

North Star Community School

2016-17 School Council Annual Report

The School Council is comprised of parents, teachers, non-teaching staff, community members and the principal. The Council's role is to provide an advisory forum to promote school growth, successful learning and increase parents/guardians' participation in the education of their child. They work with the school community to make our school a safe and positive place for students to learn. The members bring individual strengths to the table and work together to identify and support the needs of our school community. New parents and community members are welcome and encouraged to join our Council.

2016-17 School Council Members:

Mellisa Gallagher– Chair and parent
Julie Slack – Co-chair and parent
Lisa Campbell – parent
Lana Puumala – parent
Sherri Dragan – parent
Erica Lantin – parent
Amy Sodtke – parent
Megan Zacharias – parent
Carly Skrenski – parent
Chrissy Hamlin - parent
Anita Lyons – Community representative – NWHU
Laurie Mosley – teaching rep
Daniella Ojala – non-teacher rep
Jody Labossiere – Principal

2015-16 Meeting Dates:

September 27, 2016
October 25, 2016
November 22, 2016
January 31, 2017
March 28, 2017 (Sub-committee meeting for Family Mental Health Night)
April 6, 2017
April 25, 2017 (Sub-committee meeting for Family Mental Health Night)
May 10, 2017 (Sub-committee meeting for Family Mental Health Night)
June 3, 2017

Highlights from the Year:

Our School Council felt that they could best support our students and families in the Community, Culture, and Caring Goal of the School Improvement Plan. The goal states, "If we work with students to develop their self-regulation skills then they will develop the confidence and resilience to work through challenging personal and academic challenges." The Council recognized the importance of students being positive, productive and connected to the school in order to achieve this goal. They got involved in initiatives to build this strength in our students.

Student Being Positive, Productive and Connected

Council reviewed the results of the Tell Them From Me Survey and looked at ways for students to feel safe at school and feel comfortable in reporting incidents of concern on the school bus or school grounds. The school promoted leadership activities through student-led clubs. Grade 3-6 students took a real interest and led Dance, Soccer, Basketball, Yoga and Singing clubs at recess. Staff supported them as mentors and supervisors. The school continued to promote student voice with regular visits to classrooms to get student feedback and with a student advisory group to discuss issues that arise and better ways for students to report bullying issues.

Christmas Shopping Event

The School Council organized a highly successful "wrapping brigade" to assist children at our Children's Christmas Shopping Event. Members and liaison agency volunteers worked to bag, box, wrap and tag gifts that children had chosen for their loved ones. A great deal of pride and excitement followed the children out the doors and into their homes for the holiday season around these gifts.

Family Mental Health Night

The students and families of North Star Community School and Atikokan High School took part in our Family Mental Health Night activities at Atikokan High School on May 25, 2017. A total of 39 families equalling 112 participants attended the event. All of the evening's activities were sponsored by the Parent Involvement Committee's Parents' Reaching Out Grant.

A Welcome table was in the foyer where families received a passport for the evening and large maps of activity locations were posted. One bag per family was handed out for gathering informational handouts and prizes at Community Partner Tables. RRDSB and Community Partners in the event included :

Atikokan Fire Service Fire Truck display ; OPP car and info; Scouts and Cubs - camp set up in courtyard; Atikokan Native Friendship Centre - drummer and info table; Yoga with Susan Bourne; Public Library display; Township of Atikokan - After School Program and recreation programs; Shelter of Hope display; Family Health Team - Helping Children with Anxiety; Northwestern Health Unit -- Granola Snack and recipe/ Sugar Shocker display/ Infused Water samples/ OPHEA Health Literacy; Kidsport info and registration; Atikokan General Hospital -- Emergency Room 101; KRRCFS - making stress balls; RRDSB Mental Health Lead - Take Care of Your Selfie and Wheel of Wellness; RRDBS STEM co-ordinator with Math Activities; RRDSB Behavioural Therapist - Understanding Challenges Activities; RRDSB FNMI Collaborative Inquiry Lead -- Traditional Medicines/Cedar Tea; Mindfulness colouring pages; Soothing rock painting; Percussion Instrument exploration; Large family games – Connect 4, tower building.

Displays and Activity centres were well set up in the parking lot, Grayson Hall, classrooms, the lower gym, the courtyard and throughout the hallways in between. Families commented that there was so much to do that they did not get to all of the activities.

Prior to leaving for the evening, families stopped by the welcome table again where each student picked from a selection of books on Yoga, Mindfulness, and Community Support. There were also a variety of items to choose from to help restore calm when stressed: soothing rocks, stress balls, and fidgets. A large raffle table with items for healthy living was available for families to put their names into the draw for prizes.

Looking Ahead to 2017-18

1. School Council would like to maintain the high level of parent membership
2. Continue to look for direction from the student responses in the Tell Them From Me Survey
3. Sponsor workshops for parents: topics to support their child's development and achievement