



**Ross Road School  
SAC Meeting Agenda  
April 23, 2024**

**Attendance:** Kim LeBlanc, Roselyn Godbout, Valerie Van Acquoj, Natasha Trudel, Matt Strickland, Karen Dawe, Sonja Malle-Keating, Renee Masching, Liana Field, Willow Field

**Regrets:** Alison Stark, Alana Conrad, April Scudder, Garnett Estabrooks

**Call to order:** 6:05 by Karen

**Approval of the last meeting notes:** Natasha, Roselyn

**Approval of Agenda:** Valerie, Matt

**Ongoing Business**

A. Fence proposal update

We have two quotes.

Next steps (with Paul Chadwick): go with the lowest quote and company that will be able to complete the project earliest as possible; waiting for confirmation. RRS should go ahead with Arkson Fence company. The project was quoted at: \$15,450.00.

Once that's been confirmed, the total will be shared with political partners, Home and School, and SAC. Political partners first to have them hopefully commit their financial contribution. Hopefully the fence will be complete well before September.

Garnett is in communication with the neighbour as well on this.

B. SAC Innovative Funding update

Valerie, Karen and Alana met in person about this, and we came up with consolidated information. However, Kim was a bit nervous because the template didn't allow for expansion of the text boxes, so we were allowed to upload a PDF. Unfortunately, the EECD did not receive the proposal. S. Tomie contacted Kim and gave the email to send directly to EECD. It's been sent now via email.

→ Kim will send the application to SAC members via email to read through.

C. Student Leadership update

Last thing was a hotdog sale, and it was a great success. The kids sold hotdogs to all grade levels. There was some leftovers, so some of it was given away for free and some of the wieners were frozen as well for future use, if/when needed. We made a really nice profit of \$490 for the Gr. 9 boat trip. They're working on another fundraiser: a

family basket: Air Fryer donation from Home and School, LCD projector donation, UA hoodies, \$75 gift card too. Natasha and Home and School have created tickets and the kids are excited about distributing the tickets; they are given a few minutes out of class to finish the fundraiser. If there are still some items wanted, it's family items like gift cards, summer items, etc. Grade 9 families have so far made donations, but if anyone from SAC wants to donate, that's fine. The students have taken ownership and enjoyed the process. Perhaps another hotdog-type fundraiser is in the works.

#### D. Home and School update

Natasha reported that the theme for Home and School fundraising is on school beautification projects. Home and School is still prepared to assist with fencing if needed. H&S has some fundraisers coming up too:

- Looking at reviewing signage for the school
- student athletes; they have received their new pinnies ; feedback was positive
- H&S is purchasing RRS branded clothing for staff and members. Experience in other schools is that they often show pride for school by wearing school-branded items.
- Most of the teachers have spent additional \$150 on supplies for classrooms; most teachers have benefited from this. We've tried not to adhere to requests for painting doors etc. but the library has some aesthetic updates still ongoing.
- Upcoming: bingo, big success last year
- Walkathon is happening in May.
- Big plans for the spring fair.
- Junior high end of year dance is also in the works.
- H&S are looking for volunteers for the spring fair. Kim will ask for Jr. High Leaders and Staff members to sign up to volunteer.
- Cole Harbour Fire Dept donated \$500 to the school, which will be used for the spring fair.
- May 25th outdoor spring cleanup day, all are encouraged to come!
- Walkers will donate new picnic tables, students will hopefully help assemble.

#### **New Business:**

#### E. Thought Exchange: Cell use in Schools

Mostly relevant for Junior High: elementary students are not as active yet with cell phones. Junior high students are very attached to their cellphones and are having issues following the rules around cellphone use.

Children are still using the phones and distracting themselves instead of focusing on class. Children are also making mistakes by taking pictures and videos of people without their consent. Inappropriate images are being sent through social media or other digital media to other children/people online. This is also confirmed by the police.

We have to work with our children to help them understand the dangers, implications, etc.

RRS is also constantly looking for resources to share with teachers to enable them to facilitate discussions, conversations and policy.

Is there a timeline for changing policy/regulations? No timeline yet, usually takes lots of time for the province to collect information. Starts with SAC member voice first.

Apparently having a cellphone with you is considered a human right and they cannot be

banned from schools.

Right now, children don't feel putting their phone in their locker is safe, but this is what is the rule. Children have been hiding them in backpacks, in their pockets, etc. We'd be interested to learn how access to phones is a human right.

Student POV: students are very adamant that it is something that they want to do even more when told no. Some teachers are more lenient, which brings to light the lack of consistency across classrooms; rules should be the same across the school. It was suggested to think about having a basket on the teacher desk where students could place their phones during the class. Basket might work better than the lockers.

Is cell phone use a topic for change at school? → It is on the staff meeting agenda, to gather thoughts and opinions about this. Suggestion to look at scientific evidence into cell phone use in school.

#### F. Bike Connection

Matt has been working on this for a while, there should be a bike connection between Lawrencetown Beach to RRS and some other points as well. Some paths are in place in the form of ATV trails.

Form of secondary wildfire egress.

Is this something the SAC is interested in supporting, or RRS? Having more people in the community who want it will help contribute to this project's success.

Are there currently people supporting this? → right now there is a bicycle club and people in the community might want to help make the trail themselves (from Ross Road, Keltic Gardens, Hayling Acres).

→ Suggestion for Matt to verbalize how the support from school or SAC would look like and we can decide on how or if we can support this initiative.

#### **AOB (Any Other Business)**

- Earth Day: On May 16, Olivia, an Engagement Officer will work with out elementary classes, to strengthen sustainable behavior that helps the Earth. The program supports community efforts to reduce energy waste and to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels.
  - Earth day was April 22, but there was no junior high event. Karen is trying to get Richard Zurawski to speak to JR. High classes.
  - Earth Day update from Karen: grow lights coming for the school. Hoping to have them in time. This has to do with the innovative funding request: asked if we could have donations for grow lights for starting to grow a garden with seeds in school that can be moved outside as part of the curriculum. Grow vegetables!
  - Ms. Lachance was hoping to do a project like this as well with students.
  - May 16, Olivia from Green Schools NS Energy Engagement is doing workshops for all Elementary classes.
- High School Course Selection
  - Natasha shared that she is aware that this process is not the normal process. At other schools, children had the opportunity with the High School counselor before making their decision, but that didn't happen at RRS. The challenge was that each child should

have excitement around this opportunity, and we felt she and her student had the opposite experience. After this experience, her child didn't know what language to continue in, or what courses to select. Children were asked to make their initial selections before parents were invited to an information session. She did not feel equipped to help her child make the decision. She wondered, if the courses didn't have to be inputted until a later date, then why were the choices so firm for the children? Why were students forced to make selections prior to parents learning the information as well and support them in their decision-making? SAC members who have children who went through the process in previous years, agreed that the process wasn't the same this year, so Natasha's experience is validated by RRS.

Experience from Liana: the process was rushed; we felt we knew what our child wanted, but we wanted the information, but like with Natasha, the child had to pick courses and then went into conversations with Cole Harbour High. Lots was put on the kids that should have had more parent-child coaching. Willow experienced pressure to pick courses and that sparked confusion among students.

Experience from Renee: four years ago, it felt like there was lots of information from Cole Harbour High (and THAT felt overwhelming), but when there was a transition for her youngest last year, there wasn't as much information. The process allowed children to think about the courses for next year, and there was a promise for a session with the counselor, but that process still felt really rushed.

### **Adjournment**

Next meeting: 6pm online → May 28th

Adjourned 7:20pm