

NTCI Parent Council Meeting Minutes

26 April 2017

In Attendance

Falguni Turakhia, Co Chair
Anne Ferguson, Treasurer
Ellie Morch, Co-Secretary
Simindokht Keramati, Co-secretary
Will Ollerhead, Member-at-large
Karl Reitmaier, Speaker Coordinator
Jess Hungate, Ward Rep

In Absence

Christina Kwong, Co-Chair, Ward Rep
Wendy Kagan, Event Coordinator
Daniela Popovik, Event Coordinator
Janet Vidtor, Member-at-large
Gila Rydlewicz, Safe Schools Rep

School Staff

Ms. Martha Bartley, Acting Principal

Ms. Helen Elliot (Staff Representative)

Welcome:

Mrs. Falguni Turkhia (Co chair) started the meeting.

Principal's update:

Acting principal, Ms. Martha Barley introduced herself

She has sent a number of email blasts but for some reason the emails were not delivered to the parents. She mentioned she will follow up and make sure that the emails will be sent from now on.

There were a couple of fire drill earlier in the week related to work in the condo unit attached to the school. Repair work using water to cool the equipment created a lot water vapour and this triggered the smoke detectors. The school was evacuated. There were no concerns about safety. Later that day students inadvertently triggered the smoke alarm again and the school

was evacuated. No safety concerns. The day of our meeting there was a lock down practice as part of the school emergency preparedness requirements. All these procedures went well. A parents was concerned about the lack of notification of these events either before hand,during or after. The principal apologized for the recent lack of communication in general and related to the email blasts that have not been going out. The principal promised to follow up to see what the TDSB does to notify parents in emergency situations as soon as possible.

She updated us with the recent activities as below:

- The blue report cards were sent two weeks ago.
- The blue exam time table were sent today (Wednesday April 26 2017)
There are the dates and time and the title of the exam on the blue cards. The rooms are not confirmed for each exam yet.
- A group of students in grade 12 participated in an exchange with Sioux Lookout to experience the culture/traditions lives of our First Nations people. The feedback from the students was amazing but emotional. These students are also going to meet with the Mayor John Tory and the students from Sioux Lookout on April 27 2017. There might be a television report on this meeting too.
- Charity week of April 3rd. Ms. Barley mentioned that she found the leader ship amongst the students in NTCL amazing. The amount that has been raised is not finalized.
- The exhibition “Midnight Madness” is still on in the school. It is an exhibition of the art works by grade 12 students. She asked to encourage parents to go and visit this exhibition.
- The Orchestra qualified to got to the National competition in Niagara Falls. This will be a great experience for the music department of NTCL.
- Earth Day assembly was fun and full of activities for the students. The focus for this year’s Earth Day was bees and the decline in their population.
- Some grade 12s will go to Thorn Cliff Park to meet and peer tutoring the Syrian refugees.
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Staff Update, Ms. Helen Elliot (Staff Representative)

Teachers have started to prepare the students for upcoming summates (30% of final mark) and final exams.

The blue exam time table has been sent home. Ms. Elliot asked parents to coordinate with their kids and help them with the timing to get ready for exams. It is important to be on time for the exams. Students should be present at the time of the exam. In the case of emergency or illness an absence requires a valid note from their doctor. This needs to be approved and in this situation the exam grade is an assigned average. Missed exams are not written later.

The teachers and the students are super busy these days, lots of events are happening these days.

The Student Council Election is about to begin, there are 41 candidates for 8 available positions. Each candidate is allowed to make only two posters.

Treasurer's Report and Financial Requests:

Ms. Anne Ferguson mentioned the thank you notes from the groups that have received funds from the parent's council.

Total inflows are \$30,077.36

Requests for funds:

Music department: The trip to Niagara Falls for the National competition. The cost for the whole trip is \$11550; they are asking for \$1000, the council is paying \$500 to them.

Sunnybrook Hospital PARTY program (health consequences associated with high risk behaviour/accidents): the fee is \$1200 they are asking for \$800. The council is paying them \$800.

All requests were motioned to approve by Will Ollerhead and seconded by Falguni Turakhia.

No discussion held. All in favour by a show of hands – majority in favour

Motion approved.

Presentation: Adolescent Mental Health:

Speaker: Mr. Jason Shaul Ellenbogen MSW, RSW, From Avenue Road Academy

Ms. Falguni Turakhia introduced Jason.

Jason is a registered social worker and psychotherapist with extensive clinical experience working with teenagers and their families.

Mr. Ellenbogen says that he has been working with teenagers for 20 years. Mental health issues are important especially during the teen age years. Your kids are not necessarily depressed but it worth it to be aware of the symptoms of depression in different ages. Have you ever dealt with a youth suffering from depression?

Mrs. Elliot says that there was a student two years ago that committed suicide, and their parents has founded a charity under her name, The Maddie Project. The goal is to raise awareness in teens and parents of the symptoms of depression and help the ones in need.

The communication between the teens and their parents becomes awkward during the teen years. They say parents do not understand them. How often do you sit and play a video game with your kids? It is important to share the moments of joy and happiness with them. Parents

always blame technology and related stuff for this distance but some part of this lack of understanding is on parents themselves.

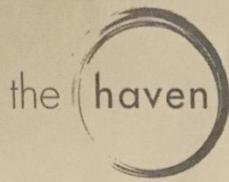
Because of the structure and the developing process of their brains, teenagers, mostly are unable to control their emotions. They might say something they did not intend to say in a conversation and it is important for the parents to be aware of these changes.

They might experience some anxiety in school or in their friendship, and get angry at you. However they did not intend to do so. You (Parents) should be patient and do not react to their actions immediately. Listen to them carefully to find out what their problem might be. The anger is often how they are reacting with a 'fight or flight' response to stress.

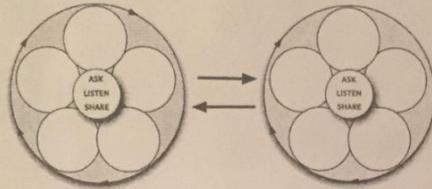
It is good if from time to time you give them feedback and ask them to give you feedbacks on the relationship. The problem is that when parents see their kids in an angry mood, they usually jump into the anger. The fact is that they might not be aware that they are acting angrily. If you (parents) ask them and remind them of the tone of their voice and the way they are talking. They might say that they are not angry and this gives them the opportunity to calm their emotions.

If a youth is not excelling in school this is a set up for concern because they feel they are not succeeding. Some may have a "learning disability" which he thinks of as "learning differences". The ability to learn in every kid is different. In any case please do not look at their disabilities instead look into their abilities and remind them that they are good at their abilities.

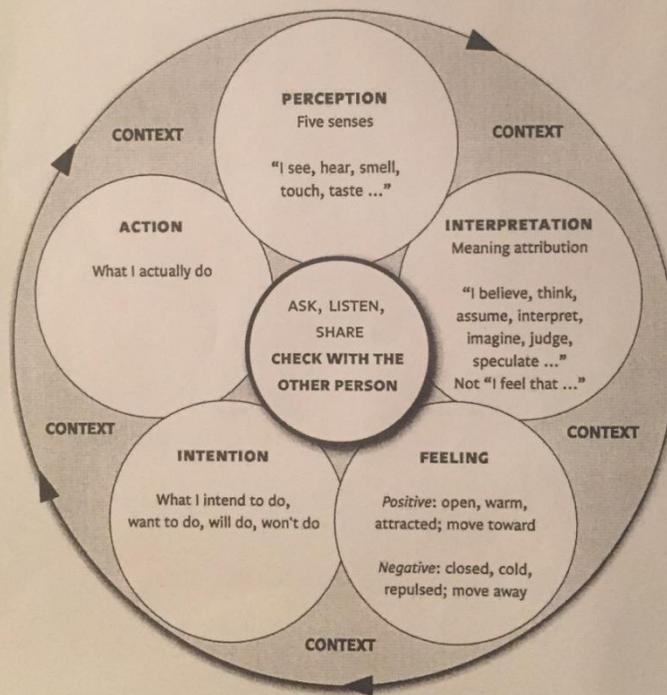
Knowing what they are doing online is important but monitoring them online is not good. It might ruin their trust in you.



The Communication Model



In using this model think in terms of *agreeing or disagreeing* with one another, rather than *being right or wrong*. Be curious about each other's realities. Also be clear with one another about your *intentions* as you communicate.



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Ms. Falguni Turakhia Thanks the speaker and ends the meeting at 9pm

The next meeting will be on Monday May 29 2017.

