

SAC MEETING SUMMARY
Halifax Central Junior High School
Wednesday, April 21st, 2021 6pm

1. **Attendance (via zoom)**: Valerie Meers (Principal), Erica Phillips (Vice Principal), Clare Bilek (Chair), Kelly Bower (Vice Chair), Pheilm Martin (Staff Rep), Jennie Colburn (Secretary), Lorelei Burgess (Community Rep), Jeanine Meade (parent), Peggy Brown (parent), Cyndy Allen (parent), Tessa & Gabriel T. (Gr. 7 reps), Michelle L. & Kathleen A-R. (Gr. 8 rep), Oula M. (Gr. 9 rep) ; Regrets: Denise Smith (Staff Rep)
2. **Approval of Agenda**: Agenda was approved.
3. **Approval of minutes**: Minutes from February 2021 approved; Minutes from all meetings are now posted on the school website
4. **Principal's Report**: (presented by Val Meers)

Student Success Plan (SSP):

Student Survey re: Well-being – families would have received a correspondence on Monday regarding the Student Success Survey that will be completed at school between now and April 30. See attached for details.

The results will help us with our well-being goal of our school's SSP.

We will also take into consideration our Action Steps from our work with BLM in Education and possibly add student voice, choice and sense of belonging at school to our Well-being goal. I will be working with Karen Daye, HRCE School Improvement Facilitator, to ensure our goal is appropriate for all students. This is due to HRCE on May 31, 2021.

STEM opportunities (a follow-up from last SAC meeting):

I spoke with Lynda Shoveller and here is a synopsis of that conversation:

Much of the STEM opportunities this year were put on hold or greatly reduced because of COVID. We are taking part in the program offered by NS Agriculture in growing strawberries hydroponically. It is located in the Math/Science pod room and if it is a success there, it can be introduced next year as a real learning tool. We are not having a Science Fair at school this year only. It was restarted a couple of years with many of our student body participating. Last year, there were significantly fewer students who participated, but still some. Some of our students did attend Regionals at SMU. Regionals is still happening, but it is virtual, and was very late getting organized.

Although this isn't STEM specific, Katie Paul and Lynda also are planning on getting involved in an environmental programme at the end of the month, going until May 3. It is a community based biology programme where the students download an app and as they

go about their days in the community, they will be asked to take pictures of any flora, birds, or animals, and the app immediately records the data in a national data bank that scientists can then access and keep track of what is going on where on a biology sphere.

Air Quality Testing Process:

I have a Zoom meeting with Craig Cole, Supervisor of Maintenance for HRCE Operations Services, and Bob Lawrence, Regional Manager for HRCE Operations Services, this Friday at 3:00 regarding the applications I submitted regarding the Indoor Environment Quality.

Grade 8 Reading, Writing, and Mathematics Assessment (RWM8):

The Nova Scotia Assessment (NSA): Reading, Writing, and Mathematics in Grade 8 will be administered on four sessions between May 25–June 4, 2021.

Assessments are typically scored at a provincial scoring session in order to provide the province, regions, and schools with data regarding student performance. A

Following the administration, scoring, and analysis, results are shared with parents and guardians, teachers, schools, and regions. The following reports help schools identify areas of strengths and challenges. Individual Student Assessment Reports are provided to parents and guardians and teachers; these are accessed through PowerSchool.

Conrose Field consent forms:

If we receive all consents back from families, students will be able to have their Phys. Ed. Classes at Conrose Field for the month of June. Kelly Gillis and Erica Phillips will be the two adults going with the students.

PD (Black Lives Matter in Education):

Teachers viewed an interview with Robin DiAngelo, author of *White Fragility* and had a whole group discussion afterwards about being the agents of change and disrupting systematic racism.

Then we divided into smaller groups and had discussions on preassigned four chapters in *White Fragility* with suggested questions on each chapter to help guide these discussions.

The last part of our PD day, we watched a video on “Microaggressions in the Classroom” and discussed what this looks like in our school. We had a whole group discussion on Action Steps for our school in terms of student voice and choice and feeling a sense of belonging at our school.

Grade 9 Closing:

Education leaders continue to engage in conversations with Public Health about graduation and moving ahead ceremonies. We understand the important role these ceremonies play in the lives of staff and students as a rite of passage. We know that schools need to plan ahead, so we hope to have some guidance on this soon.

Planning for next school year will be coming soon. While it is difficult to predict the future during a pandemic, we will continue our conversations with the Learning Continuity Table and Public Health. We will continue to provide updates as they emerge.

I have forwarded our plan to HRCE for consideration. It is as follows:

Grade 9 Closing Proposal:

We would have a ceremony for one cohort in the morning and another in the afternoon. We would hold it in the gym with the students spaced with a chair between them and of course their masks on. As a fun fact, in the seat between the students we thought we would ask for a picture of their parents / guardians and tape that to those empty seats. (The same concept you see at sporting events.)

They would be called one at a time to the stage and given their certificate and any awards.

The presenters would be wearing masks and will sanitize their hands between each student.

Afterwards, the grade 9 students from that cohort would have a social gathering (required to social distance) in the gym with celebratory cupcakes.

We were discussing if we should record it or stream it live for just the families to see and we will have to review our Media Releases for that. We would like to broadcast it to the other grade 9 class while they are in their classroom. (We also would like to broadcast to the grade 7s and 8s as we were thinking we would announce any awards for them and then the teachers in the classrooms would present the student with their award.)

We were hoping to have this on Friday, June 25.

SAC Funds – Focused Instruction:

See attached mini reports from teachers (13 Sub days at \$195/day = \$2535)

Suggestions for the remainder of the SAC grant money (we need two stoves and a fridge for Food and Nutrition course, Students who have Life Skill IPPs, and any other events for the school in which a stove and fridge are needed)

Speed Bumps:

I received the attached correspondence from Jason Hockley, who is a Design Engineer with HRM Project Planning & Design. Please see attached notices regarding traffic calming measures to be implemented this summer on Preston, Cedar, Chestnut, and York streets near Halifax Central Junior High School.

Proposed Bell Time Changes by HRCE for 2021-2022:

I have been notified by HRCE that they are looking at changing our bell times for an 8:25a.m. start time and a 2:45p.m. dismissal.

So this is the proposed schedule for next year (attendance will be taken each period):

8:05 - teachers arrive
8:15 - doors open for students / duty starts
8:25 - 9:25 - period 1
9:25-10:25 - period 2
10:25 - 11:25 - period 3
11:25 - 12:40 - Lunch
12:40 - doors open for students
12:45-1:45 - period 4
1:45 - 2:45 - period 5
2:45 Dismissal

I would like to keep the separate grade level entrances the same for next year.

Additional Music Course for 2021-2022:

Tentatively, we are hoping to offer the course called "Explore Music" and it runs simultaneously with Band so students either choose Band or Explore Music. These run for the entire school year.

Students will still receive their other electives of Family Studies (7 Textiles, 8 Food & Nutrition, and 9 Child Studies), 7-9 Tech Ed, and 7-9 Art. Each term will have one elective, as we are no longer allowed to do half-year courses for electives, as this does not align with reporting periods.

Erica did some research and Elizabeth Sutherland and Oxford are running it this year and ES found it strengthens their music program

School Courtyard Beautification Project:

We would like to get students involved in bringing our courtyard to life (i.e., planting flowers). However, if SAC is comfortable with writing to the MLA regarding a grant to provide picnic tables (2 have rotted this year and were thrown out), to replace the wood around the flower bed as well as the bench attached, and anything else that can add to this outdoor space (it is used for mask breaks, outdoor classroom, and by the community after school hours and on weekends, holidays, etc.).

5. **Staff Report:** no news to report at this time from the staff as a whole.

6. **Student's Report:**

Gr 9 - request for more menstrual supplies in the bathrooms (specifically tampons, deodorant)

Gr 8 - request for more outdoor work during class time and to look in to improving the internet connection outside of the building

Gr 7 - ask for more mirrors in bathrooms which was met with Ms. Meers explain they had been purchased but needed to be returned and re-purchased with appropriate

hardware; Mention of asking for more fair teams during gym classes (follow up with Ms. Gillis to take place)

7. **Business carried forward from last meeting:**

a) Consideration of Correspondence re: school ventilation

No consensus was reached so the committee left it that people could send in letters and notes of concern on an individual level.

8. **Next meeting:** May, 2021, 6pm via zoom

9. **Adjournment:** 7:16pm