

## **Minutes of McMath Virtual PAC Meeting - 7pm Jan. 17th, 2023**

### **Attending:**

Dionne M (Chair), Samantha H (Vice-Chair), Jon L (co-Treasurer), Winson L (co-Treasurer) Lingly W (co-Secretary), Ledi D (co-Secretary), Jeff Johnstone (Administration), Ms Cowin (teacher), Ms Loren (teacher), Andrea, Annie, Annie V, Brenda C, Carol, Cassandra C, Charlotte, Cheyna, Chris D, Christophet W, Cinda W, Dan, Deborah J, Eduardo V, Elisa M, Gen, Glen, Grace L, Helmut, HiPhone, iPhone(2), Ivy D, Ivy G, Jack C, Jasmin, Jeremiah G, Jing, Jorge P, Joany, Kaye S, Kerri, Kerry C, Leesa, Lisa F, Lratzlaff, Lyn Y, Melanie K, Meng, Michelle K, Nicole W-C, Rachel C, Raj, Rita, Robin, Sena, Shasha Y, Silvia B, Tawnya & Vicky Y.

### **Meeting Opened at 7pm by Dionne**

#### **1. Adoption of the Agenda: Samantha and Cheyna**

#### **2. Adoption of November Minutes: Winson and Samantha**

#### **3. Welcome and Introductions**

- Housekeeping reminders to mute microphones to minimize audio disturbance.
- Unmute yourself or raise hand to speak or ask questions.
- Dionne welcomed everyone to the meeting, Happy New Year and Happy Chinese New Year.
- Land Acknowledgment by Dionne.
- PAC succession planning - We will be needing a Chair, Treasurer and Secretary for next year. These positions need to be in place in June to apply for the next year's Gaming Grant Funds.

#### **4. Principal's Report & answering any pre- submitted parent questions**

- No pre-submitted questions this meeting.
- Presentation from Ms. Cowin and Ms. Loren on Linear and Semester system. Staff and students will also be having this presentation.
- McMath is one of 5 high schools in Richmond reviewing their learning system.
- Parent survey will go out in early February. Students and staff will also have surveys.

**Ms. Cowin and Ms. Loren shared their PowerPoint presentation.** This can be found on the McMath website under the PAC page. [Timetable PPT PDF version \(2\).pdf](#)

- Background - during covid we went from linear to quarters, then to 2 semesters due to mandates.
- Purpose of the Surveys - to assist in the decision-making process for the next 5 years.
- Purpose of the Presentation
  - Looking at Linear or Semester only
  - PLT will continue to be offered in both systems
  - Both systems have 8 Courses per school year
  - Semester - 4 courses Sept - Jan, 4 courses Feb - June
  - Linear - 8 courses for Sept - June, broken down into Day 1 and Day 2
  - Semester Reporting - 2 formal, 1 informal and one Meet the Teacher Night each semester.
  - Linear Reporting - 3 formal, 2 informal and one Meet the Teacher Night
    - Absences = absences have many reasons
    - LS = Learning Strategies
- Semester System: Time
  - Advantages - Fewer number of courses at a time to focus on. Daily practice of concepts. Less time to review previous material in class because students have the course daily.
  - Disadvantages - Fast paced. There can be a gap of a whole year between 2 courses. Less time and opportunity to provide feedback and change to occur.
- Semester: Mental & Physical Well Being
  - Advantages - More focused study due to 4 courses at a time can be less overwhelming. Opportunity to start fresh and reset in February. Daily connection between students and teachers. Identify and address concerns with some students thanks to daily context.
  - Disadvantages - Possibility of unbalanced course load per semester. Quicker coverage of curricula in a shorter time span can lead to students feeling overwhelmed. Connections with most students and teachers for only half a year. It may be difficult to keep up with missed work due to absences. No structured physical education year-round.
- Semester: Learning and Teaching Opportunities
  - Advantages - Only 4 courses = fewer to manage and to complete in the summer. Easier to manage and plan resources and books because few students and classes to share with. Opportunity to repeat a grad requirement course and possible course acceleration. Option for flexible graduation time. More opportunity for semester based SD38 career programs for training in trades.
  - Disadvantages - Some opportunities, field trips, and seasonal/cultural activities are missed or unavailable all year i.e., current events (elections) winter music

concert, holiday lessons, Physics Olympics, Science Fair. French Immersion courses could be stacked so students have an English only term. LS block is only for half the year and not always in line with courses that students need the most support. Some programs or students don't have yearlong support i.e., LS students, Yearbook, Athletic Director.

- Any questions from Parents about Semester? - None currently.
  
- Linear System: Time
  - Advantages - Long term continuity and routines of learning concepts and skills for students. Catching up on missed material may be easier. More time for assessment and feedback. Time to digest material.
  - Disadvantages - No change in courses for the whole year. Non-daily practice of concepts. 8 courses to focus on.
  
- Linear: Mental & Physical Well Being
  - Advantages - Longer relationships with teachers and peers. Consistent course load throughout the year. A day in between classes to digest information and complete assignments. Yearlong prep has less mental fatigue for teachers.
  - Disadvantages - More courses to juggle at a time which can be overwhelming. "Stuck" in a course for a year vs end in sight after 5 months.
  
- Linear: Learning & Teaching Opportunities
  - Advantages - Year-round learning: lessons can be tailored to the season, weather, and events. Yearlong practice of key skills for retention and ability to improve over time. Students with LS support have a primary block for a full year. More opportunities for cross curricular connections.
  - Disadvantages - Strain on resources, books, textbooks. 8 different courses can be a struggle to manage for some. Grad requirement course repeat and advancement must be done over summer school, the following year or through online schools. Difficult to change schools during the year to follow a SD38 career trades program.
  
- Important Dates to complete survey:-
  - Parents February 8th to 15th
  - Students February 9th and 10th
  - Staff February 9th and 10th

- Final decision by District announced on February 17th
- Questions from Parents about Linear and Semester?
  - Q. Is the change only applicable to the next year or forever going forward?
  - A. It will be for the next 5 years.
  - Q. With respect to the surveys, how much weight do they carry in the decision making? Meaning, ultimately - who/what makes the decision?
  - A. The decision will be made based on the survey results.
  - Q. So the decision will be made based on the majority of the survey?
  - A. There will be a gathering of the information and then a vote.
  - Q. If it's decided to go ahead with semester system going forward, would PLT remain the same on Tuesdays and Thursdays?
  - A. Can't give an answer at this time. There's 100 minutes of PLT time a week.
  - Q. Can you speak to the rationale for continuing with PLT (whichever system we go with) rather than going back to hours of instruction students used to get?
  - A. PLT was a District decision. We will figure out how it will be structured after the survey.
  - Q. From a teacher's point of view, for Gr. 12's that may apply for early admission to post-secondary, which system would be better for those students?
  - A. There's no disadvantage or advantage, post-secondary institutions keep spaces open for those in the linear system.
  - Q. For teachers that have taught in both systems, what have they seen in students in terms of the effect on knowledge/skill retention & setting them up for success post-secondary for linear vs semester?
  - A. We haven't asked that question to staff as we felt it didn't add value to their feedback.
  - Q. Every school can choose their own system, right? I know that Richmond High and MacNeill have linear systems even right now while the rest of Richmond Schools have semester system now.
  - A. Yes Richmond High is linear due to IB Program. MacNeill is currently looking at their system for next year.
  - Q. Why need a vote when the semester was a temporary measure for the pandemic period?
  - A. This is the process to go through to make the change.
  - Q. VSB has made the decision to go with semester. Will that affect Richmond's decision?
  - A. Don't know if that will affect our decision. It's a democratic process.
  - Q. For post-secondary early admission, would students that have an "easier" course load in S1 have an advantage vs linear which might put everyone on an even playing field?
  - A. Applying to post-secondary students come from all over and the institutions are also looking at the Gr 11 marks for early admissions. They will look just after Spring Break at the marks both for linear and semester.
  - Q. Excuse me but may I know how students work out their Math when they have Grade 8 Math only at Sem 1 then leave until Grade 9 Sem 2. How can the students manage their Math during the gap?

- A. You can always get extra help outside of school i.e. Workbooks, tutors, apps. The gap between courses may not be detrimental but might give the chance for the child to grow.
  
- Samantha gave thanks to Ms. Cowin and Ms. Loren for the chance to have a say as a parent.
- Dionne - urged parents to have discussions with others about the 2 systems especially for those younger students and parents who haven't experienced the linear system.
- Dionne thanked Ms Cowin and Ms Loren.
  
- Principals Report continued.
  - Staffing changes
    - Ms Jang (Business Assistant)
    - Mr Luistro (Counsellor G-L)
    - Ms Chen (Art - Mr Sharma)
    - Ms Clay (Art - Starts Semester #1)
    - Mr Kiss (Tech Ed for Mr Crowe/Ms Crowe)
    - Mr Lalonde - Retiring End of Semester
      - Wish him all the best on his retirement.
      - Posting for this position now and should have a teacher hired for the start of Sem 2.
  
- Following Up on Questions from November meeting
  - Question #1 - Are students required to do Volunteer Hours?
    - Physical Health Education
      - Need to be completed during the semester
      - No form, email teacher with details and contacts
      - Students can ask teacher for volunteer options at school
      - Ask PLT, Athletic Director to volunteer for games
      - Community work
      - Grade 8 (3 hours)
      - Grade 9 (5 Hours)
      - Grade 10 (7 Hours)
    - CLC - 30 Hours (Grade 10-12)
      - Volunteer
      - Work
      - Documented and complete a form, can be found on the website.
      - See Mr Ngo or Mr Anderson for more information

- Question #2 - How is the Rainbow Installation/Crosswalk coming along? Rainbow Club meet quite often, and they are still researching it.
  - Rainbow Crosswalk
    - PRIDE club concerned about vandalism
    - McNeil Secondary has had theirs vandalised about 3 times.
    - Looking at Indoor Project Options
- In February will be reporting on conduct issues that are happening at the school. Being a partner with the police. It's everyone's responsibility to report things going on in the schools.
- We need more replies to the survey to get an accurate overview. Looking for 3/4 responses.
- End of Principal's Report. Thank you to Jeff for the presentation and update.

#### **5. RDPA Report – Andrew Scallion unable to make the meeting tonight**

- Updates from Dionne
  - RDPA will be putting on a parent night "Cybersafe from Exploitation" on January 24th 7pm at Richmond High.
  - Registration for the evening, email richmonddpasd38@gmail.com.
  - Check Facebook page, twitter for more information

#### **6. Treasury Update – Jon / Winson**

- Finance overview
  - General Account \$221.62
  - Gaming Account \$33,078.43
  - PAC Scholarship (7x\$500) \$3,500
  - Funds Available \$29,578.43
  - Update on which clubs spent what at the February meeting.

#### **7. PAC sharing or New Business**

- Dionne opened the floor for discussion of linear and semester systems or any other topics.
  - Samantha, some parents didn't find the volunteer hour forms on the website. Some teachers are not requiring forms, just an email with contact information.
  - Dionne, for those students still needing volunteer hours, many can be found in many places within the school, ask PE teacher, front office, babysitting, something out in the

community such as a seniors' facility, City of Richmond. Dionne needs some help with crafts for DAG, if anyone is needing hours to contact her.

- Dionne, it is important to fill out the parent timetable surveys. This will be locked in for the next 5 years. We need more than 50% of parents responding. Ask other parents to fill in the survey.
- PAC succession reminder - vote at AGM in May, we really need parents to volunteer to be on PAC in order for us to apply for the Gaming Grant.
- LS using the PLT blocks are available all year round.

## **8. Meeting Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn at 8:25pm, Motion Jon, Second Winson

Next meeting on Tuesday, February 21, 2023 @ 7pm