

Halifax Central Junior High School
SAC Meeting Meeting Summary
October 27, 2021
6:00-7:00p.m. via Zoom

1. **Welcome:** In attendance: Valerie Meers (Principal), Erica Phillips (Vice Principal), Kelly Bower (Chair), Jennie Colburn (Secretary), Lorelei Burgess (community rep), Clare Bilek (past-chair), Kathy Anne Rainforth (parent), Pheilm Martin (staff rep), Michelle (grade 9 rep), Elly (grade 8 rep), Jack (grade 7 rep)

2. **Approval of Agenda:** Agenda approved.

3. **Approval of Minutes** (From April 2021 meeting, review of September Summary): Minutes approved.

4. **Election of Executive:** The annual election of executive was held.

- **Decision:** Kelly Bower was elected as Chair, Jennie Colburn was re-elected as Secretary. We have representation from all 4 groups for SAC (Staff, Students, Parents, Community members) and have enough elected members for quorum.

5. **Principal's Report:**

1. Bell Change Protocol (due December 1st):

- Many parents have expressed concern about the new Bell Times in terms of access to crossing guards and coordinating with siblings attending sister schools. School Administration has looked into the process of requesting changes. Bell Change for the 2022-2023 school year is due to the regional office by December 1st. (note: HRCE has communicated that not all changes are approved).
 - o **Decision:** SAC committee decided to put forward a formal request to change bell times for next school year to be similar to sister schools for access to crossing guards and family management.
 - o Separate from SAC, a parent group is making a request for crossing guards to be available for HCJH for the rest of this school year.

2. Student Artwork:

- We are excited to share that we were approached by Lorelei Burgess, our SAC Community Member, on behalf of the Quinpool Road Mainstreet District Association, to provide student artwork for the banners that will

line Quinpool Road during the holiday season. Our Visual Arts Teacher, Mr. Pheilm Martin, was so excited to work with our grade 9 students in their Citizenship classes on this Holiday Community Art Project.

Thank you to Lorelei Burgess, the Quinpool Road Mainstreet District Association, and Mr. Martin for providing this wonderful opportunity to our grade 9 students. I am sure they will be thrilled to see their creations on banners lining Quinpool Road.

3. Student Success Plan Goals:

Every year the school is asked to identify goals for a Student Success Plan in the areas of literacy, mathematics, and well-being. The goals identified for this school year are as follows:

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Strategies: <i>(assessment for learning, instruction and learning team focus)</i>
ELA teachers will conference with students on their writing using common language to teach, prompt, reinforce and assess conventions, language use, and organization.
ELA teachers will provide students with opportunities to self-assess, give themselves feedback, and set future goals in relation to success criteria for conventions, language use, and organization.
Teachers will leverage digital technologies in instruction and assessment to ensure equitable and inclusive opportunities exist to meet the needs of all learners.
Mathematics Goal: Students will improve in their ability to access prior knowledge to problem solve new concepts.
Strategies: <i>(assessment for learning, instruction and learning team focus)</i>
Mathematics teachers will create opportunities for students to reflect on their current understanding of specific math concepts both prior to and following formative assessments.

Mathematics teachers will use a constructivist approach to math instruction with an emphasis on providing opportunities for students to engage in challenging, culturally relevant, and novel problem-solving situations.

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Well-Being Goal: We will improve students' sense of belonging and well-being at Halifax Central Junior High School.

Strategies:

School staff will promote the skills, habits, and mindsets that enable self-regulation, interpersonal skills, perseverance, and resilience.

School staff will promote strong attachments and relationships, a sense of safety and belonging, and relational trust.

School staff will enable healthy development, meet student needs, and address learning barriers.

4. Feedback on Adams Photography:

- Last year several parents expressed dissatisfaction with the school photos. A new company was used this year. Many students and staff expressed what a positive experience they had on photo day with the photographer, Paul. They asked to use it in their testimonials. For follow up, SAC is interested in hearing from parents about the quality of the photos, to inform whether the school should go with the same company next year.

5. Remembrance Day Assembly:

- School based (unfortunately no families) to maintain Covid Protocols for gathering limits.

- Our School Counsellor, Nicole DeLory, organized our guest speaker.

Corporal Grantham, he is kind and knowledgeable and has agreed to come in person for our assembly, what an impact that will be. He has done many presentations including speaking to our audience age level.

He will speak about what is the military, what impact it has on his family, etc - that relates into career counselling goals as well as the important social emotional outcomes.

He said we can have teachers recommended to students to think of questions before hand so they are prepared.

So privileged to have this speaker.

6. **Staff Report:** no news to report

7. **Student Reports:**

Michelle (gr 9 rep) -

1. Michelle reported students have concerns about temperature fluctuations in the school (too hot/cold). Ms. Meers responded that our heating system is old and it takes time for it to adjust when the caretaker raises or lowers the temperature. Students should be encouraged to dress in layers to accommodate these fluctuations.

2. Michelle said some students and families are concerned about the trees in the courtyard by the main entrance. They are very close to the building and there are worries of structural damage to the foundation of the building. Ms. Meers let us know that operations has been contacted and is going to assess the concerns we have.

Elly (gr 8 rep) -

1. Elly brought forward that there is conflict between some students in the grade 7 and 8 classes surrounding rumours. Elly was comfortable speaking with Ms. Meers and Ms. Phillips after the meeting to discuss further.

Jack (gr 7 rep) -

1. Jack asked that birthdays be announced. Ms. Meers explained that although they would like to acknowledge birthdays during daily announcements, there is worry of someone feeling left out if their names are accidentally missed during these announcements.

2. Jack requested a day off (or half day) on November 1st so that students could recover from Halloween. Ms. Meers said would be happy to accommodate, however, we are not able to make those decisions at the SAC :)

3. Jack asked about field trips. Ms. Meers mentioned that bussing is an issue and that we could perhaps look in to some field trips within walking distance. Staff and students are encouraged to bring ideas forward. On this note, it was also suggested that parents interested in volunteering could submit background checks to the school if they have current and/or updated checks. Due to covid restrictions last year, a number of volunteers have expired checks on file.

8. Business carried forward:

- (a) A subcommittee consisting of Janine Meade, Clare Bilek, Kathy Ann Rainforth and Laura Brady are going to submit a 'Letter to the Editor' of the Chronicle Herald outlining concerns from parents with regards to lack of crossing guard coverage for the junior high students since our bell schedule has changed this school year.

9. New business:

- (a) Bell Schedule Change Proposal: The SAC is going to put forward a bell schedule change proposal (deadline Dec 1) in hopes of returning the bell times to what they have been traditionally. This request is largely in part due to lack of crossing guard coverage for the junior high students and to ease time management for families with children in our Citadel family of schools, specifically Central Junior High, Tupper Elementary and LMST.
- (b) School Sports Spectators: Central has decided that spectators will not be allowed for school sports held indoors. There is only one school in HRM (SHSH) that is allowing spectators. It has been decided that the navigation of proof of vaccination checks, maintaining social distancing and monitoring gathering limits was not possible at this time, and would be reviewed again if/when public health protocols change in the future.

10. Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 7pm. Next meeting schedule for Wednesday, November 24th, 6pm via zoom.