



**Parent School Support Committee
Moncton High School
Wednesday October 26th, 2022**

Present:

Scott Ferrell (principal)	Moriya Boyle (President Student Council)
Matt Sammut (Chair)	Susie McDow
Lorie Edwards (Secretary)	Graham McCrea
Laura McManaman (Teacher Representative)	Steve Roper
Randy McLean (Superintendent)	Yuliia Usharov
Hayley Kennedy (Workplace Culture Assessment)	Lynn Adams

Regrets: April MacAleese-Jay

Meeting Opened by Mr. Ferrell at 6:30pm with introductions and welcome to Randy McLean and Hayley Kennedy.

Lorie E. volunteered to take minutes.

Motion to approve agenda made by Steve R. and seconded by Graham McCrea.

Motion to approve the minutes from the April 5th, 2022 meeting made by Steve R. and seconded by Graham McCrea.

Student Report by Moriya

- Grade 9 day was well received with tours of the school and pizza
- Great turnout for the first Pep Rally of the season with approximately 250 attending and several hundred attending the football game.
- Buddy week was a success again making the grade 9's feel more connected and comfortable in the school by having a "senior" buddy.
- First dance of the year "Project Purple" was a success with approximately 400 in attendance and good behaviour from the attendees.
- Have instituted Welcome Wednesdays for new students so tours can happen once a week instead of every time a new student enrolls. This week there were **40** students who were given the tour.
- Leadership program has 90 students involved who assist with various activities and events.
- National Day of Truth and Reconciliation was supported with posters and information sharing around the school.
- New Student Lunch will be held every few months to provide some insight to MHS and it's history. At the first session, free tickets to the football game were given out to encourage new students to come out and feel more connected with MHS. Next one planned for November.
- Held the first student Town Hall on Tuesday to allow students a chance to voice their ideas . Exploring ways to allow students to send feedback anonymously as well.

- Purple Fridays continue to be a great way to increase school spirit. Giving away candy to participants and offering face painting out of the council office.
- Theme week is ongoing for Halloween.
- Student council will work with Mrs. McManaman on the “Movember” initiative. Staff have agreed to participate in social media posts etc., to show off their mustaches throughout the month. There will also be a bake sale to raise money.
 - o Matt suggested that parents be informed of and encouraged to participate in this and other fundraisers. Moriya agreed to this back to council to facilitate.
- There will be a coffee house (date TBD) to showcase artistic talents of the MHS population.
- Winter Formal plans are under way, considering holding the event at the Crown Plaza. Many other high schools do hold dances off premises.
- There were 550 paid patrons at the recent girls soccer game. This is an example of the great school spirit that is being developed.
- A Dress for Respect day was held to honour the memory of the Harrison Trimble student who lost his life. Student Council is hoping to continue to build on relations with other high schools to share ideas and coordinate efforts.
- Student council is in support of parents helping out and volunteering at events and functions as was suggested at recent PSSC meetings. Moriya investigated the Policy 701 training and it is not complicated to complete to allow parents who have or are willing to obtain a current criminal record check to then volunteer at events like dances, etc.

Hayley Kennedy – Workplace Cultural Assessment – *An Action Plan for MHS*

Ms. Kennedy, has worked with other schools going through transitions like the Humboldt High School in Saskatchewan. Since January, she has been engaged in supporting MHS and the District to perform a cultural climate assessment. She has been in the province since the spring and met in June with stakeholders to get feedback. Lots of great information and creative ideas were shared as well as some fairly critical areas for growth which led to a very detailed report specific to the District, MHS and the central office. It is hoped that the process created here at MHS can then be repeated across the other 39 schools. The recommendations that came out of this report were reviewed with staff at MHS today along with next steps.

At a high level for MHS;

- Communication is going to be key. A more mindful and purposeful electronic communication strategy.
- More alignment between staff and management including focus on personal growth plans for training, mentorship between peers and other staff
- Comparing how things were done versus how they could be done in the new educational environment to ensure a healthy positive work environment for all.

At the District level;

- There will be a broad review of current policies and systems to highlight those that are outdated or not in line with the current learning and educational environment.
- Will implement a more robust way to monitor and facilitate employee training requirements and opportunities.
- Roles for the District positions will be clearly defined and communicated so that everyone understands who is responsible for what and where to go for what.

Expect that these changes will be implemented over the next 6 months with follow up in the Spring to measure success and determine next steps.

Randy McLean presented –

With 3,000 employees and over 18,000 students, communication is paramount. As the new superintendent, he will be looking at old structures to see if they still have a place in the shifting educational needs and challenges as well as the demographic of the current workforce. He will be checking in regularly with stakeholders and is currently sending out weekly updates about what he is doing and working on. Steve commented that these have been well received. Lorie suggested that these could be shared with parents as well as employees, Mr. MacLean agreed to look into this.

He is taking learnings from his time working in other provinces and bringing in experts to assist where needed which is why Hayley Kennedy was brought in. The goal is to create a safe space where people feel heard and to build common understand from which to move forward. Workplace culture impacts the kids as it flows down to them if there are problems.

Lorie asked why MHS was singled out and if we could get a high level overview of the improvement plan to understand what needed to be changed and what is coming. It was explained that this will be template to take forward to other schools. That no one classroom or school should work as an island but that all parts will be connected to share in accountability, evaluation and learnings.

Mr. Ferrell thanked Hayley and Randy for coming in and Mr. MacLean, both stayed on to answer more questions. Mr. Ferrell inquired about portables, staffing shortage and EA's.

Portables –

12 new portables under construction, MHS is getting 4 but due to supply chain issues, they have been delayed. Technology check is being done next week to assure that the intercom systems work (safety issue), assuming all goes well, the portables will be ready to use the following week.

District expected the annual growth to follow past examples and forecasted for 300-400 new students this year, we are already 1200 students over that projection.

Graham asked if the 4 portables are enough to solve the overcrowding issue at MHS and whether the boundaries would actually be redrawn as this is something that has been discussed for many years but never acted on. Edith Cavell is the only change so far which is 40 students re-directed from MHS.

Randy explained that Shediac and Dieppe are also growing drastically so the two new proposed high schools to be built there will help decrease the number of students coming to MHS from those areas. Not to mention the long driving time for those kids being reduced by having more local schools. Although this is a longer term solution, he also committed that there will be boundary review in the spring. He explained that they are being creative in doing so. For example, Riverview will no longer be closed to Moncton residents if their physical address is proximate to the schools even if it means crossing the bridge. He believes that once they are able to really look at what space is available and get creative that there are enough classrooms to meet the current need but not necessarily if the new influx of people moving to NB continues at the current rate. This is where the challenge comes with getting school approved to meet current demand which is why new schools will be developed with the idea of being able to repurpose them is the demand and demographics should slow or decrease.

Ullia was concerned that boundary changes would impact current kids, but was assured that a grandfathering would take place even if it means higher transportation costs in the short term.

Mr. Farrell and Mrs. Macmanaman later explained that they believe realistically 10-12 portables is what would be needed to allow current spaces being used as classrooms to go back to their original purpose (ie: meeting rooms, cafeteria, staff rooms, etc.). However because the portables need access to washroom facilities, this becomes the sticking point. Apparently because of the toilets facilities in the gym change rooms, MHS currently has more than enough and no new bathrooms would be installed. However, the gym facilities are not available

during regular class times expect for gym activities due to safety concerns. There are already teachers performing “duty” assignments outside the regular washrooms.

Staffing Shortages & EA’s –

Mr. Ferrell detailed a bit about how creative they have been, not just with space but also staff. For example; teaching in the cafeteria is working really well for the 3 ESL classes and allows the teachers to move around between groups. The cafeteria is not as conducive for other classes though. He also stated that every day there are classrooms without their teacher due to supply teacher shortages. There were 5 on Friday, 4 on Monday and 6 today.

Mr. MacLean explained that they just received \$5.4 million in supplementary funding on October 3rd. \$2 million is already spent on adding 40 new teachers. Offering permanent positions to teachers means less available on the supply list. So they are trying to get creative in how they obtain new teachers and supply teachers. Looking at recruitment process with universities, offering short term placements for supply teachers that have a 4 year degree. Matt and Lorie inquired as to whether or not community members could help with these shortages in short term paid or even volunteer capacities. Contractual obligations with the Union do make some of this challenging but there are possible opportunities here.

It was also explained that they have had to shift the model for EA’s as the current need for EA’s is \$8 million beyond the funding. So, although there are fewer EA’s there are now 12 new positions including guidance counsellors, behaviour management specialists, and resource staff. It is hoped that these changes for specialized assistance, may help with the lack of EA’s. They are continuing to look at a needs analysis in this area.

It was later discussed that the staffing shortages make teachers have to double up and this is further compounded by the increased pressure from Team 99 and NVCI calls which have increased since the reduction in EA’s.

8:15 pm Mr. MacLean and Ms. Kennedy left the meeting with thanks and appreciation.

Principal’s Report

- There were 500-600 people at Meet the Teacher which is almost more than the last 5 years combined.
- Bell Schedule changed to have homeroom in between first and second period so there is less likelihood of kids skipping it at the beginning of the day.
- Daily announcements are now being done by the Student Council communications person unless there is something of a more pressing concern to be communicated.
- Monthly grade level assemblies are commencing and even then as the cafeteria only hold 400, it is hard to get an entire grade into the assemblies.
- RCMP were impressed with the hold and secure/lockdown drills as students were completely silent and non were visible. Fire Drills are more complex due to the placement of the portables but still able to get everyone out in 3 – 3.5 minutes.
- RCMP liaison officers originally cause a bit of a stir but are very much appreciated at the school. They will be holding grade level informational assemblies to remind kids what they can and cannot do while at school or bring to school etc..
- Joint Health and Safety committee are working hard to keep on top of all the various issues that come up.

Teacher’s Report – Ms. McManaman

- Annie production is in full swing, lots of involvement from the school.
- Astronomy event being held in partnership with Astronomy NB, open to the public Oct 28th at 7:30

- Guidance Councillor handout was reviewed (see attached). Councillors are performing an alarming number of suicide assessment risks. As with all the staff at MHS, the Guidance team are stretched too thin to effectively handle the needs of the student population. It is clear that there is a need for more mental health supports at MHS. There is a desire to have 100% of the student population using MyBlueprint because it will be required to graduate in the coming years. Because of the influx of new students who may not have taken PDCP, this proves challenging.
- Staff concerns are increasing regarding the overcrowding of the school and classrooms, EA cutbacks and the associated support which may be contributing to the increased number of NVCA calls. Even the teachers are having to perform risk assessments for their students. Cafeteria closures are also of concern for those students who struggle with food insecurity.
- Newcomers to MHS – Anglophone East has seen an increase in students at a rate that is 3 times the next closest school district. MHS also has more multi language learners (MLL) than the entire Anglophone North School District. EAL are running at 25-29 students each and the recommended cap is 15 or even less for lower language proficiency levels.
- Lastly, we went over the slides for the new Options for Credit which highlights the new Provincial changes for how students will obtain credits to graduate. Education will be changing drastically with this new plan. This new plan uses Credit hours and allows more flexibility to award credits for option courses and for teachers to award partial credits etc. It is expected to be introduced for this year's Grade 9 students during their course selection in the Spring 2023. Current Grade 10's will be grandfathered out. This is because credits will be available beginning in Grade 10 rather than starting in Grade 11. There is still much to be understood about how this will work as it will mean running two grading platforms concurrently. It also means not only more flexibility for teachers to there is no consistency across schools or even teachers in the same school for similar classes. The new system is expected to allow students to challenge for credit more easily than before which will open up access to take many more option courses. AP classes are now only available online. A much greater understanding of how this will affect the students and the staff is necessary.

Other

- It was discussed that the PSSC put a petition together to go with the letter that Matt and April wrote regarding the overcrowding issues.
- School Improvement Plans were put on hold during the Covid restrictions but will be resuming soon.
- A bleacher barrier is required and Scott will speak to the woodworking classes in regard to building something.
- Parents would like to see more awards for Academics similar to the Sports Night so that Academic highlights are acknowledged not just awarded at graduation ceremony.

Action Items:

Moriya to talk to Mrs. McManaman regarding "Movember".

Moriya to look into including parents and guardians in fundraising activities at the school (voluntary involvement).

Lorie to verify minimum number of PSSC meetings that must be held each year.

Laura M. will provide an update as to the new Options for Credit at the next meeting.

Matt will send the letter that was created last year regarding overcrowding in response to the CTV news article.

Scott will look into a bleacher barrier with the wood shop classes.

Next meeting: Wednesday December 7th 6:30pm

Meeting adjourned: 9:01pm Motion to close by Steve and seconded by Graham.