Acknowledgement](#) given by Trustee Donaldson
- This will be an open discussion to share about how the year has gone, what we have learned and what we may expect in the year to come.
- Introductions were made by School Co-Chairs and representatives.
 - Schools represented were: Regal Road, Carlton Village, Brock Public School, Ossington Old Orchard, Downtown Alternative School, Rawlinson, Perth, Dewson
- **Superintendents Update:**
- Executive Superintendent [Sandy Spyropoulos](#):
 - This school year has been a rollercoaster! What a ride!
 - Our staff, Students, families & communities have had to adapt quickly and readily as learning modes have changed and they have done it!
 - We have learned many lessons and we will be able to capitalize on those as we transition our students and families back into school in September.
 - September is still uncertain; we don't know how things will evolve but we seem to be moving in the right direction. We are getting our staff and students vaccinated and working with Toronto Public Health on the return to school.
 - We are preparing our staff to welcome students back to school recognizing that we need to pay very close attention to our students and staff mental health and wellbeing coming off eighteen months of social isolation.
 - We will be focusing on re engagement as we transition our students back into school socially and academically.
- Superintendent [Mike Gallagher](#):
 - Looking back over the last eighteen months and thinking about lessons learned; for me it would be that Public education, despite its flaws in design, has really proven to sustain itself over the year. It is a dense web of relationships. It is committed to its teachers. There are infinite possibilities of what public education can do.
 - I have been truly amazed by the fortitude of the students. They keep showing up and they keep being kids. The secondary students have kept getting credits. It has taken a huge amount of flexibility and adaptability. We have maintained our institution of public education and continued to be successful and drive forward.
 - Our commitment to early literacy has continued and we have learned that kindergarteners can learn to read successfully over Zoom. Our Grade One reading has continued to progress. Well-developed literacy skills are a huge advantage to all our students so if we get that right we can ensure that our students are successful.

- Our staff's, administrative and teaching, commitment to learning about anti-racism and anti-oppression has continued and gotten deeper over the last year. We are looking at what we have learned and what actions we can take and how we can include those actions in our [School Improvement Process](#).
- Superintendent Mary Linton:
 - The things I have learned this past year are about relationships. Building relationships with the Trustee, being able to talk about the good, the bad and the ugly and being able to problem solve together and to build trust.
 - Having co-workers with whom we can solve problems but also find time for humor and laughter and that makes a difference.
 - Building relationships with school staff and families. We call on each other and we learn from each other and remember we are all here to serve our students and to do our best.
- Superintendent Erin Altosaar:
 - We have to recognize that our kids have learned a tremendous amount this year. They have learned how to navigate systems, they have learned how to change, they have learned how to engage on an online platform (and done it better than most adults).
 - We hear a lot about learning loss, but I think we need to talk about the learning gains we have made this year too. We can learn a lot from the children and reimagine education and learning going forward. Bricks and mortar schools exist much like they did 150 years ago. We can make changes now while we have the opportunity to.
 - We need to remember the importance of play and joy in learning. We learn best when there is joy and we feel connected to what we are learning. This is for students and adults. When we go back to bricks and mortar, we need to remember that we learn best when we are having fun and that needs to be at the core of what we do.
 - It's been a tough year for families and teachers. We have individualistic perspectives right now and the key to going back will be building communities, within our schools, within our feeder schools and within our wards.
- Trustee [Stephanie Donaldson](#):
 - I want to thank everyone. You are all amazing and the amount of heavy lifting you have done this year is truly remarkable. I thank my lucky stars every day for the Chairs and Co-Chairs and school councils. You have really held it all together over the last year. All of us at the TDSB thank you from the bottom of our hearts.
- **School Council Updates:**
- Regal Road - Adam Miller:
 - It's been a whirlwind of a year. Lots of navigating information at the beginning. Lots of advocacy from the parent council.
 - Did virtual events this year for the first time. Our community really came together over zoom events with great turnout, it was a great way to connect the virtual

school families as well and I think going forward we will incorporate a virtual aspect into our events.

- Rawlinson - Alexis Dawson:
 - We also had successful virtual events
 - We used the telephone school messenger to reach out to students and families.
 - Our school council formed an anti-racism committee, Rawlinson Families Against Racism. Started with reading the book 'So You Want To Talk About Race?' and have booked the Freedom School for a three part series confronting racism for next year.
 - We transitioned principals this year. Our principal became a Superintendent and we got Lorelei Eccleston.
 - We completed our [School Statement of Needs \(SSON\)](#). This helped identify key priorities and also engaged students.
 - We are moving into the final phase of our playground improvement initiative.
- Dewson - Andrew Waters:
 - We had a lot of focus around outdoor education.
 - Also, a lot of focus on social justice. We have a social justice committee on our council.
 - Were able to cap off the school year with an online dance-a-thon.
- Brock - Cecile Farnum:
 - We also had a focus on social justice and outdoor education.
 - We have a new canoe garden at the school, and it is really nice.
 - The school came together in recognition of the 215 children found at the residential school in BC and tied orange ribbons to the fence.
- Ossington Old Orchard - Gail Klein:
 - We also did a big focus on outdoor education.
 - School council tried to make the school year welcoming and fun and spirited. We provided the students with fanny packs colour coded to their cohort.
 - We had an anti-bullying magic show via zoom.
 - The students painted orange rocks and lined the walk to the school in recognition of the 215 children from BC.
 - We are working up to a large fundraising initiative to do a full restoration of the school yard.
- Downtown Alternative - Keira Grant:
 - We are a small school and about a quarter of our student body was virtual this year.
 - Our school council was small but mighty.
 - We did a fundraising/engagement activity where we sold masks with DAS on them.
 - Social justice is always a big thing for us, and the students participated in Indigenous Awareness Day today and we have a big pride event coming up.
- Carlton Village - Melanie Medeiros-Sims:
 - We had a new principal this year, Cathy Chumfong.
 - We did a community survey and got a lot of feedback.

- We did unconscious bias training with Freedom School.
- We had awesome great interactions with other school councils in the ward and would like to continue that next year.
- Provided our struggling families with grocery gift cards.
- Parent Involvement Advisory Committee ([PIAC](#)) Update:
- Ward 9 Representatives, Cecile Farnum and Andrew Waters
 - The first day of school for the 2021-2022 school year will be **Thursday September 9th, 2021**. This is an odd start date, not on the Tuesday after Labour Day, so we want to bring it to everyone's attention. [School Year Calendar 2021-2022](#)
 - [Ward 9 PIAC Update - June 2021](#)
 - [Learning Model Preference Form](#) for 2021-2022 School Year will be distributed mid-August
- A heartfelt thank you extended to Cecile Farnum and Andrew Waters for all their work on PIAC representing Ward 9.
- Thank you to Alexis Dawson for her work representing Ward 9 as Co-Chair of the Black Student Achievement Advisory Committee.
- Thank you from Trustee Stephanie Donaldson to all the parents, caregivers and staff who have attended the Ward 9 Forums this year. Have a restful summer and know that we are here for you even over the summer.
- Thank you to Trustee Stephanie Donaldson from Executive Superintendent Sandy Spyropoulos. Thank you for your advocacy and support to the families of Ward 9.
- The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.