

Hillcrest High School Council Meeting Minutes

October 26th 2022

7:00-8:30 PM

Attendance:

Kate Connolly, Co-Chair, Andrew Wigston, Co-Chair, Janet Mark Wallace, Secretary, Dinu Chande, Principal, Marilyn McMillan, Staff Rep, Alex Belgrave, Co-President of Student Council, Rebecca Doherty, Student Senator, Akash Karunaharan, Past Chair of Student Council, Christine Dalglish, Michelle Simms, Tori Moore, Valerie Edgecombe, Jenny Dzellis, Louise Doherty, Faten Arzouni, Jodi White.

Call to Order

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledged that we are meeting on unceded and unsundered Algonquin territory.

Introductions

All members of School Council had the chance to introduce themselves.

Approval of Agenda:

Moved by Tori, seconded by Andrew, to approve the agenda for October 26th. Carried.

Approval of Minutes from June 22nd 2022

Moved by Kate, seconded by Valerie, to approve the minutes of September 28th 2022 with the following amendment:

Q: In Elementary schools, boys and girls are now permitted to use each other's washrooms and this is why the main doors have been removed. Is this being discussed at the High School level?

A: This has not come up yet at Hillcrest. There is a gender neutral washroom available for student use. The Board has ruled that all students must given free access to the washroom that matches their gender identity and not their biology.

That the italicized part be replaced with:

A: Dinu: This has not come up yet at Hillcrest or any other schools he's been at. There is a gender neutral washroom available for student use. Students must be provided the option to the washroom which matches their gender identity. Carried.

Student Report: Student Rep, Co-President(s) and/or Student Senator

Rebecca Doherty is Hillcrest's representative this year on Student Senate. Student Senators from high schools across the OCDSB meet once a month at the Board Office at Greenbank and Craig Henry Drive in Nepean.

Student Senate is currently discussing the installation of menstrual products in bathrooms for free, starting in February. There is also some discussion about increasing recycling and composting within the schools. The first meeting this year was about brainstorming new ideas.

Student Council Co-Chair Alex Belgrave reported that the situation with crowding on OC Transpo busses, reported in September, has improved.

The Halloween Bake Sale almost sold out, and brought in \$200. There will be a Halloween Fashion Show on Monday the 31st. Student Council discussed the possibility of a Haunted House but decided there was too much risk of injury.

Student Council had a visit from members of the LINK crew to discuss how to best collaborate and avoid overlapping in their functions.

Question: Some students find that the halls are too noisy at lunch

Answer: Lunch time is a good time to get rid of energy that gets pent up during class, so a certain level of noise will be tolerated over the lunch hour provided it is not unreasonable.

Question: When are midterms?

Answer: Wednesday November 23rd.

Principal Report:

Principal Chande, expressed his overall positive experience so far at Hillcrest.

The School Climate Survey was done in the spring of 2021 for all students in grades four through twelve in the OCDSB. The following summarizes the data as it relates to Hillcrest

School Climate Survey, Spring 2022
(Presentation to School Council, Oct 26th, 2022)

- OCDSB Grade 4 to 12

4 Domains:

1. **Engagement** (e.g., sense of belonging and social connectedness, positive relationships with adults, intellectual engagement, school involvement, and support outside of school);
2. **Environment** (e.g. school environment, learning environment, school discipline, and diversity and representation, identity).
3. **Safety** (e.g., bullying, harassment, discrimination, and help-seeking)
4. **Well-being** (e.g., general well-being, and social and emotional skills)

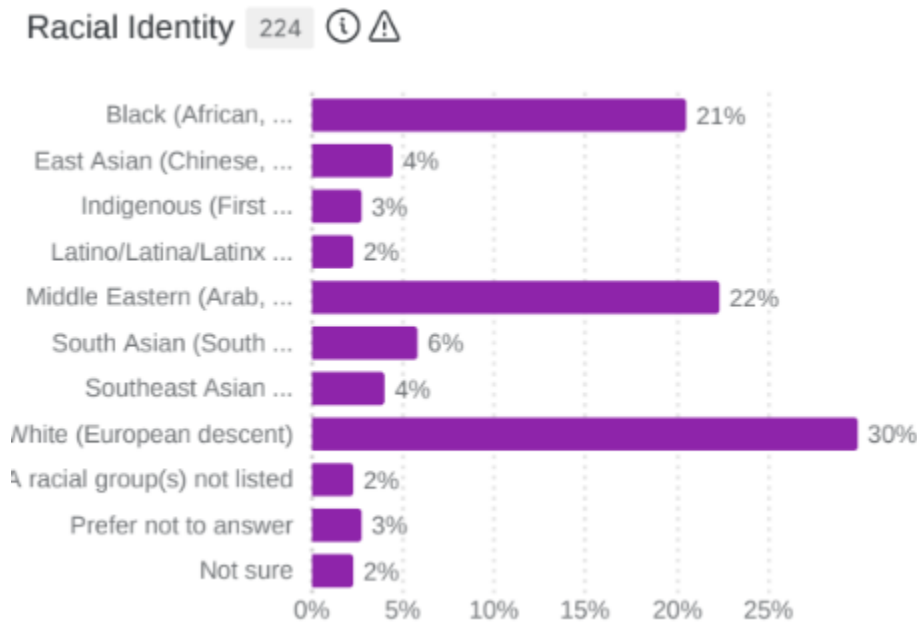
Purpose: better understand students' perceptions about bullying, safety at school, well-being and engagement. We know that when students feel safe and welcomed at school that they are more likely to achieve at higher levels and have a stronger sense of well-being.

School Data Files:

- [engagement.pdf](#)
- [environment.pdf](#)
- [HHS_schoolclimatedemographics.pdf](#)
- [safety.pdf](#)
- [wellbeing.pdf](#)

Selected Items for Discussion:

Participation Rate: 281 students responded - 61% of students.



Sense of Belonging and School Connectedness: The **12 item** measure of sense of belonging and social connectedness measures the extent to which students feel they are accepted by their peers and are a part of the school community. It also includes items related to connections with friends and between peers at school. It is measured on a **5-point scale** from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), with **higher scores reflecting stronger sense of belonging and more positive social connections.**

	# Responses	Average Score* (out of 5)	Favourability Rating (Across Items)
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			% Favourable	% Unfavourable
District (Secondary)	39,128	3.73	67%	11%
Your School		3.59	60%	14%

Positive Relationships with Adults at School: The **13 item** measure of positive relationships with adults at school indicates the extent to which students feel accepted by staff and experience fair, positive, and supportive interactions with both teachers and other adults at school. It is measured on a **5-point scale** from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), with **higher scores reflecting more positive relationships with teachers and other adults at school.**

	# Responses	Average Score* (out of 5)	Favourability Rating (Across Items)	
			% Favourable	% Unfavourable
District (Secondary)	38,311	3.62	63%	13%
Your School		3.43	53%	17%

Intellectual Engagement: The measure of intellectual engagement includes **4 items** for students in grades 4 to 6, and **7 items** for students in grades 7 to 12 that indicate the extent to which students enjoy school learning and feel a sense of goal orientation and achievement mastery. It is measured on a **5-point scale** from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), with **higher scores reflecting greater institutional or intellectual engagement.**

	# Responses	Average Score* (out of 5)	Favourability Rating (Across Items)	
			% Favourable	% Unfavourable
District (Secondary)	37,193	3.33	51%	22%
Your School		3.13	42%	27%

Sources of Support Outside of School: The **4 item** measure of sources of support outside of school indicates the extent to which students have sources of support at home and in the community. It is measured on a **5-point scale** from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), with **higher scores reflecting greater support and encouragement outside of school.**

	# Responses	Average Score* (out of 5)	Favourability Rating (Across Items)	
			% Favourable	% Unfavourable
District (Secondary)	36,381	3.96	77%	11%
Your School		3.76	67%	16%

School Environment: The **3 item** measure of school environment indicates the extent to which students feel the school is a friendly and comfortable place to learn, and whether they enjoy being at school. It is measured on a **5-point scale** from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), with **higher scores reflecting a more positive school environment.**

	# Responses	Average Score* (out of 5)	Favourability Rating (Across Items)	
			% Favourable	% Unfavourable
District (Secondary)	35,984	3.36	51%	19%
Your School		3.09	37%	27%

School Discipline: The **3 item** measure of school discipline indicates how students feel about the rules and strategies used to manage student behavior, and how fairly they are applied. It is measured on a **5-point scale** from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), with **higher scores reflecting more positive feelings about school discipline.**

	# Responses	Average Score* (out of 5)	Favourability Rating (Across Items)	
			% Favourable	% Unfavourable
District (Secondary)	36,039	3.42	55%	17%
Your School		3.16	40%	23%

Identity: The **4 item** measure of identity indicates the extent to which students feel that they are able to express and learn about their own identity and the identities of others. It is measured on a **5-point scale** from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), with **higher scores reflecting greater ability to express and learn about diverse identities.**

	# Responses	Average Score* (out of 5)	Favourability Rating (Across Items)	
			% Favourable	% Unfavourable
District (Secondary)	33,635	3.63	64%	15%

Your School		3.48	56%	14%
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Feeling Safe: The **6 item** measure of safety indicates the extent to which students feel safe at school, and on the way to and from school. It is measured on a **5-point scale** from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), with **higher scores reflecting greater feelings of safety.**

	# Responses	Average Score* (out of 5)	Favourability Rating (Across Items)	
			% Favourable	% Unfavourable
District (Secondary)	33,952	3.82	73%	9%
Your School		3.56	62%	14%

General Well Being: The **5 item** measure of general well-being comes from the *World Health Organization - Five Well-Being Index (WHO-5)*. It is a short self-reported measure of current mental well-being (over the last 2 weeks). It is measured on a **6-point scale** from 1 (at no time) to 6 (all of the time), with **higher scores indicating better well-being and quality of life.**

District	33,524	3.22	24%	38%
Your School		3.19	25%	40%

School Initiatives Related to Above Data

- Open House (reenvisioned to increase number and diversity of families attending)
- Full school emphasis on building relationships with students - Admin, Teachers, EAs, etc
- Student Council - school events starting again
- Start up BBQ with Grade Assemblies
- Link crew activities (example, Gr 9 transition activities, academic check in)
- Tues/Thurs homework club after school
- Clubs (linked on website)
- Muslim Student Association, Black Excellence Club
- Student Success Initiatives
 - Creative ways to engage students
 - Authentic Student Learning Experience (ASLE)
 - Junior Achievement Entrepreneurial Hoops Program
- Community supports - Black Youth, Somali Centre, Ottawa Public Health, etc
- Staff Professional Development
 - STEM - Science, Technology, Engineering, Math
 - Destreaming and Achievement
 - differentiation
 - Belonging
 - Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy (CRRP)
 - a pedagogy that recognizes the importance of including students' cultural references in all aspects of learning

- Close the achievement gap for underserved students
- OCDSB guidance counsellors for 2SLGBTQ+ & Black Students

Other Ideas:

- Chai & chat - bring in community groups, families
- Equity/Belonging Group
- Special Education, Guidance and Student Success Information Evening- (how to request and access services, assistive technology session, special topic (keynote speaker); guidance services; Credit recovery and the ASLE.

Question: Will there be an opportunity to further discuss the results of the School Climate Survey? Increasing relaxation of rules around punctuality and staying in class may make school feel more welcoming for some students, while making other students feel less secure.

Answer: Yes we intend to provide opportunity to further discuss the School Climate Results. This could take the form of a committee of Council to meet at a separate time, or a one-on-one meeting with the Principal.

Question: Are there new restrictions around spectating sports at Hillcrest?

Answer: On Friday October 22nd the behavior by fans at the Girls' Basketball game was not adequate. Consequently there will be no spectators permitted next Friday. From a Covid perspective, spectating is now permitted, so provided fan behavior is good, we will resume allowing spectators for sports matches.

Staff Report – Marilyn McMillan

Guidance Updates: from Jamie Bell of the Guidance Department

Fall Academic Awards - Tonight we presented our Academic Awards for the 2021/22 school year. This included honour roll, silver medal, goldcrest, subject awards, and two memorial awards. All award winners are listed on two posters that have been displayed in our lobby.

Post-Secondary Visits - We currently have colleges, universities, and various trades programs from across Canada visiting Hillcrest throughout the months of October and November in order to better inform our students of the options for after high school. All of these are listed on our Hillcrest Google Calendar and are being highlighted on our student services Instagram.

Post-Secondary Presentations - Earlier this month, Jamie visited all the grade 12 classes to provide a presentation on Post-Secondary Pathways. This presentation was emailed to all senior students and is also available on the Hillcrest Student Services Webpage. There was also a parent presentation during parent-teacher interviews.

OUAC Pin's - Eligible students will receive their Ontario University Application PIN numbers on November 1st at lunch in the lobby. All other high schools in the OCDSB are handing them out this week as well. Students do not need a PIN number to apply to college.

Course Offerings Survey - The guidance department will be sending out a Course Offerings Survey to the students and the community in the month of November in order to examine the courses that our community would like to see offered for the 2023/24 school year. Jamie will be able to speak about course selection, as well as how and when courses are offered through eLearning, when she attends School Council next month.

Hillcrest Clothing is now on sale-the order form and link to catalog is on the HHS website.

Question: Is the clothing sale to raise funds?

Answer: No, the school does not raise any funds off the sale of the clothes. It's just an opportunity to own clothes with the school logo.

Greening Report: Janet Mark Wallace

On October 21st, Heather Pelz, the landscape architect assigned to the city's School Yard Tree Planting Program, met with Janet and Principal Chande to discuss the location and species for the ten trees that we applied last year to plant on the grounds. The area in question is the northeast corner of the school grounds, the corner of Dauphin and Smyth. We will need to get approval by February 1st from the OCDSB Project Officer, Dan Fournier, to ensure that there are no underground structures that would obstruct the plantings. The trees would then go in the ground in May, and the school community would take responsibility for watering the trees over the growing season for the first three years.

Since Friday the 16th of September, Janet has been meeting interested members of the school community on Fridays at lunch at the veggie beds, to get the gardens ready for spring. We've harvested some cherry tomatoes and green onion for use in the Foods classes. We planted garlic, strawberry, rhubarb, thyme and oregano, and these should all emerge in early spring. We weeded all the beds, and started two composters. We've filled leaf bags to feed into the compost over the next year.

A family who lives near the school has committed to collecting compost at home over the next year and then donating it to Hillcrest once it's usable.

Word about the garden is getting out through the Open House, Student Council, the Foods classes, and people just observing what we're up to at lunch on Fridays.

Equipment-wise, for the first year, Janet is going to try to borrow as much as possible from other community gardens in order to avoid spending money on things we don't need. Once we have the experience of a full growing season we could apply to a city program called the Community Environmental Projects Grant Program to buy tools, watering cans and other equipment.

Treasurer's Report

There has been no activity in the School Council Account since we last held a meeting in September. The balance is at \$745.84.

Chair Report

Four parents have put forward their candidacy for the positions of Executive of Hillcrest School Council. They are as follows: Kate Connolly, Andrew Wigston, Janet Mark Wallace, and Tori Moore. The Chair called for any other nominations from the floor, and there were none.

Moved by Kate Connolly, and seconded by Andrew Wigston, to nominate Tori Moore and Janet Mark Wallace to the Executive of Hillcrest School Council. Carried.

Moved by Jenny Ellis and seconded by Louise Doherty, to nominate Kate Connolly and Andrew Wigston to the Executive of Hillcrest School Council. Carried.

Positions on the Executive will be negotiated among the four members, and then reported to the Council for the November meeting.

Janet reminded the full Council that it is very helpful to the Secretary if all reports can be submitted in writing, for inclusion in the minutes.

Open Questions

Question: Could more publicity be done about the need to keep the school fragrance-free, out of concern for those who have allergic reactions to fragrances?

Answer: Yes, we could put out reminders in the weekly emails and post signs on all of the doors. Once people are made aware of the issue they are usually happy to comply.

Question: Does Hillcrest have a Prayer Room?

Answer: Yes, there is a multifaith room in the basement dedicated to prayer or other quiet reflective activity.

Question: Are any parents interested in holding a fundraiser at Hillcrest?

Answer: Yes, one possibility would be a winter clothing and sports equipment swap. Janet will send out an email in the next twenty-four hours to find out who is interested.

Question: Does anyone on Council prefer to return to in-person meetings?

A vote was taken, with roughly half the Council wishing to try an in-person meeting for November. This will be confirmed when the minutes are distributed.

Adjournment Meeting adjourned at 8:30

Last meeting for 2022: Wednesday November 23rd 7-:8:30