



September Meeting Minutes

7:12: Land acknowledgement (Mallory)

7:13: Alfredo introduces student council

7:15: Roll call (Alfredo)

Present:

Executive: Alfredo, Mallory, Danna

Parent representatives: Arturo, Midori, Jennifer, Shauna, Juan

Community representative: None

School: Lovenia Gorman, Sue Casey

7:17: Tips for new families (Alfredo)

- Roll call for families by age of child, for families new to the school
- Introduction to school council website (howardpublicschool.com), which has information for school payment and communications systems, as well as contact information for school administration and parent council
- Read the weekly Howard Hawk emails. If you don't receive those, contact the office to make sure your email is added to the list
- There is a school messenger app (School Msgr) where you can get school emails all to one place and look back at older messages. They also come to email
- Make sure your child's teacher has your email address for communication
- There is a Facebook group (Howard Parents), not managed by school council, where people can ask questions from other families
- Parents are also welcome to email school council with questions
- There is a class email list that gets sent out every year, and there is a class parent for each class who runs that list. The draft list should be out to families soon
- Some classes have formed WhatsApp groups, this is handled by the parents in each classroom

7:27: Introduction to council (Alfredo):

- Howard has many traditions (e.g. musical, cross country, sports teams), but nothing is guaranteed

- Sports/extracurriculars only happen if there is a staff member who volunteers to run the team. Teachers are not compensated for this
- Parents have offered to step in and coach teams. There is a process to be certified through the TDSB athletics dept. But a TDSB staff member must still be present at all events
- Cross country has opened up to all students of all genders, grade 1+
- TDSB is moving away from classifying events as boys/girls, but have not fully gotten there. The school is attempting to change this as well
- Visual arts project is coming up this year involving a large mural
- If you know your child has a particular interest, bring it up to council and staff to see if it is possible. Council could allocate funds, if necessary
- At a policy level, the TDSB is revising policy around volunteers. There isn't a current formal policy for volunteers, so the TDSB is creating one. This would allow for more community members (not necessarily guardian/parent) to support extracurricular activities
- Things that council organizes/supports include: fall fete (big fun fair in Oct), monthly pizza lunch, new tech equipment, art supplies, art workshops, calming space, scientists in the schools, sports equipment, learning garden, spring potluck, parent social, pride parade, book purchases, musical, grade 6 graduation, speakers for parents
- Last year's school budget was \$57,000 for things like supplies, desks, extra programming etc
- Typical council budget net is about \$40,000, which is high for the board
- School council is not just parents/caregivers, also includes staff members. Includes principal, staff rep, community rep, parent/caregiver reps
- Parent/caregiver reps have to attend the meetings, and are allowed to vote on motions
- Within parent reps there is an executive, including chair/co-chair, secretary, treasurer
- Council is in for one year and new members are elected on October 5
- If you are interested in being a parent representative, you must submit a nomination. This information will be circulated through the school. If you nominate yourself, you will probably be in. But if you join as a member and don't show up to the meetings, and then not enough members show up, no voting can happen
- If you don't want to be a part of council, you can still get involved: volunteer for initiatives, fundraisers etc. There is often a call-out for volunteers for events and coordinators. A more involved role is running a committee (e.g. STEM, tech, equity, sports). Anyone can attend school council meetings (monthly). People can also get involved at the board level – will discuss further next meeting
- Three things are happening now: Oct 5 elections for school council, TDSB multi-year strategic plan (document that guides the way the board allocated resources across the TDSB) and parents can comment, the TDSB is also proposing changes to the way parent funds are used and polling via survey (due Oct 10) asking about mechanisms for directing money from council to other schools

7:58: Principal Update (Lovenia)

- Lovenia thanks school council and school community
- Our school's strategic plan is focused on belonging and mattering. Ensuring that all students are valued, seen, and feel supported

- Continuing to eliminate disproportionate outcomes for all students, including how students identify. Work on making school a safe place for all students
- There is a new language curriculum that is connected to the science of reading. The curriculum can guide the existing work at Howard around the science of reading in both French and English
- Parent volunteers have helped develop literacy materials/sound walls for this year
- Sept 25 – 29 is the week of Truth and Reconciliation, including work with Alter Eden around the orange flower memorial garden
- TDSB is funding an outdoor mural pilot project at the school. Howard is partnered with ReCreate Place who will be working with all Howard Hawks, esp Gr 6 FI and Gr 5/6 E to create a mural.
- Learning buddies have been introduced this year school-wide. Partnering mostly a French with an English class of different grades who will be doing a school-wide activity each month. This month the project involves creating a belonging tree.
- Teacher reps for the school are Sue Casey and Ms. Maitland
- Playground Pals are coming back. This is a TPH organized program that gives Gr 4-6 students opportunities for leadership in helping younger students engage in games at recess
- Ashley Wood-Suzsko continues to be head of the wellness committee and worked on the Hawks' Nest calming space. This is a safe place to go for kids who are feeling dysregulated or need a moment to calm down.
- Howard has partnered with Calming Compass to do some PD work with the staff to support students with self-regulation and social/emotional development
- Howard has special education resource support for both French and English students this year. This supports students with EIPs
- Howard will be reorganizing on both French and English sides. Howard has been allocated an additional teacher on the French side. The proposal for this teacher is to reduce the number of students in the 2/3s and 4/5s. On the English side, there will be a reshuffling of the grade 1 – 3 students which will result in significant classroom placement changes
- The exact teacher placement depends on other movement throughout the board. Hiring may or may not involve an interview process
- Reorganization begins October 2. Parents will be informed about the new class on Sept 28

8:16: Financial Update (Danna):

- Money left over from last year, upwards of \$25,000
- Consider what committees will look like and what type of work should be done this year

8:19: Fall Fete (Yvonne):

- Annual fun fair held in Oct, huge fundraiser for the school
- Last year was a rebuilding year after a few COVID years
- Fun community event that includes bouncy castles, photo booth, games, indoor activities, food
- A great way to get involved and meet other Howard families. This involves a lot of volunteers and local businesses are asked for donations
- Volunteers are needed on the day of (set up, cleaning up), committee leads (e.g. indoor games, outdoor games, Chez Howard)
- Looking for co-chairs to run the Fall Fete, spread the word and find interested people. Yvonne can support incoming co-chairs

- No date has been set yet, but possibly end of Oct

8:25: Other Business (Alfredo):

- At what age do kids get instruments at the school? Lovenia: instrumental music itinerant teachers come to Howard once a week, typically for grades 5 and 6. This year there are not enough instruments for all grades 5 and 6. This year will only be Grade 6 students
- It is possible for school council to fund instruments (strings/band)? Yes. However, the budget may be large. It's also possible that instruments could be reallocated to other schools who need them.
- Are there tutoring resources for French students? The TDSB has not put out tutoring information yet

Questions, comments, concerns, or have a suggestion for us? We'd love to hear from you - please get in touch with Council: sc.howardjuniorpublicschool@tdsb.on.ca

Next meeting is Oct 18