

Deans Community High School

Parent Council Meeting Notes

Tuesday 1st March 2022

Attendees

Angela Ritchie (Chair), Pauline Allison (HT), Gillian Campbell, Eddie Carson, Patricia Miller, Ann Edwards, Laura MacMillan, Heather Marriott, Janice Ritchie, Caroline Bennett, Lauren Riddell, Ruth Williams, Stephen Small, Eric Carson

Apologies

Sandra Fannon

Agenda

- 1. Welcome**
- 2. Apologies**
- 3. Review of the Minutes from previous Meeting**
- 4. Parental engagement**
- 5. Connect Information sessions**
- 6. Head Teacher's update**

AGM

- 1. Election of Parent Council Office Bearers**
- 2. AOCB**

1. & 2. Welcome & Apologies

As above.

3. Minutes from the previous meeting were accepted by all attendees

PA introduced Ruth Williams, Student Council Chair. AR warmly welcomed Ruth to the meeting.

4. Parental engagement

AR has added to the proposed leaflet. This will be circulated again for all to review and provide final feedback to AR. It was agreed that this leaflet could be used as part of the rebrand. AR shared her idea of the poster which would represent the GIRFEC indicators along the lines of My World Triangle. This would include a collage of photographs that represent the GIRFEC indicators including stakeholders of parents, carers, school, outside agencies (for example health and wellbeing and career pathways.) For the Earth AR suggested using the DCHS logo representing the Earth encircled with a pair of hands.

GC spoke to the Art Teacher who suggested we may be better off engaging a graphic designer to create a banner which we could put on the fences outside the school to promote the Parent Council. PA will speak to DMG to see whether we can tap in and use their resources.

Once we have everything together, we can do a full launch of the leaflet, poster, website in addition to the renaming of the group. AR suggested DCHS Parent Group and DCHS Parent Partnership Group as the new name for the Parent Council. All liked DCHS Parent Partnership Group.

The blurb for the website will need to be revamped to make it more interesting and engaging. CB asked whether the group has a generic group email address for parents to contact us on. PA will ask Lauran Compton what other schools do for Parent Council communications. There would need to be clear guidelines on what parents can email into the generic email address. It shouldn't be used for grievances or specific issues with their own child.

5. Connect Information Sessions

There are a few sessions which AR could attend but suggested we could divvy them up around the group. All of us are to look at the sessions and email AR with which ones we would like to go on with the view we could attend and provide feedback on. EC has already registered for "Welcoming new families" and "Parent Councils – What's our role now". AR will attend "Constitutions and AGMs for Parent Groups". The "Using Social Media Safely" session was postponed unfortunately. AR asked whether the Social Media session could be sent to all parents when it is rescheduled. PA will find out. ER will also register for "Equality and Equity Toolkit" session.

SS confirmed we now have a dedicated Advice Shop officer within the school. There have been 5 Financial Inclusion Officers appointed across WL who will be located in James Young, St Margarets, Inveralmond, Whitburn and Deans High Schools. SS will work with Jenny alongside the Transition Programme to ensure the cluster primary schools are aware of benefits and support open to them including The School Bank, free school meals etc.

6. General Update

- **Student Council**

Ruth Williams introduced herself. Ruth was Vice Chair of the Student Council last year and is now Chair. There are around 30 students who make up the Student Council. Ruth has been a member of the Student Council since S1. The Student Council currently have three different committees – Rights Respecting School, Antbullying and Mental Health. They are just about to release a 2nd survey for Rights Respecting School working towards their Silver Award. For Mental Health the committee have weekly check-ins where students complete a wellbeing form. Specially trained teachers are available for any students who may need support. Antbullying FAQs are currently being created which will be

posted in classrooms, websites and sent out to parents. Student Council meetings take place once a month. Minutes are taken for anyone who can't attend as well as a suggestion box.

- **P7-S1 Transition**

SS has confirmed transition will take place in person this year although the format has not been decided as yet. SS & PA are in the process of visiting cluster primary school for in person visits. The new curriculum transition programme with live streaming of lessons including Maths, Humanities, Spanish and English have been well received by the cluster primary schools. Transition will ramp up after Easter with the transition visit proposed for June. AR asked if the Parent Council could be involved in transition meetings with the Parents whether that is in person or skype. Although there has been no guidance yet from the Scottish Government, PA is hopeful the transition meeting in June will include parents being welcomed back into the school. CB wanted to thank and congratulate the school on the new curriculum programme with the cluster primary schools. As a parent it has made a huge difference to her p7 child transitioning this year from p7 to S1.

SS also confirmed in person assemblies will start to take place again in the school.

- **School Budget**

The school budget sent out earlier covers the current school session. PA passed the budget to the Parent Council for information. PA confirmed we are in a better position than last year. Some of the budget was used to purchase the new tables in the canteen, revamped one of the business rooms. There is also a wish list from each department being collated which so far includes PE kit update, science equipment and an English transition novel project. Looking to carry forward about 4-5K into next year as a safety net.

CB asked about a chillout place for the students. PA confirmed after the summer we would have the rooms currently let to Cedarbank School back. The rooms will be used by Support & SFL. They will be repainted and carpeted. What each room will be used for is still up for negotiation.

EC raised his concerns regarding the 130K Covid Recovery budget which didn't seem big enough. PA explained there were many items which were covered by a central budget e.g. ICT which is split across all schools. The Covid Recovery budget was mainly spent on additional staffing. Indeed, the vast majority of the budget outlined in the email sent by PA today to the Parent Council is staffing costs. Twilight sessions are run by the teachers on a goodwill gesture. The Parent Council wanted to express their thanks to the teachers for organising and running the twilight sessions. Easter School will be funded and the teachers will quite rightly be paid for this.

Head Teacher's Update

Second of the Senior Assessments are currently underway. There will be additional feedback before the last burst of studying prior to the SQA exams.

SQA exam diet will take place between 21st April and 1st June. S5 will have study leave for the entire session. For S4/S5 sitting Nat 5s will have two days for each Nat 5 plus exam day.

Scottish Government will fund easter revision for the period starting today until end of May. PA has begun conversations with the PTs on what this will look like but will incorporate the Easter holidays,

during a normal school week, Friday afternoons and Saturdays. Arrangements will be confirmed asap.

PA happy to report the easing of Covid restrictions. Teachers and pupils may take their face masks off in classrooms. They do still need to wear them in communal and open areas.

S6 common room reopened for the first time in two years.

S6 Prom will be allowed to take place this year. Caroline & Denise are currently organising it. Date and Venue tbc.

CB asked whether S5s who left last year would be allowed to attend the S6 prom. PA to find out.

AR asked whether the details of the funded study sessions could be sent to the parents.

CB asked if a student had covid during the exams what would happen? PA confirmed there is a contingency plan in place. They would follow the process for appeal and evidence collected over the school year would be sent to SQA.

AGM

1. Election of Parent Council Office Bearers

AR confirmed she had sent an email round the group asking for nominations.

- 2.** The Chair's report was circulated for review prior to the last Parent Council meeting. This provides a summary of the key focus areas and actions taken throughout 2021, and the aims of the Parent Council going forward.

3. Election

4. AOCB

AR confirmed happy to remain as Chair of Parent Council for the forthcoming session. No nominations for Secretary but was agreed CB, LM, HM and PM would take turn to take the minutes.

AOCB

None

Next meeting: Monday 28th March 2022