



**Ross Road School
SAC Meeting Summary
October 17, 2023**

Attendance: Kim, Alana, Karen, Alison, Liana, Natasha, Renee, Sonja, Valerie

Regrets: Garnett

- 1. Call to order**
- 2. Introductions/Attendance**
- 3. Role of SAC**
- 4. Approval of Agenda**

New Business:

A. Student Success Plan (Literacy/Math and Well-being)

The student success plan has been aligned across the HRCE. It is now up to the staff of schools to determine next steps to obtain goals.

There is a hyperfocus on children of African Nova Scotian or Indigenous descent. However, this is only the case if students self-identify as belonging to one of those groups. It should be mentioned that the hyperfocus means that there will be small-group instruction and 1:1 check-ins without singling out those specific kids. All children who have been identified as needing additional support will get it from their teacher.

P-2 literacy focus: currently, 17 children are not meeting the reading expectations. Their progress will be monitored throughout the year.

Math: currently, there is also a focus on French Immersion math too. Kids who need additional math support for both English and French programs can count on that support. The time is almost divided evenly between the two programs.

Well-being: although still being evaluated, we can think of well-being as more staff being visible for students in the hallways in order to offer assistance. There can be unexpected incidents, so there is a need for more staff visibility.

B. Vaping in schools

Some members are concerned: it is happening in schools + bathrooms. It seems to be happening most frequently during transitions.

School will keep close ear/eyes on this.

Parents also hear about vaping classmates en route to school + disrupting behaviour in classroom, but they're not direct witnesses. Suggestion: liaison officer seminar for kids about being more visible + risks of vaping. RCMP maybe has talks on vaping? → this is an educational talk since fear-based talks don't work as effectively; rather, these sessions are health- and education-focused. It should also be included in the health curriculum.

C. School Supplies/Fees

During the meeting it was suggested that we as Ross Road School should consider asking parents to pay a flat fee for school supplies. The SAC should be able to change rules around school supplies, BUT school does have to offer parents an alternative if they don't want to pay the flat fee so parents can shop themselves. Previously, the SAC has funded school supplies at the start of the year; we can ask donations from parents to get SAC's budget back up again. Big advantage of flat fee is that all kids (and classrooms) have the same supplies. This would look different for junior high, but Ms. Conrad mentioned she could maybe work out a fix for this.

The SAC and school will investigate how to move forward with this. We would need to understand the budget. An idea was brought up to be transparent about these plans in the May/June upcoming newsletters with an idea of the cost for parents.

D. Volunteers in Schools

What do you need to become a volunteer at school who also comes into contact with the children? → a criminal background check + child abuse registry. The HRCE needs both of these before approval.

Once you are in, you just sign a form each year to confirm you haven't committed any crimes. A criminal background check costs CAD50. School will provide a letter which could lead to a discount of CAD15.

For the first application as volunteer, your criminal background check cannot be older than 3 months. After 3 years, you need a new check.

Suggestion: put out a sports-specific volunteer request to coach a school sports team → School mentions we already do this, but not for track. The call-out in the newsletter was general. Once volunteer gaps are identified and clear, RRS will publish a callout for specific volunteers. Perhaps we could have a table at spring fair for volunteer registration as well.

E. Fencing on the adjacent property

Inclusion is an illusion → RRS needs a fenced off area for flight-risk/special needs kids who cannot safely attend school otherwise. The property next door is a rental so the HRM got involved in locating the owner. Soon the fence will be removed. We contacted Paul Chadwick and look into fencing options.

RRS should contact:

- HRM
- Councillor Mr. Hendsbee
- HRCE

Between these parties, the issues of the fencing should hopefully be taken care of.

One attending member of the meeting mentioned they have chain link available for a fence that would just need poles.

The school will get quotes from Eastern Fence.

Question: is there a model for inclusive space at school playgrounds we could use as an example?

Next step: share letter (“Inclusion is an illusion”) with parties mentioned earlier, share results with SAC.

F. Weapons in schools

There was a report earlier in the school year of an incident where a student was intimidated by another boy. The student was made to believe the boy had something in his hand, but he wasn't sure what this was. The student made a report of this incident three days after it happened; then, the story blew up at school and rumours about a weapon were spread, which coincidentally happened at the same time when the designated liaison officer also visited the school. What happened was intimidation, which was very real, but there was no weapon. The boy was removed from the school by mother for another incident, which is when other kids came forward with more information.

The school staff are encouraging kids to talk when they see or hear things happening, and are teaching them that talking is not snitching when it comes to safety.

The equity group is also teaching groups/classes about important equity topics.

G. Student Leadership to support Well-being goal

The student leadership group support the well-being goal at RRS. There is a SchoolsPlus staff, Child and Youth Care Practitioner, to teach kids about how they can be a leader at school. They could help in the SAC, clean in the cafeteria, join the tech team, help around the school. The student leadership group could be assigned various tasks.

This is for students in grade 7-8-9. Encourage the kids in grades 7 & 8 to sign up for something like the yearbook group.

All students can join the student council. They're meeting at junior-high lunchtime on Fridays. They help decide for junior-high events at school. Suggestion for a bulletin board for inclusive topics.

Plan is to keep this time during lunch and not disturb instructional time, but sometimes there would be activities during instructional time that would fit the curriculum. Students can attend even if they missed previous sessions.

Option for student leadership swag is being looked into.

H. Recruitment for inclusive membership to represent all students of RRS

Currently we don't have member from North-Preston in the SAC. There is also no member for upper-elementary, nor do we have a student-rep. The SAC should reflect and represent everyone in the school population.

Suggestion to provide healthy snacks during SAC meetings.

5. Meeting Schedule

Tuesdays work best, in-person meetings at Ross Road School Library. Suggested schedule:

- November 28, 2023: 6.30 pm

- January 23, 2024: 6.30 pm

- March 5th, 2024: 6.30 pm

- April 23rd, 2024: 6.30 pm

- May 28th, 2024: 6.30 pm

Kim will update on the fence when she hears back.

6. Any Other Business

Agenda suggestions:

- Grade 9 closing ceremony - SAC potentially look at a photographer to come in. This is on Ms. Conrad's list. Staff will take photos?
- Neptune for students? Tour company, bring live theatre to the school.
- Update on French Immersion Program.
- Technology – Chromebooks

7. Adjournment