

Sir Frederick Banting Secondary School

School Council Meeting – March 2nd, 6:30 – 7:30 pm

Attendance: Suzanne M (Admin Rep), Amaris P (Student Rep), Erica L, Naheed R, Francis H, Zaina A, Azmat J, Ana E-J, Chris F (Staff Rep); Amani R (Community Rep)

Regrets: Silvie M; Gregori, F; Neil B; Jennifer F; Aggie K.

Naheed chaired the meeting; we briefly reviewed the agenda for the meeting; and previous minutes were approved by the group.

Banting Updates

Principal Report (Suzanne representing Richard): New initiative launched – Relationship First. This is a 3-year pilot project beginning in September 2022 with a focus on grade 9 students. Year 1 (Grade 9), Year 2 (Grade 10), Year 3 (Grade 11). As they go through the program, students will be trained as peer support. The purpose of the initiative is to build relationships with students who may be struggling. It aims to build safe schools by working with professionals (teachers, social workers) to incorporate social-emotional learning in the curriculum. It seeks to address trauma, behavioural, and stress-related issues brought on by COVID-19; and it focuses on health and well-being for staff and students. As students are trained as peer supports, they will be connected to feeder schools (e.g., Wilfrid Jury) to build capacity.

Amani: Is this initiative available to community partners? This would be of interest to the NWLRC.

Suzanne: Yes. Relationship First is already partnering with St. Leonard's and open to partnering with other communities.

Teacher Report (Chris): Trish Ram (teacher) has developed a program to showcase students (monthly), who have demonstrated impressive characteristics. These include Empathy (February); Initiative (March); Honesty (April); Collaboration (May); and Resilience (June).

Banting students scheduled to compete in 'Over the Top' to highlight their business knowledge and skills. Grade 11 students will also participate in Reach Ahead – offered by Western University to encourage students to consider future options in a business career.

Other activities: tree planting; varsity try-outs after March break; first meeting to help students prepare for literacy test is upcoming.

Student Council Report (Amaris): Spring Coffee House (virtual) is scheduled for March 31st. Link to the event will be circulated for posting on April 1st.

Council intends to plan a semi-formal for April or May (depending on COVID protocols).

NWLRC Report (Amani): These are the programs we will be running at Northwest London Resource Centre (NWLRC)

1.Imagination Station – 1st and 3rd Saturday from 2pm-3pm (partnership with London Public Library)

- This coming Saturday (March 5th) we will be doing a Watercolour Painting Workshop.
- Workshops and activities using different art modalities to celebrate creative expression
- Youth can connect with other youth in the community

2.Northwest Eats – everyday Saturday from 9am-11:30am.

- Volunteers come together to cook 30 meals for the community, earn volunteer hours and a Safe Food Handling Certification.

3.Chit Chat – once a month on Thursday, March 10 from 4pm-5pm.

- Youth-oriented conversation circle to practice English.

4.Financial Literacy with RBC – once a month on Tuesday, March 15 from 3pm-4:30pm.

- Youth will learn about basic financial literacy including investment planning and OSAP.

5.Youth Council – 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month from 4:30pm-5:30pm.

- Youth can get actively involved in the community, an opportunity to have their voices heard, build leadership skills, and earn volunteer hours.

6.Be Kind to Your Mind: Let's learn about mental health – every Wednesday starting **March 9, 16, and 23** for 3 weeks, from 6pm-7pm

- A 3-part mental health workshop for youth 12+ to learn about mental health and practice strategies and tools for maintaining mental well-being.

7.Fresh Box is available for families in need every Thursday as well snack bags for children and youth every week from now until April 30th.

8.College Boreal will assist students with interview skills to help them prepare for their first job; taking place on March 24th.

9.NWLRC holding nominations to elect a new youth council.

For further information about NWLRC activities contact: Jasmine Lee at jasminelee@nwlr.ca

Additional Questions and Information

Suzanne: Trish Ram is creating mental health lesson plans (with Centre for Addiction and Mental Health Guidelines) to run in March. The goal is to get staff and students comfortable with talking about mental health and well-being. Will offer mindful meditation, tai chi, and yoga, and address myths and facts about mental health.

Naheed: How can we engage students who may not be comfortable participating in mental health-focused initiatives?

Suzanne: Students are encouraged to approach a trusted adult (e.g., guidance counselor, social worker, teacher, in the school).

Azmat: Are there screening tools to assess students who may be experiencing depression or anxiety?

Suzanne: No. Students can talk to a trusted adult for information about appropriate school or community resources. Staff are also encouraged to be alert for students who may be facing mental health challenges (e.g., be aware of students with attendance issues); also focus on building relationships and talking to students.

Naheed: Screening can also begin in the home. If there are challenges, parents are encouraged to reach out to the school for support and resources; and if necessary, school can connect parents and students to other professional services.

Suzanne: Banting has not received new protocols from the Middlesex London Health Unit in relation to opening the school gym. Other sports activities will become available in the coming weeks (e.g., track and field, soccer) for students seeking physical exercise.

Chris: There may be supervised after school gym activities in the next few weeks. As well, teachers are trying to support mental health and well-being by pairing students to reduce isolation; and teachers are increasingly sensitive to student needs so that they can be encouraged to care for themselves.

Naheed: Three more meetings before the end of the school year.

Next Meeting: April 6th at 6:30 pm