



## School Advisory Council

### Minutes

Tuesday, June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018

**Attendees:** Emily Quigley (Principal), Dave Moorhouse (Chair/ Parent Rep), Jennifer Cholock-Whitty (Staff Rep), Mary Beth Ross (Community Rep), Brian Psooy (Parent Rep), Ashley Matthews-Duffett (Community Rep), Alix Robinson

**Regrets:** Lynne MacKinnon

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1. The meeting was called to order at 1:26 pm
2. Business arising from June 7, 2018 meeting:
  - Primary purpose of the additional meeting was to continue discussion from June 7, 2018 meeting regarding creating an official SAC position on the enrollment concerns at the school, and time permitting, discuss input for submission to the EECDC regarding the proposed enhanced role of SACs.

#### SAC Position re Enrollment Concerns

- Council discussion echoed and agreed with several of the common concerns raised by community members, including:
  - acknowledging the trend of increased enrollment is not a new issue, as it has been evident in the school's overcapacity for the past 10 years;
  - the over-capacity urgently needs to be addressed;
  - while the short-term solutions provided for the 2018/19 school year provide relief for the issue, more needs to be done;
  - presence of increased housing development in catchment area is seen as indication the issue will only become worse unless action is taken; and
  - the school's overcapacity has negative impacts that reach beyond the classroom, including availability of before and after school childcare, traffic around the neighbourhood, and school events that can be too crowded to be enjoyable.
- In reaching a consensus on the seriousness and urgency of the issue, the Council discussed the possible solutions believed to be available:
  - Seeking a Boundary Review;
  - Change in Grade Allocation – although not certain, the Council's understanding was that this option was a "Program Decision" that did not require a boundary review; and

- Introduction of French Immersion to Central Spryfield
- In concluding its discussion, the Council agreed to put forward a statement confirming its unanimous support for looking into possible solutions for the over-capacity issue.
- The plan for the formal statement from the SAC was agreed to include reference to looking into each solution first by gathering information to create a base understanding of the process/ viability of each, as well as others that may become known.
- The SAC also agreed to commit to a plan to remain diligent in communicating the concerns of its community members with the EECD and the HRCE to hold these parties accountable in a timely manner.

#### SAC Input on Enhanced SACs Proposal

- Council had a brief discussion around the EECD's request for input on its plan to introduce an enhanced role for SACs:
  - Concerns were raised around whether an enhanced role would mean further responsibilities for SAC members who were already working as volunteers, and whether there would be training provided for those without the skillset to match those responsibilities.
  - The Council is supportive of the idea of duties and priorities being divided among two-tiers of SACs created at school and regional (family of schools) levels, but speculated that additional bodies may require more volunteers, which have been difficult to secure for many schools.
  - Generally, the Council has questions around the structure of enhanced communication and how if additional resources i.e. funds, were made available, how they would be managed.
- As Chair, Dave Moorhouse expressed frustration at the minimal information and communication provided by the EECD for input on the structure and scope of duties of an enhanced SAC. This was a common sentiment expressed among the SAC Chairs through the Facebook group SAC Chairs of Nova Scotia, which was created at the outset of the consultation process with EECD.
- Similar to other SACs, the Council recognized that without more information forthcoming, it was a difficult task to provide meaningful input. With that in mind, Council looks forward to further details that are expected out prior to September 2018.

#### **3. Next meeting:**

Thursday, September 13, 2018 at 5:30 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.