

BLT Jr & BLT Sr Elementary- School Advisory Council Meeting Minutes
October 7th, 2024

Attendance:

Present:

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|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1) Katie Sherren | Parent (BLT Sr.) & Chair of SAC |
| 2) Mr. Craig Myra | Principal for BLT Sr. |
| 3) Mrs. Tracey Quinn | Vice Principal for BLT Sr. |
| 4) Mr. Albert Williams | Principal for BLT Jr. |
| 5) Mrs. Cali Huczel | Vice Principal for BLT Jr. |
| 6) Mrs. Sarah Doxtater | English Teacher (BLT Sr.) |
| 7) Mrs. Erin Delaney | French Teacher (BLT Sr.) |
| 8) Karri Lynn Davidson | Parent (BLT Sr. & BLT Jr.) |
| 9) Sarah Warford | Parent (BLT Sr. & BLT Jr.) |
| 10) Stephanie Brown | Parent (BLT Sr.) |
| 11) Jill Baker | Parent (BLT Jr.) |
| 12) Ian Angus | Community Member |

Regrets:

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 1) Ms. Terri Mount | English Teacher (BLT Sr.) |
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Call to order:

6:03 PM, October 7th, 2024
BLT Sr. Cafeteria

Review of SAC Conference: (Katie)

- The first annual SAC Conference was held on Friday, September 27th, 2024. SAC Chairs and Principals from all schools in Nova Scotia were invited.
- Mr. Myra, Mr. Williams, and Katie Sherren represented BLT Sr. & BLT Jr.
- Presentations were made regarding mental health of students and healthy eating habits.
- Breakout sessions were offered. Mr. Myra and Katie attended one together regarding School Advisory Councils. We agreed our council is on the right track and have our meetings as outlined. We will work towards recruiting more members, as well as working together with Mr. Williams to form two individual SACs.

Principal Report from BLT Sr.: (Mr. Myra)

- Great start to the school year. New this year is “Morning Affirmations” which the students are responding very well to. Students provided their thoughts on “What does it mean to be a BLT Bear?”
- Change in recess schedule allows for all students to be outside at the same time for 15 minutes. The 15 minutes after recess are dedicated to social/ emotional learning.
- Student Success Planning- Focusing on the following questions for literacy/ numeracy/ well being:
 - How are our students doing?
 - How do we know?
 - What does the data tell you?
 - What challenges are we having?
 - What is our next step?
- Literacy:

Grade Level	Developing	Approaching	Meeting
2 ENG- 79 students	5%	11%	84%
2 FI- 64 students	8%	19%	73%
3 ENG- 87 students	33%	11%	55%
3 FI- 57 students	25%	32%	44%
4 ENG- 68 students	32%	9%	59%
4 FI- 27 students	11%	33%	56%
5 ENG- 106 students	31%	13%	56%
5 FI- 38 students	50%	8%	42%

* This data is measuring against end of term 1 (November) benchmark. It includes 22/26 of our classes.

- Mathematics: Going to use number sense for area of collection using our computational fluency portion of the day to support collecting of student evidence.

- Well Being:

- Time built into the day (10:20 – 10:35) for social emotional learning.
- Professional Development for teachers will be done during an upcoming staff meeting.

- Provincial Assessment Data- Grade 3 Assessment Data from spring, 2024:

Level	Reading BLT Sr.	Reading Province	Writing BLT Sr.	Writing Province	Mathematics BLT Sr.	Mathematics Province
4	20%	19%	4%	5%	35%	29%
3	49%	53%	41%	38%	37%	48%
2	15%	16%	42%	45%	14%	12%
1	16%	12%	13%	11%	14%	10%

*Level 4 = above grade level, Level 3 = at grade level, Level 2 = approaching grade level, Level 1 = not meeting grade level requirements.

- Other updates:

- Terry Fox Run- Raised \$471.50
- Emergency Management Planning: Successful Lockdown Drill, Hold and Secure, 2 evacuation drills. Completed bus evacuation drill.
- NS Lunch Program- ordering October 18th with a start date of October 28th, 2024.
- Holiday concerts- whole school will perform over 3 nights (week of November 25th).

- Standing Item:

- We are experiencing accessibility issues due to the lift being broken. In the meantime, we have moved two classes and one student to the main floor. Unfortunately, students in a wheelchair cannot currently access the top floor. Operations has been working to get the required parts to have the lift fixed as soon as possible. However, this is not a long term solution as the lift we have is not meant for the use we need it for.
- A new lift will cost approximately \$50 000. We need to determine how we can fund this project.

- Another option to examine is an exterior ramp system (as seen at an elementary school in Tantallon).
- We are on the list with IWK to have an “emergency chair” being provided to the school. This will be used as a backup in case of power outage.

Principal Report from BLT Jr.: (Mr. Williams)

- Mr. Williams was welcomed as Principal and Mrs. Huczel was welcomed as Vice-Principal.
- Mr. Williams will reach out to BLT Jr. staff members to recruit and possibly form their individual school advisory council.
- SAC voted yes to go ahead to spend grant money on math manipulatives as requested by teachers.

Discussion around announcement of the new school in Timberlea: (Katie)

- As a group, we discussed the new school and have created the following letter that will be shared with the minister of education:

I am the chair of the School Advisory Council at BLT SR Elementary. As requested, our council has come together to provide input regarding the new school that will be built in Timberlea. Overall, our community is very happy to hear the news and acknowledge its importance. However, we do feel there are many unknowns at this stage. Therefore, some of our input is in the form of comments, while some are questions for you to consider. We recognize the significance of the project and we are looking for the best outcome possible for the children in our community.

Location (Maple Grove Ave):

- It’s great that there seems to be plenty of space, including an HRM field.
- A concern was brought forward regarding the proposed apartment building that will be built on the adjacent property which would possibly be between the field and the school. What buildings in the surrounding area are proposed and how will that impact the new school?

Capacity (800 students):

- Our understanding is that this capacity is based on current needs. However, we know the growth in BLT will be ongoing for some time. How can we plan in advance for future needs?
- It would be great to avoid the need for portables in the future, but if they are needed, will there be enough space at this location?

Grades (Pre-Primary to Grade 8):

- What will be the boundaries of the new school? We would like the boundaries to be very clear.
- We would like to see a fewer number of transitions that students will need to make between schools. For example, it would be beneficial for students to remain at one school for a longer period of time, rather than going to a new school every 2-3 years.

Daycare:

- It is stated that “a daycare is expected to be part of the program”. What will the hours of the daycare be? Will the children of the daycare be included in the 800 student capacity?
- Will there be Excel, or before/after school care be offered?

Accessibility:

- It’s clear in the Site Investigation Summary that there has been thought put in regarding speed limits, cross walks, and parking. It also states “there are opportunities for active transportation”.

We would love to see a fully protected active transportation route, something that could connect to the BLT Trail, and likely requiring more sidewalks (including along Timberlea Village Parkway).

- We need to ensure this new school is fully wheelchair accessible, including at least two routes to upper levels for students in wheelchairs. This could include an elevator and ramp.

General Space:

- A cafeteria that seats at least 50% of the number of students.

- Teachers find “pod style” classrooms very beneficial for educational purposes and supporting/mentoring new teachers. An example of this has been seen at Ridgecliff Middle School.

- Larger classrooms including storage such as cupboards and counters.

- Each classroom would benefit from having a sink, particularly for crafts, and hand hygiene.

- Gender neutral bathrooms/ single room bathrooms.

- We would like to see the school be available for use outside of school hours for community needs.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to provide input and reading through our thoughts. We are looking forward to the changes and positive impacts it will have on our community. We would love to continue to be involved in the process as the planning continues. When the design is completed, will there be community consultation about the vision for the school in terms of programming/ interior design to enhance the student’s experience?

Thank you,

Katie Sherren

BLT SR Elementary SAC Chair

BLT Sr. & BLT Jr. Agreement & Bylaws: (Mr. Myra)

- Copies have been distributed to members to be reviewed prior to next meeting.

Dates of Future SAC Meetings: (Katie)

- In general, we will aim for the first Monday of every month. We will change our meeting time from 6:00PM to 6:30PM.

- Our next meeting will be November 4th, 2024 at 6:30PM in BLT Sr. Cafeteria.

Meeting Adjourned:

7:45PM