

## PAC meeting

November 24, 2020

In attendance: Kirsty M., Lisa F., Win L., Andrew S., Peter M., Mary I., Tammy O., Carol C., Karen F-H., Larissa R, Helmut D., Cheyna C., Lucas M., Ivy G., Nadine S.,

Staff: Jane M., Adrienne G.

Exec.: Jon L., Dionne M., Cinda W., Megan R.

Guest: Sandra Nixon – school trustee

Amber C – Crossroads Career Counselling

Meeting started 7:04pm

**Adoption of the Agenda:** Helmut D.  
**Seconded** Kirsty M.

**Adoption of Minutes:** Karen F.H.  
**Seconded** Carol C.

### Sandra Nixon

Sandra attended to touch base with parents and staff, as McMath's school trustee she likes to attend a couple of meetings each year so that parents know who she is, and that she is able to answer questions that may arise.

- The board is very appreciative of both the support families are giving to schools and staff, and the patience and support shown to the district as they deal with ever changing regulations. School is integral to the mental health and well being of many students.
- Parents are always welcome to reach out to the board with questions or concerns, the Trustees are there to work with parents, and encourage contact.
- Dionne expressed how nice it is to have the connection with a trustee, and that we all recognize the work the board does for our students and schools.

### Principal's Report

#### Covid:

- As McMath had another exposure the previous week, Jane wanted to go over the process for which cases are reported to families.
- Typically the health authority will be the one to let the school know there has been an exposure event – sometimes the school will be the first to know, and they must report it to authorities first, and wait for further instructions. The school can only let families know when the health department tells them to. The letter that goes out to families is a stock letter, and schools are not allowed to customize it, other than to add the school or program's name, which is why Jane added a further notice in the form of the email when she let us know of the exposure.
- The district has hired Donna Matheson to serve as the point person for all schools and will be the one who is in contact with school and Vancouver Coastal Health. This is a change as before it was the responsibility of either the Superintendent or Vice Superintendents, however having one person streamlines the process and ensures that all the information is held in one place with one person.

- Vancouver Coastal Health is completely in charge of the investigation into close contacts the person with the exposure may have had. The school may be asked for input, but they do not run the investigation.
- If the health authority finds there are others that may need to either monitor themselves for symptoms, to self isolate, or to go for testing, they send that letter to the school, and the school then sends it to the applicable people. The school does not write, nor add to the letter.
- It's important to note that while there have been many exposures, the actual transmission rate in schools is currently very low.

**Question:** If someone has been exposed and have no symptoms, are they welcome to attend school?

**Jane:** yes, the health authority investigates and if they feel there is not enough to warrant isolating, those exposed may return to school immediately.

- REMINDER: it is very important that staff and students who are feeling ill should stay home. This includes people with colds, flus and other communicable type diseases.
- The school is maintaining a strict regime of which entrances students are to use, depending on their classes for the day, students should not be leaving through other exits elsewhere in the school.
- Lunch is the biggest challenge – its hard for kids to always remember to distance themselves, and to stay in their designated areas in the school (cohort specific). The admin team and the noon hours spend the time moving from group to group, ensuring students are staying in their cohorts.
- Schools can't make masks mandatory, but the admin and staff are appealing to the kids' better natures, and overwhelmingly they are responding by wearing them throughout the day.

**Question:** How long is there between the time an exposure is confirmed, and letters are sent out to families.

**Jane:** It's a pretty quick turn around. This last exposure was reported to the health authority and they called Jane within a very short space of time. She then waited about 3 hours for the go ahead to send out the general letter. Any letters to students who may have been exposed include the dates of exposure. General letters do not.

### WAAG newsletters

- Tinh sends these out every week – typically Friday night or Saturday morning. They are always posted on the school website, and anyone who subscribes will receive it directly to their email address.

### Quarter 2

- Classes are designated "C" and "D" this quarter. Q 1 is still wrapping up and teachers add final marks and enter report card information.
- Q2 lunch cohorts will be like Q1 – students are required to eat lunch in specific classrooms, and then may hang out in their cohort's designated areas
- Students may visit with friends in other cohorts – but only outside and need to remember to maintain the 6 feet of distance.
- Report cards will be published Wednesday, Nov. 25<sup>th</sup> on the My Ed portal.
- If a student earns an "I", it is because the teacher is allowing the student to submit work past the deadline in the hopes of bringing the mark up to a passing grade.
- If a student fails a class this year, every effort will be made for them to be able to repeat the class before the end of the year. The upside to the quarter system is that classes change over, rather than

running for the full school year. Equally, some senior students may wish to retake a course to try to increase their mark.

- Students who need to retake a failed course will have priority over a student wishing to try to increase their grade. Getting into a class will completely depend on there being space once students who still need the to take the course for the year are accounted for.

**Question:** If a student is trying to add a class to get higher marks, are they going to be able to drop another course to accommodate that.

**Jane:** Sometimes senior students will have a study block, and this is when they will try to schedule them into another class, but it is possible they may be allowed to drop an elective if needed. It is much harder to do this with gr 8 and 9 as they have only 1 real elective.

- Q2 midterm reports will come out just before winter break, and will include letter grades, a work habit grade and a comment.

Meet the Teacher Night

- Like Q1, meeting the teacher will be virtual again. Teachers may choose to have a Zoom meeting, email outlines and course expectations, or record video clips and send you the links to those. Teachers will be contacting families in the next few days.

**Question:** Is there any news about an extended winter break?

**Jane:** No current plan, but everything is constantly evolving.

Clubs and Sports

- Clubs are currently underway and being enjoyed. The jewellery making club is HUGELY popular, so much so they have had to break it into several subgroups.
- Volleyball was suspended on Nov. 9<sup>th</sup>, but the province has allowed them to start up again as of Nov. 24<sup>th</sup>, provided the Return to Play guidelines and plan are filled in and adhered to.
- Basketball will not start up until January – always depending on the situation then.
- Extra curricular activities are important to students, and the school is committed to allowing what they can, however safety is the paramount decision maker.

Grade 8 Day

- This Friday, Nov. 27<sup>th</sup>
- Kerry Zaine and the senior leadership students have been working hard for the last month to try to get something that will be a lot of fun and build community for the grade 8s, while maintaining strict covid safety measures.
- This year, each class will be a team, and events will happen within the classrooms. There will be crafts, a kahoot and other activities. Each class will have 3 designated senior leadership students to help lead the fun, and to hand out the tee shirts and treat bags to each gr.8. Lunch will be individually packaged pizza slices. The leadership students will eat with their class. In the afternoon, students will have reflection pieces to work on, that includes thinking about McMath's PRIDE matrix and what it means to be part of the McMath community.

Jane ended her report by reminding families it is so important to find balance in these times. She shared photos and stories of her family, and ways they are working to find that space for mental and emotional health together.

### **Amber Chow – Crossroads Career Counselling**

- Amber was invited to speak with regards to her business as a career coach. McMath has an in-house Career education and support staff - Sheila Carter – who is on-site 2.5 days a week. We invited Amber to speak as an addition or alternative option.
- Her company provides students with support in career exploration and self discovery. She has found that often students aren't aware of all the options that are available to them, or are overwhelmed by it. She feels that many students are stressed by choices and not knowing what they really want to do. She felt there was a need for support for them to be able to identify their skills and strengths and have a sounding board who can show them different options and pathways.
- Amber sees her service as an extension of services schools provide, as her service is able to spend more one on one time with students than counselors may have time for.
- Her goal is to help the students understand what they have to offer in the world of work. It is designed for those gr 10 -12.

### **RDPA – Andrew Scallion**

- Recent questions and concerns from families have centered on the number of exposures in schools. There have been several, but it's important to note there have been zero transmissions.
- The district (among many) is currently in talks with the Ministry about extending the deadline for those who chose to go online for the beginning of the school year. The re-entry date is fast approaching, and families are feeling it is even less safe to return right now.
- A concern was raised by a family that students are only getting 10 weeks of PE, and nothing the rest of the year. Superintendent Scott Robinson will meet with secondary school admin to see if there is any way to provide more in the quarters that students would not have a PE class.
- The RDPA is requesting the Board of Education send a letter to the PHO and Ministry of Health regarding making masks mandatory in schools.
- Parent/Career Education workshops: in a normal year, the RDPA tries to schedule 2 workshops to give parents some tools and advice to help their children with post secondary options. Keep an eye on the RDPA website for further information as it becomes available.

### **Financial**

- There have been no further requests for funds from the wish list this past month. There is currently a decent amount of funding available should clubs come forward in the future.

**Motion to adjourn:** Jon L.

**Seconded** Lisa F.

**Meeting adjourned at 8:20pm**