

Three Oaks Family of Schools District Advisory Council

Members 2018-19: Terri MacNeill (Athena), Julie Hogan (Elm St), Jeff Nichols (Greenfield), Patricia Altass (Parkside), Leigh Dymont (Three Oaks), Jacqueline Lecky (Miscouche), Andrea Pickett (SIS), Jana Weatherbie (PEI HSF rep), Blake Vandervelen (TOSH student rep)

May 7, 2019, Three Oaks Senior High

Guests: Geoff MacDonald, Project Lead, Student Well-being Teams; Dale Sabean and Harvey MacEwen, PSB Board of Directors.

This meeting was also open to all parents in the District. There was a small number of parents present.

Discussion and Outcomes

Student Well-Being Teams

- The role of the SWB team is to support student emotional and social well-being;
- Build grit and resilience;
- Empower all students, not only those in crisis;
- To look at students health potential, as opposed to their deficits.

The SWB teams take a tiered approach to interventions.

- They focus in Mental Health Literacy.
- The teams work to get in front of a crisis, and ensure that basic self-care needs are being met.

The vision of the SWB teams is:

- “Supporting Island children and their families to be the best that they can be”

Poverty triples the odds of a mental health problem (Lipman and Boyle).

The 4 principles of the SWB team are:

- Child centered;
- Easy access to service;
- Early Intervention;
- Collaboration

Teams consist of:

- School Health Nurses;
- Mental Health Clinician;

- School outreach workers;
- Board-based Counselling consultant;
- Occupational Therapists

The number of each on a team varies by District, based on student population.
Team work can consist of:

- One on One interventions;
- Group work;
- Educational Opportunities

Geoff answered some questions from the floor, and was thanked for his time and presentation.

Playground Letter

- A letter was sent to the Department of Education and Lifelong Learning seeking clarification on playground funding prior to the election.
- A response is still pending.

Membership

- If you require some help in securing a new member, please book the Engagement Officer to come your Home and School meeting to present to your membership about the role and importance of the DAC in the PEI education system.
- Thank you to all DAC members whose terms are ending June. Your service and dedication to the students of your District and the province is appreciated.

DAC Provincial Report

- A presentation was given on the work of all DACs this year.

Forward Agenda

Some key issues that the DAC wants to carry forward in the Fall include

- BYOD,
- School Food and
- Parent Engagement
- Members would like to see better engagement between the PSB/Dept and Parents.
- Some suggestions were more social media presence, newsletters, school pages, media at events, profiles on CBC and actively promoting what is happening in schools to parents.
 - **UPDATE: a DAC evaluation survey in June will have opportunity for members to suggest changes to the meeting and group frameworks.**

March 11, 2019, Three Oaks Senior High

Guest: Harvey MacEwen, PSB Board of Directors

Discussions and Outcomes

Membership

- Several members are transitioning off the DAC in June.
- The Engagement Officer will continue to work with those members and their Principals to fill the vacancies.

Student Supports in Community

- Community Mental health resources, the PEI Helping Tree and the Island Helpline were shared.
- The "Help My Child" link on the PEIHSF webpage was also shared.

Social-Emotional Learning

- Information was shared about the SEAK (Socially and Emotionally Aware Kids) and the PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies)
- These Social-Emotional Learning programs were piloted in Central Queens and Parkdale Elementary this year.
 - **UPDATE: The PATHS program will roll out to Island elementary schools in 2020-2024, supported through the PEI Poverty Reduction Action Plan.**

PsychEd Assessments

- The assessment team is now at full complement and is on target to meet its mandate of a 1 year wait for assessment by June 2020.
- School Psychologists shared at the Charlottetown DAC meeting that many students are found to have vision and/or hearing issues.
- The Charlottetown DAC is thinking of advocating for a provincial yearly assessment for all K-4 students for both hearing and vision.

Common Assessments

- The report from RMJ came back with few changes suggested to the current model.
- A member was concerned about the high rate of exemption in PEI.
- There was discussion about why students are exempted.
- More information is requested about that.
 - **UPDATE: New exemption criteria and process are being drafted to promote consistency and reduce exemptions.**

Digital Citizenship

- Some information from "My Life Online" was shared.
- It is an organization that talks to students about Internet usage and to parents about how to talk to kids about Internet usage.
- A member wondered if there was an opportunity for Student Well-being teams or School Health Consortium to lead some discussion on this in classrooms.

School Food Project

- There was an update on the School Food Project.
- A member asked if they can receive a report of some kind outlining what has happened and will happen with the pilot project in Kinkora, Montague and Cornwall area schools in the Fall.
- There was also a discussion about breakfast programs in the area, and how they are impacted by volunteer burnout and lack of administration.
- There is a need for more volunteers, perhaps retired people, seniors, family members who could take on the role in the school.
- It was suggested to brainstorm people outside of parents in your community who could be tapped to volunteer.

Playgrounds

- A member is concerned about the high level of financial burden placed on parents and communities to fund playground equipment.
- Smaller communities are at a disadvantage, with not as many pockets to draw from.
- He would like to see the PSB or Department play a role in paying for playground equipment that the PSB deems unsafe and must be replaced.
- It was noted that old equipment needs to be inspected and deemed safe, and new equipment must meet CSA standards.
- It was suggested that communities go to their municipality to request funding partnerships for new equipment, as it gets used after school hours by the community at large as well.
- A member spoke about alternatives to traditional equipment, including purchasing toys and games for kids, as well as designing more natural playgrounds.
- A letter will be drafted outlining these concerns and sent to the Minister, Board and PSB.
 - **UPDATE: The letter has been drafted and sent to the Minister, Board and PSB.**

Oct 22, 2018, Three Oaks Senior High

Guests: Harvey MacEwen and Dale Sabean, PSB Board Members

Discussion and Outcomes

Membership

- There are 2 student vacancies from TOSH. These have been vacant for more than a year.
- Some members suggested ways to engage students to serve on the DAC, including asking students who take Leadership, Political Studies or those looking for volunteer hours for their community bursary to sit on the Council.
- It was also suggested that the DAC have a regular meeting day and time, so students could better schedule their time around extra-curriculars and find time to sit on the DAC.
 - **UPDATE: One of the student vacancies was filled in November 2018.**

Student Mental Health

- This FOS will get a Student Wellbeing team in Sept 2019.
- In the meantime, parents are concerned that student's mental health needs may not be getting met.

- It was suggested to compile a list of community resources including walk in mental health clinic in the area.
 - **UPDATE: Resources "Help My Child" and " PEI Helping Tree" were shared with members.**
 - **UPDATE: Geoff MacDonald, SWT Project Lead will attend the Jan 2019 meeting to inform members about the SWT model and its rollout in this FOS.**

Social Emotional Learning

- A member raised the idea of establishing a program of whole school approach to social and emotional learning province wide - similar to the PATHS program pilot currently running at Central Queens and Parkdale schools.
- There was a request to have information about SEAK sent out to all the members to read and get a better understanding of what a program of this sort could look like in all Island schools.
 - **UPDATE: As part of the Poverty Reduction Strategy, the PATHS program will rollout to Island elementary schools from 2020-2024.**

EAs and PsychEd Assessments

- There were questions around how EAs are assigned.
- It is believed that student's psych-ed assessments recommend interventions including EA support.
- Many feel that the wait time to get an assessment is too long, and that often the needs that are identified can't be met at the school level.
- The Province recently hired teachers to help interpret the results of the psych-ed assessments to teachers, and to target resources that a school or class may need to support a student with a diagnosis.
- Members would like more information on how student psych-ed assessment and resource allocation works.
 - **UPDATE: The Province is now at full complement of school psychologists (10.3), the wait time has been reduced from 3.5 years in Jan 2018 to 2 years and 3 months in Jan 2019.**
 - **UPDATE: The wait time goal is 1 year by Sept 2020.**

Student Common Assessments

- Members would like more information about how PEI Common assessments and PISA work together.
- They want to know what is covered, how are they the same or different.
- Members would like a Dept staff member to attend a meeting to talk about the assessment model on PEI.
 - **UPDATE: The Dept. Manager of Achievement and Accountability, will attend an meeting to inform members.**

Engagement requests

- RMJ are conducting a review of the assessment model in PEI and are seeking input from parents and students on changes they would like to see in student assessment.
- Members were encouraged to complete the assessment survey from RMJ and to share it in their networks.

- 2018 Common Assessment results will be public this week.
 - **UPDATE: The assessment results were shared with all DACs.**

School Goals

- Members would like to see school teachers and administrators be able to define areas where they need to focus on improvement
- Members would like to see schools share how they have been successful with schools that may be struggling.
- It was suggested that members use their Our School Survey as a starting point for identifying possible District priorities.
 - **UPDATE: Our School Survey launches in Feb 2019, and will be circulated to all DAC members.**

School Food

- Members are supportive of the ongoing work of Morgan Palmer, and asked that she come to speak with them about her work on school food.
- They want to ensure that students are leading the way in changes and have opportunities for experiential learning, increasing food literacy and working toward reducing food insecurity.
 - **UPDATE: Morgan will be attending an upcoming meeting to present on the School Food Initiative.**

Digital Citizenship

- Last Spring, TOSH hosted a parent evening around this issue.
- A panel of educators presented ways to talk with your child about their online life
- The turnout was lower than hoped, but it was discussed about ways to share information with parents and students.
- Members would like to know if there was a resource produced that could be shared electronically with parents, and if curriculum may already exist around this topic.
- It was suggested that parents also receive information on this at their child's 4 year assessment and upon entering Kindergarten.

Playground Equipment

- There was a discussion about the large role parents and communities play in fundraising to replace playground equipment.
- Smaller communities feel they are at a disadvantage because of lower population numbers.
- Members feel that playground equipment is key to student's health, and should be paid for by the Province, not parents.
- It was suggested that communities with a municipality approach their councillor and ask that they participate in the funding of the equipment, as it is also used after hours by the community at large, much like how school sports fields are used by community sports teams.
- The membership will work on a letter requesting that the burden of fundraising for playground equipment be removed from parents and school communities.
 - **UPDATE: A letter was sent to the Minister. A response is pending.**

French Immersion/Student Choice

- Members spoke about the frustration that they and their students are encountering when students are entering high school, and their choices are limited, especially if they are in French Immersion.
- Parents would like to see more opportunity for students to try new courses and experiences.
- Members would like more opportunity to allow for increased flexibility.

Bussing

- Members want some information about extra-curricular bussing budgets for rural schools.
- Many parents are driving long distances in the Province to get students to extra-curricular activities.
- They also noted that the start time of some activities mean that students are missing class time to travel.
- Members would like more information about how the bussing allocation process works.
 - **UPDATE: This information will be provided at the Jan 2019 meeting.**