

Montague Family of Schools District Advisory Council

Members for 2020-21: Debra Matheson (Montague Consolidated), Joelene MacLeod (Vernon River Consolidated), Ashley Higgenbotham (Southern Kings Consolidated), Lindsay Hume (Montague Intermediate), Lisa Edward (Belfast Consolidated), Patti MacKenzie (Cardigan Consolidated), Craig Goodick (Montague PEIHSF Regional Rep), Mia Martell (Montague Regional High Student Rep), Kenzy Hawkins (Montague Regional High Student Rep)

Vacant: Georgetown Consolidated, Montague Regional High, Teacher Rep

May 31, 2021, Web Ex Meeting

Guest: John Cummings, Director, Education and Lifelong Learning

Discussion and Outcomes

Discussion of Montague DAC recommendations for the Minister for 2020-2021

- Late French immersion
 - DAC members expressed interest in Late immersion being an option for students in the Montague family of schools.
 - Parents want to continue discussions on how this could become a reality.
 - This has been a sensitive topic because parents didn't want the program to jeopardize numbers at small schools.
 - They started to make progress and then COVID hit.
 - There needs to be fair engagement about the program.
 - It needs to be promoted to parents more widely and sooner, when they are enrolling their children in kindergarten.
- Overcrowding at Montague Consolidated
- Speeding in school zones
 - This has been a chronic issue at Vernon River and other schools in the Montague family.
 - Parents have called RCMP to monitor more closely.
 - The Home and School has discussed installing a radar detector.
 - There are also concerns with people passing school busses.
- COVID impacts
 - The Montague DAC would like to know how the department feels about how the school year went with COVID.
 - They would like to know what the allotment of resources will be moving forward into the 2021-2022 school year.
- Parent engagement
 - This has been a challenge this year with COVID
 - There have been no large fundraisers and little money spent on events and activities.
 - Vernon River Home and School has had more engagement with younger families this year with home and school. They find that small incentives work well.
 - Children of exec members receive free pizza for the year.

- Children of parents who attend meetings get free pizza for 1 week.
 - There is a \$25 gift draw card at each meeting.
- More school counseling time
 - The DAC would like to have more counseling allocated to small schools.
 - Children facing challenges might not be able to see a counselor when needed if they are at another school.
 - There has been positive feedback about the Student Well Being Team.

Presentation to Director

- Late French immersion
 - **Response: John will follow up with Rene directly, and include the PSB in the discussion.**
- Speeding in school zones
 - **Response: John will reach out to Highway Safety about enforcement, and to Transportation and Infrastructure to ask for their suggestions around signage.**
 - **Update From the Highway Safety Division: Some preliminary work was completed on June 2 2021. The findings were 7 passenger vehicles with speeds ranging 68-91 km/h in the posted 60km/h zone. All other vehicles maintained the proper speed for the zone. They were there from 8:30 to 9:30. They plan to keep an eye on it periodically until school's end. Any complaints in respect to private passenger vehicles speeding should be directed to Queens District RCMP (902-368-9300)**
 - **Update from Transportation and Infrastructure: We will install feedback signs at the beginning of the school zone the same as we have in Rollo Bay**
- Additional counseling time
 - **Response: 12 new counseling positions have been created in the 2021-2022 budget. This will be allocated to education authorities for more counseling time in schools. The department will be monitoring to see how these new positions function and if there are any gaps.**
- Overcrowding at Montague Consolidated
 - **Response from PSB: Renovations start this summer as soon as school is out. Tenders close this week. The project includes building upgrades recommended in the assessment report, including: exterior walls, roof, plumbing fixtures and systems, heating system, HVAC/ventilation systems, lighting improvements, and communications and security systems. The project includes relocating the library, converting the existing library space to multi-purpose office/break-out rooms, converting boot storage room to multi-purpose office/break-out spaces, renovations to the entryway and washrooms, replace ceiling tiles and furniture and equipment for the new, re-purposed spaces.**
- COVID impacts
 - **Response: PEI schools fared well considering the challenges related to COVID. The school system rose to challenge. Teachers and education authorities did a good job.**
 - **COVID funding will continue into the 2021-2022 school year for additional staff, cleaning, and bus drivers.**
 - **Parent engagement has been a bit more challenging due to COVID rules, creating more work for the teachers.**

February 24, 2021, WebEx Meeting

Guests: Lynn Anne Brousseau, School Mental Health Clinical Lead, Juliana Barry, Comprehensive School Health Nurse, Student Well-Being Team, Tara Roche, Provincial Supervisor, Student Well Being Teams

Discussion and Outcomes

Student Well Being Team Presentation

- Lynn Anne and Juliana gave a presentation about the SWT's work in the Montague family of schools.
- They talked about how early intervention provides better outcomes for kids and teenagers.
- There are multidisciplinary SWTs in all 7 families of schools.
 - Phase 1 2017: Westisle and Montague Family of Schools pilot.
 - Phase 2 2018: Colonel Gray, Souris, Morell, and Bluefield Family of Schools.
 - Phase 3 2019: Charlottetown Rural, Kinkora and Kensington, and Three Oaks Family of Schools.
- SWTs consist of registered nurses, social workers, outreach workers, occupational therapists, and provincial supervisors in health, education, justice, and occupational therapy.
- SWTs collaborate with a number of partners.
- The vision of SWTs is: "Supporting Island children and their families to be the best they can be."
- Guiding principles for SWTs are child centeredness, easy access to services, early intervention, and collaboration.
- SWTs hold formal one on one meetings, group interventions, brief interventions, and educational opportunities.
- Referrals received:
 - 2018-2019 – 573 referrals
 - 2019-2020 – 914 referrals
 - 2020-21 (Sept-Dec) - 426 referrals
 - These numbers do not include parent or school group sessions or presentations/health promotion activities.
 - The number of referrals have grown each year in the Montague family of schools.
 - From September to November 2020, there were 41 referrals in the Montague family of schools.
- Parent/student required to sign a consent form upon initiation of the service to enable information sharing between the 3 departments when appropriate and in the best interest of the student/parent.
- Referral process: Referral created -> forwarded to team lead and school counselor -> team lead gathers intake information -> triage and assignment -> consent for services obtained.
- Anyone can make a referral using the online system.
 - <https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/service/make-student-well-being-tea...>
- SWTs connect with students in schools, at home, in the community, and at after-school programs.
- Changes with regards to the pandemic:
 - The impacts of the pandemic depend on vulnerability factors such as pre-existing mental health conditions and educational status.
 - There has been an increase in school refusal.
- What can parents do
 - Talk with students about the impact of COVID-19 on their lives and assess its potential relationship to their current mental health.

- Complete a referral for their children if they have any concerns about their children's mental health.
- Early intervention may prevent long-term mental health consequences from this COVID-19 pandemic.

These points were made in the following discussion:

- The DAC thanked the team for their work, and noted that they had heard positive things about their sessions.
- Several members of the Montague SWT are trained in Triple P parenting.
 - Parent and grandparent sessions have been offered by Families First in the Montague area.
- The Montague SWT is thinking about creative ways to connect with parents.
- The Montague SWT offered to give presentations to Home and School groups.

Round Table Sharing of Home and School Updates

- Many Home and School groups are planning for teacher appreciation week.
- Montague Consolidated working on playground equipment fundraising.
- Southern Kings is also working on a capital campaign for playground equipment.
- Belfast Home and School provided funding for pink shirts day.

Elected School Boards Consultation

- Three DAC members attended the consultation.
 - Members noted that it would have been helpful to have more information about previous elected school boards.
 - The DAC is looking forward to seeing the outcomes of the consultation and the structure that is chosen.

October 5, 2020, WebEx Meeting

Guest: John Cummings, Executive Director, Department of Education and Lifelong Learning

Discussion and Outcomes

Working together

- The Engagement Officer will continue to develop the meeting agenda and organize DAC meetings.
- The DAC will meet at different schools within the family of schools when in person meetings occur.
- The Montague DAC is interested in hosting a joint meeting with the Morell/Souris DAC at some point.

DAC Overview

Anne Rooban, Engagement Officer for the Department of Education and Lifelong Learning, gave an overview presentation on the role of the DACs.

- Mandate of the DACs is to help shape an education system that is focused on and meets the needs of learners. The role of DACs is:
 - to advise the Minister of Education on educational priorities for the District;
 - to engage school communities in discussions;
 - to foster collaboration among school councils, home and school associations and the community.
- Responsibilities of membership:
 - Report concerns of your local Home and School to the DAC;
 - Provide leadership in identifying priorities to focus on;
 - Work collaboratively with members;
 - Report back to your local Home and School the discussions and outcomes of DAC meetings.

School operational plans

- The school operational plans are working well at the schools. Students are adapting quickly, wearing their masks and washing their hands.
- Transportation and bussing was a challenge at the beginning of the school year but is working well now.
- Space continues to be an issue, especially with physical distancing. There is no extra space available for the VP's office or for the student wellness teams.

Topics for discussion

- Healthy School food Initiative: the DAC would like more information about this initiative.
 - **UPDATE: All schools have access to healthy food right now.**
 - **Most schools have an outside vendor to deliver meals to school (parents go online, order meals, and these are delivered to the school)**
 - **Some schools are still in the pilot phase of this project.**
 - **Some schools are using a hub model (i.e. Kinkora) where meals are made in the high school and delivered to feeder schools.**
 - **Some schools have their in-school food provider (i.e. Chartwells) provide an altered menu with healthier meal options.**
 - **The Department will do an evaluation on all the models in the next couple of months.**
- Late French Immersion
 - Parents would like to know whether students going to Charlottetown for late French Immersion in junior high will stay in Charlottetown for high school or if they will move back to Montague Regional High.
 - For Early French Immersion, students must spend extended periods on a high school bus, making this not a good option for many families.
- Fundraising
 - What does fundraising look like for schools, during COVID and otherwise?
 - COVID is creating barriers for Home and School meetings and fundraisers.
 - **UPDATE: The PSB confirmed that Home and School meetings can be accommodated in schools now.**
- Members will send any additional topics that come from meetings they attend (i.e. Parent Council, Home and School, Student Council)