**MINUTES**

May Meeting of the Parent School Support Committee (PSSC) 2013-2014

Bernice MacNaughton High School (BMHS)

Main Office, Board Room

Monday, May 25, 2015

7:00 p.m.

Attendees

1. Carolyn Baer (Chair) 5. Dale Hughes
2. Judy Roper (Principal) 6. Pascale LeBrasseur
3. Alaina Bui (Student Rep) 7. Jen Steylen
4. Linda Taylor (Vice-Chair) 8. Jane Coleman (Secretary)
5. Heather Lewis (Teacher Rep)

Regrets Absent

1. Mary-Lynne Borsella
2. Shirley Smallwood
3. Anna Kelly

Guest: Steve Cormier: BMHS teacher

* + - 1. **Call to Order**

Carolyn welcomed all members at 7:00 p.m.

May’s agenda was approved after a few changes were made: Old Business was removed since neither Alan nor Shirley was present to discuss questions the PSSC would like the DEC to take forward re the provincial cuts. Under New Business, Carolyn added correspondence from Birchmount School PSSC about their Media Safety Night as well as recycling by ImagineAction. Dale added the PSSC Spring Symposium for this weekend and math curriculum.

Moved Accepted: Pascale Seconded: Dale Motion carried

* + - 1. **Approval of Minutes**

April’s meeting minutes were approved.

Moved Accepted: Linda Seconded: Pascale Motion carried

* + - 1. **Principal’s Report**
* Steve Cormier gave a presentation on the district’s portal assessment data. It currently contains info on OCA and math screener results. Although it is not user-friendly (students are not arranged by class, etc.), it does allow teachers and administrators to see students’ progress throughout their time in school.

Steve explained how the OCA works. Students answer questions that are based on a real world piece of literature. These tests are marked by all teachers during a PD day. Using a rubric to assess and calibrate the answers, each student’s test is marked by teachers. The results are then entered allowing faculty to note areas of weakness. This year, staff noted that students were weak on the questions dealing with inference (question three). As a result, English teachers focused on providing their students with exercises that required them to practice inferring. Connie Corbett did an in- service to help teachers from other areas incorporate this skill into their areas of curriculum. The specific literacy goal was to improve students’ ability to infer. Steve gave the test results to teachers so they could see which students needed more support.

Grade nine math screeners are marked by math teachers who then enter the data from the early, middle and exit tests.

The school improvement plan is based on smart goals, but BMHS does not really have smart goals for math. Steve suggests that numeracy is a weak area, and schools should have math screeners for grades nine and ten.

* The school is doing good things in literacy but will be putting some focus on math goals. The portal will help schools in the district have a ‘school improvement’ template which is a useful and welcome document that ensures consistency between schools.
* In June staff will start to work on the school improvement plan and will revisit it when they return in August.
* With the provincial teacher cuts, the seven schedule D teachers at BMHS are not even considered in the staffing mix for the fall. The projected number of students is down, and no funding is available to run many programs including the in-school suspension program. With fewer teachers, class sizes will be larger. No new out of bound students will be accepted because the situation is so tight. There will definitely be new students who move into the area serviced by BMHS as well as an unknown number of international students.
	+ - 1. **Teachers’ Report**
* Heather attended a meeting in Bouctouche about the Farm to School initiative. Currently, seven schools are involved, and each one is dealing with the issue of sustainability. However, it is written in the contract that when the cafeteria tender comes up, the chosen cafeteria provider must cooperate with this program. By the end of this meeting, Heather left with the idea that since teachers are always changing, the PSSC is perhaps the body to ensure this program continues. Carolyn supported this and suggested that students should also be involved: those in ImagineAction, clan leaders, student council… The point was made that student groups exist, in large part, due to the commitment of certain teachers who may or may not be at BMHS in the future.

Heather mentioned that the meeting she attended prior to the PSSC meeting was working towards making curricular links to school gardens and food security.

The Salvation Army daycare has agreed to take two of the garden boxes and to maintain them over the summer. It was discussed that the residents at People’s Park Tower, people associated with the United Way/the West End Food Bank or even people living in Centennial Place would/could participate in the maintenance of the garden. Heather mentioned that without a community liaison who could coordinate such participation, it is difficult to make it happen. She did make the link between healthy eating/living and the crisis of mental health issues. This might be one approach to ensuring a successful continuation of the program.

* The PSSC congratulated Heather on receiving the High School Council Award for extracurricular involvement and recognized how deserving she is of this award.
	+ - 1. **Students’ Report**
* Wednesday night is a casino night for grads. There will be a talent show, and students are looking for donations of baked goods to eat at this event.
* Yearbooks are coming out tomorrow.
* Grad ditch day was today.
* The exam schedule is the same as last year.
* The book fair was successful.
* There is a girls’ rugby ‘adopt a team` game today vs RHS.
* Last Wednesday a meeting was held for grade 11 students who wanted to be on grad council.
* Drama had one act plays last week. They were really good.
* The BMHS Reach for the Top team won three of eleven games at the nationals in Toronto last weekend.
* May Day was a lot of fun, but there were issues with some students and alcohol.
* Many students are complaining that the student council activities are not as good as usual. A number of the council members were kicked off due to poor conduct.
* Planning is starting for the 2018 Europe trip.
* Dragon boat is the last day of classes.
* An assembly for selecting this year’s valedictorian is on Wednesday
* ImagineAction met its first goal for raising money to feed a school in Sierra Leone raisin close to $1000.
* The Robotic`s Club competed against seven other Maritime schools in Halifax and won all categories.
	+ - 1. **New Business**
* Carolyn received an email from the chair of the Birchmount PSSC inviting all interested adults to attend their Media Safety Night in the fall. The goal is to generate a discussion and hopefully build a network of adults who can share their concerns and resources to address this important issue. On June 1 at 6:30 p.m., there is a Meet and Greet and an informal planning meeting ahead of the event next fall. Carolyn will forward the contact info to Jane who will forward it to the members.
* Carolyn wondered why the school is not recycling. A few years ago, ImagineAction worked to educate the students to use the blue and green bins, but found out that the haulers were not separating. This year, a student wanted to bring this back, so Heather contacted the district and was assured that the haulers do separate. She finished by saying the systems need to be in place to have compostable items separated and put into the school`s compost bins. District says that it is in the contract that the haulers are to separate. but the school needs to communicate with all involved to make the system work. Everywhere there is a blue garbage bin, there should be an attached green garbage bin.

Carolyn suggested that a letter be written to the district stating that BMHS is a conscientious school that wants to ensure its students and staff recycle properly and that the haulers can clearly and easily identify which garbage is green and which is blue. As such, the school needs X number of blue and green bins. This letter should be written by members of ImagineAction prior to the end of the year.

* Dale informed the group that there is a PSSC/Dec Symposium this weekend that is being hosted by this district.
* Liz Nowlan told Dale that there is a three year plan, starting for kids currently in grade six, for math to be taught in French. When they enter grade nine in 2017, math will continue to be taught in French. It was unclear how the district was going to implement this plan. Dale gave the example of her daughter who is in the first cohort. From September to May this year, her grade six class had math instructed in French. Because the math screener was in English, starting in May, math was taught in English.

Dale asked the following questions for the DEC and Liz Nowlan:

* + If grade nine math is going to be taught in French in 2017, is it going to be maintained?
	+ Will there be dual programs?
	+ Who is going to teach it?
	+ Will the district be hiring staff because they speak French or because they are math specialists?
	+ What about textbooks?

The screeners are in English, and there is no cooperation between the English and French districts to share screeners/test banks. Dale is concerned about continuity, and Carolyn wondered what the purpose of this new policy is especially given that NB math results are low.

* This is Carolyn and Linda’s final PSSC meeting. Therefore, a chair and vice-chair are needed for next year. Jane agreed to continue as secretary.

* + - 1. **Next Meeting**
* TBD
1. **Adjournment**
* The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.