

# Bicentennial School Advisory Committee Meeting Summary

Date: November 18, 2024

## Attendance

The meeting was attended by Ben and Ayumi (student representatives), Brianne Hunsley, Ed Keeble, and Helen Plowman (parents), Principal McGowan (non-voting), Ms. Webber (staff), Pastor Mutale (community), and Ingram Barss (non-voting). Bryony McStay (chair/parent) sent regrets.

## Principal's Report

- Other schools will be adopting student reports at SAC meetings.
- The gym renovation is complete, with painting to be finished over the winter break.
- The lunch program, managed by the VP, lunch monitors, and grade nines, is serving an average of 260 lunches per day. Extra lunches are distributed around 1 PM daily. The program could benefit from more variety and inclusion of dietary needs.
- The school received a \$12k President's Choice Grant for food-related initiatives. Ideas include serving smoothies (suggested by Ms. Webber) and utilizing volunteers/support from Pastor Mutale in the mornings.
- Ms. Webber took all grade 8 students on a field trip to hear a speech from a Holocaust survivor.
- The ML3 provincial assessments revealed that writing is an issue. Principal McGowan noted that students rarely write by hand outside of school, yet all tests are conducted with pen/pencil. Math scores are good, but geometry could use improvement.

## Student Report

- Lunches have been good overall, but the addition of condiments and a way to heat the food (microwave) would improve variety and quality. Portion sizes are based on elementary students, so older students need to supplement with food from home.
- The off-gassing smell from the new gym floor varnish has been unpleasant.
- Junior high students often lack necessary supplies like pencils and glue sticks. Principal McGowan committed to supplying these items to grades 7-9.

## Other Business

- The Innovation Fund proposal due date is approaching in the early new year. SAC members are welcome to submit ideas.

- Feedback on the lunch program is being sent to the HRCE by Principal McGowan, including questions about dietary restrictions.
- Pastor Mutale raised the question of mental health education. Suggestions included utilizing Ms. Mitchell as a resource, hosting assembly guest speakers, and incorporating mental health guidance into the school newsletter. Ms. Webber noted that junior high teachers often incorporate mental health guidance into their lesson plans.
- The school has support staff who follow up on students consistently not completing work in class.
- Opportunities for parent feedback include upcoming parent-teacher interviews, regular teacher communication, and staff follow-up on attendance.
- The SAC has approximately \$5,000 to spend, historically used for the school supply program. Ideas for spending will be collected and voted on at the next meeting.
- A question was raised about recent changes to the elementary lunch schedule. Principal McGowan noted that no official changes have been made and there may have been temporary changes due to staffing shortages.

## Action Items

- Send around public calendar link (Ed)
- Plan smoothie program (Ms. Webber)
- Send message to parents about gym footwear (Principal McGowan)
- Distribute pencils and glue sticks to grades 7-9 (Principal McGowan)
- Confirm upcoming guest speakers (Principal McGowan)
- Incorporate mental health suggestions in newsletter (VP Birdsall)
- Send out Google Form to students for ideas on spending the PC grant (VP Birdsall)
- Create Google Group and add SAC members (Ed)
- Send out message regarding SAC funds (Ed)

The next meeting is scheduled for December 9th at 6:30 PM.