

BLT Jr & BLT Sr Elementary- School Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

Present:

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| 1) Mr. Craig Myra | Principal for BLT Sr. |
| 2) Mrs. Tracey Quinn | Vice Principal for BLT Sr. |
| 3) Ms. Patty Hoskin | Acting Principal for BLT Jr. |
| 4) Mrs. Sarah Doxtater | Grade 3 English Teacher at BLT Sr. & Parent |
| 5) Mrs. Cali Huczel | Grade 4 French Teacher at BLT Sr. |
| 6) Katie Sherren | Chair of SAC; Parent of children at BLT Jr. & BLT Sr. |
| 7) Karri Lynn Davidson | Parent of children at BLT Jr. & BLT Sr. |
| 8) Stephanie Brown | Parent of two children at BLT Sr. |
| 9) Debbie Isaacs | Community representative; Grandmother of two children at BLT Sr. |
| 10) Tony Isaacs | Community representative; Grandfather of two children at BLT Sr. |

Regrets:

Ms. Janet Roy
Sarah Warfard
Ian Angus

Call to Order:

6:03 PM, February 12, 2024
BLT Sr. Cafeteria

Overview of 2023-2024 agreement and bylaws:

- Documents provided for new members
- Brief overview given of the role of the Student Advisory Council
- Discussion around recruitment- we are looking for new members to advise and represent the school. This could include parents, community members, or staff. Everyone should feel welcome to join. Benefits include: the opportunity to ask questions, be in the know, and advocate for support.
- Future plans for SAC- due to the growing population of BLT and unique needs for each school, we may divide into two separate councils, one for BLT Jr and one for BLT Sr. This will allow for a more focused meeting. We could occasionally have combined meetings and include Ridgecliff Middle School as well.

SAC Funds for 2023-2024 School Year:

- Each school is given a grant of \$5000 plus \$1 per student to be used as the members of SAC agree appropriate for the benefit of students at the school.
- Surveys were sent out to parents, teachers, and students of BLT Sr. to determine what changes could be made.
- BLT Sr. has purchased technology for the “bear den” including 10 chromebooks, a chromebook cart, and a printer.
- BLT Sr. plans to purchase “math manipulatives” for every student in the school.

BLT Jr Principal Report, Presented by Ms. Patty Hoskin:

- As of today, BLT Jr has 383 students enrolled. The enrollment numbers change regularly.
- BLT Jr has opened a new (4th) learning center in January.
- Guidance Counsellor, Laura Leslie will be offering “Information Cafes” for families. The goal is to improve connections and build a stronger community.

- Ms. Usman, local author, visited the school to share her children’s book, “A Butterfly and a Lightening Bug”.
- Monthly assembly on January 25th. The focus was “wisdom” as highlighted from the Mi’kma’ki teaching.
- Collection of data from students to view literacy progress. The data is used to support and guide the SSP Literacy goal by forming a plan of actions and interventions.
- Student wellness survey: teachers are communicating with each student to design and implement strategies to best support students.
- Over the next six weeks, Amanda Mahar, HRCE CRP Specialist, will be providing leadership, support, and expertise to the staff regarding culturally relevant teaching and cultural proficiency.
- February 13th: Plan for Information Night for New Primary parents/ guardians who are interested in enrolling their children in the Early French Immersion Program.
- Mrs. Janice Wells (BLT Jr Principal) will be on leave until March 22, 2024. Ms. Patty Hoskin will continue in her role until that time.
- African Heritage Month- focus on African Nova Scotians who have made an impact in our communities across the province.
- Plan for transitioning students in grade one moving to the senior building in September.
- Plan: February is registration month. Important to advertise appropriately to get accurate numbers to plan for staffing. Plan to inform local daycare centers and update BLT Elementary Sign on St. Margarets Bay Rd.
- Plan: introduce a leadership group from the senior building to visit and be part of school life at the junior building.
- Discussion regarding class sizes: the junior building is given a cap of 22 students per class in September. Currently the junior building has classes with 22-24 children.

BLT Sr Principal Report, Presented by Mr. Craig Myra:

- Introduction: Mr. Myra began at BLT Sr in January, 2024. Time for a change with leadership of the school. The school has great students and staff, it is not a “broken” school, but could benefit from some changes and clarifying expectations.
- Student Success Planning:
 - Teachers provide student data three times per year.
 - Literacy focus is on reading, support student achievement in reading.
 - Numeracy focus is on computational fluency, representing and partitioning numbers.
 - Well Being focus will be on enhancing the school environment.

Literacy Baseline Data: Data collected in January, but measuring against the end of term two benchmark in March. (ANS= African Nova Scotian & INS= Indigenous Nova Scotian)

Grade/ Demographics	Developing	Approaching	Meeting
Gr 2-3 All 285 Students	28%	17%	55%
Gr 2-3 ENG 181 students	30%	12%	59%
Gr 2-3 FI 104 students	24%	12%	59%

Gr 2-3 ANS 33 Students	27%	9%	64%
Grade 2-3 IND 13 Students	23%	8%	69%

Grade/Demographics	Deveoping	Approaching	Meeting
Gr 4-5 All 287 Students	39%	15%	46%
Gr 4-5 ENG 187 students	36%	14%	50%
Gr 4-5 FI 100 students	45%	16%	39%
Gr 4-5 ANS 47 Students	40%	11%	49%
Grade 4-5 IND 10 Students	40%	0%	60%

- Responding to the data:

- ANS & INS students are demonstrating higher levels of meeting expectations at our school compared to the provincial averages.
- Grade 4 and Grade 5 students are showing less students meeting expectations. This is a common trend within Nova Scotia and likely linked to disruptions of education in earlier years due to Covid. This has been acknowledged and will be a target group to support.
- Create plans to support individual students. Teachers will be using small group targeted instruction.
- Students who are listed under the “Developing” category will have TIER 2 support (resource, early literacy support, ALP, and coaching). Staff room will have a chart that shows which students are “not there yet” and hoping to get them “off the wall” to encourage staff to have an extra focus on these students.

Mathematics Data:

- Grade 3 students complete a provincial assessment in the spring.
- Staff have noted that the scores from the provincial assessment don’t necessarily reflect their students. Teachers will begin a “question of the day” to help prepare students for the upcoming test.
- Two math coaches will be starting at BLT Sr. To support 8 teachers.
- Grade 6 provincial exam data can be reviewed to assess how our students have improved throughout grades 4 & 5.

Well Being:

- Surveys have been sent to students/ parents/ teachers.
- Focus on acceptable and unacceptable behaviours.
- Improving communication with parents.
- Support students on the playground during non instructional times: work with lunch monitors, introduce new clubs and soccer program.

Other:

- African Heritage Month: Daily quiz questions, participation in Buddy Daye African NS History Challenges, “Lift Every Voice” played over morning announcements, and monthly assembly.
- PTC involved with leadership group from Ridgecliff introducing “Kindness Challenge”.
- Plan: “Get involved” info sheet for parents/ caregivers to show different opportunities to be involved with the school.