**NEWTON NORTH SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING – MINUTES**

8th meeting Monday, June 10th 2013

Room 103

**1. Attendance of School Council Members**

Jen Price, NNHS Principal & Co-Chair

Jo Doherty, parent representative & Co-Chair

Lynne Leblanc, PTSO representative

Melissa Hannenberger, teacher representative

Chris Alberg, teacher representative

Sonya Jampel, Junior student representative

Irene Golden, Junior student representative

Margaret Albright, parent representative

Sally Brickell, PTSO representative

Andrea Steenstrup, parent representative – resigning SC member effective June 2013

Patricia Muumba, Senior student representative - newly elected SC member for 2013/14

Jean Wood, newly elected parent representative - newly elected SC member for 2013/14

Laura Holt, newly elected parent representative - newly elected SC member for 2013/14

Apology for absence, received in advance of the meeting, from Ellen Gibson.

Apology for being late, received in advance of the meeting, from Bev Spencer

Absent from the meeting Jackie Gelb.

**2. Acceptance of minutes from last meeting – May 6th, 2013**

The motion was proposed & seconded & the minutes were passed by unanimous vote. These minutes will be posted on the School Council website – action discharged.

**3. Opportunity for Public Comment**

No members of the public were present at the meeting.

**4. Update on Kick off of the Pilot Mentoring program & the assignment of actions to SC members for next years schedule of meetings – Sally Brickell & Lynne LeBlanc**

Sally & Lynne reported the kick-of meeting went extremely well with great enthusiasm from all those attending. Attendance was good with only one student & one mentor not present. Mentees were grouped in pairs of similar concerns & circumstances & will work together with their mentors, so in the event one mentor is not be able to attend the other can facilitate both mentees.

Three translators - Chinese, Korean & Spanish - were present at the meeting.

Sarah Hoffman presented to the meeting an overview of the Counseling dept, & a graphic depiction of the timeline for the seniors next year – a subset of the timeline that has been prepared for the online handbook. After introductions the groups were then brought to the College & Careers Center where they were asked to complete an intake survey of their plans & goals for next year. These will be compared with a survey given at the end of the mentoring program in May/June to evaluate the success of the program for this group of mentees.

**Action:** Margaret Albright offered to tabulate & compile the intake survey responses & furnish the results back to Lynne & Sally.

Patricia Muumba, recent student representative to the School Council, is a student mentee participating in this program. She reported the meeting was very successful. She would like to be an architect & was paired with a mentor who is an architect, obviously a very useful contact for her. She reported it was good to hear other student mentees voice similar questions to those she has. Her Mom was overwhelmed that the school cared to this extent & so appreciated their mentor being available to talk her through this process and to help alleviate any concerns she might have.

Jen Price underlined that it was the highlight of her year. To walk in & see kids she cares deeply about & their families working with parents who have given so much to the community was a very emotional experience. It was for her the very definition of diversity & epitomizes life at Newton North High School with students from Uganda, Boston & Newton - varied mix of ethnicities & languages & from all types of socio-economic backgrounds. And not only were the mentees so impressed with the program, the Mentors also appeared to have left the meeting uplifted. Jen mentioned at the meeting that as this was the pilot feedback was needed from the mentee/mentor group as the program progresses in order to calibrate success. And she has been aware that since the meeting some mentees & their mentor have been in communication rather than waiting until the next meeting. It was important to have such a diverse pool of mentees participate in this pilot in order to see if the program could be successful.

It became apparent at this meeting how important it was to have the student mentee be present. At earlier School Council meetings when this pilot program was being brainstormed some consideration was give as to whether the student should be required to be present or if it should be something offered just to their families. Patricia emphasized that she saw the student being present & active in the process as very important.

The recruited mentors are all adults & have all been through the college application process. Initially, when the pilot was being designed, this experience was not viewed as a pre-requisite but it quickly became obvious during this meeting that any future mentors need to have this experience.

Current recruited mentors are all female. It was noted that for future phases of this program it would be great if we could think about how we could recruit male mentors. And it was viewed that the recruitment of mentors will be the restriction on how many mentee students can be included in future phases of this program. So consideration should be given as to the means by which mentors are recruited. It was suggested that possible venues might be school run seminars or events attended by parents of seniors at which to highlight the program & to identify parents whose youngest/only child is a senior at NNHS. To really highlight & sell the program it might be powerful to have testaments from recent mentees & mentors about their recent experience.

The sustainability of the mentoring program was discussed. For the program to be viable the existing staff of the Counseling department cannot run it. Jen indicated her desire to have 3 stipend positions: one to be the NNHS program contact person for the mentors, the second to be the NNHS program contact person for the mentees & the third to be the NNHS program contact person with responsibility for the content of the meetings. Such stipend positions can only be funded for one year after which the ultimate goal would be to successfully lobby the School Committee for a FTE – a funded staff position to take this onboard. The recruitment of mentors would, in Jens view, continue to be the responsibility of the PTSO & School Council members. To help sustain running the 2nd tranche of the program, anticipated to begin in January with selected Junior student mentees, & to have someone experienced running it, it was agreed to have someone from School Council shadow Sally & Lynne in running the current meetings.

**Action**: Laura Holt volunteered to shadow Sally & Lynne as they run the remainder of the meeting for 2013.

The meeting then turned its attention to what this Mentoring Program should be called. After some discussion it was decided to give that honor to the student mentees participating in the pilot.

**Action:** Patricia Muumba to talk to her fellow mentee students about their suggestions for naming it.

**5. Update on progress of Documentation Group including promotional ideas – Melissa Hanenberger & Jo Doherty**

Melissa reported that the group now has a draft of the completed document, minus a few appendices, which they are now going through with edits. The handbook currently contains 10 chapters plus appendices & is approximately 100 pages in length. The edited version will be sent to the editor suggested by Jen for her to review. It is hoped that will be in time for it to be translated. It was suggested by the meeting that the first languages it should be translated into should be those spoken at the mentoring program – Chinese, Korean & Spanish.

The title of the online handbook was discussed. Melissa reported the desire of the working group to call it the “NNHS College Handbook” or some such title, thus reflecting the handbook’s main focus. In order to ensure the handbook would be available online by September the group has focused on the college application process with virtually no information about other post-secondary opportunities. Jen Price agreed to this on the basis that the School Council would address whether another resource might be necessary to address other non-college options.

Melissa reported to School Council that the working group preferred promotional ideas for the hand-book which highlighted it as an online resource. The meeting discussed possible promotional ideas such as a postcard, bookmark or a magnet. These could be distributed at events such as Back to School Night, parent seminar evenings & other such events. In addition, the handbook could be promoted by advertising it in the NNHS Directory. Lynne & Sally suggested the PTSO could hold coffee/meetings to promote/discuss the handbook. Jen indicated she would be happy to talk about it in her summer mailing, however she did state that she wouldn’t sign off on the handbook unless the names of those working on it are attributed in it.

**6. Update on increasing the number of student members on the School Council – Sonya Jampel & Irene Golden**

School Council welcomed Patricia Muumba as the newest student representative to School Council. Patricia is a current junior who is also a student mentee in the Pilot program. In an effort to have student representatives on School Council from all grades, students were asked to recruit at least one student from the current freshman body.

**Action** – SC student representatives to ask the class of 2016 Housemaster - Adams House - to recommend at least one student for School Council.

**7. AOB & Schedule of School Council Meetings for 2013/14**

Jen Price announced that the chosen summer reading for Newton North is “Outcasts United: An American Town, A Refugee Team, and One Woman’s Quest to Make a Difference” by Warren St. John. The true story of what happened when in the 1990’s refugees fleeing from the world’s war zones settled in a typical Southern town in Georgia. In an effort to provide unity, a youth soccer team was established calling themselves the Fugees. Each year a different department will have the responsibility to host the book discussion in their classes. This coming year, 2013/14, will be the History department.

Jen also thanked members for all its work remarking how productive School Council has been this year especially in working to promote her ideals of equal access to a excellent education for all students. In addition, she expressed her gratitude for departing School Council members Ellen Gibson & Andrea Steenstrup for their service to School Council.

The schedule for School Council meetings for 2013/14 will be sent to all members as soon as the NNHS calendar has been set. It was suggested & agreed to have the first meeting begin in September rather than as usual in October.