

BLT JR & BLT SR Elementary- School Advisory Council Meeting Minutes
February 24th, 2025
BLT SR Cafeteria

Attendance:

Present:

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| 1) Katie Sherren | Parent (BLT Sr) & Chair of SAC |
| 2) Ms. Tracey Quinn | Actiing Principal (BLT Sr) |
| 3) Mr. Albert Williams | Principal (BLT Jr) |
| 4) Ms. Cali Huczel | Vice Principal (BLT Jr) |
| 5) Mrs. Sarah Doxtater | English Teacher (BLT Sr) |
| 6) Mrs. Terri Mount | English Teacher (BLT Sr) |
| 7) Jill Baker | Parent (BLT Jr) |
| 8) Stephanie Brown | Parent (BLT Sr) |
| 9) Karri Lynn Davidson | Parent (BLT Jr & BLT Sr) |
| 10) Ian Angus | Community Member |

Regrets:

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| 1) Sarah Warfard | Parent (BLT Jr & BLT Sr) |
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Call to order:

6:30 PM, February 24th, 2025
BLT Sr Cafeteria

Guest Discussion:

Geoffrey Olsson
Maintenance & Capital Division Head
Halifax Regional Centre for Education

Our School Advisory Council invited Geoff to our meeting to discuss the ongoing concerns regarding the lift at BLT Sr. The lift is currently 12 years old, and has required multiple repairs. Due to the impacts on learning for our students, BLT Sr will receive a new lift. The order has been placed and the lift will be installed possibly as soon as March, 2025. It will be installed during non school hours, such as an evening, weekend, or during March break. The new lift will be the same design and placed in the same location as the current lift. It will however have a weight limit of 300 pounds, an increase of 50 pounds from the current. This lift is expected to last 15-20 years if used and maintained properly.

Our SAC also spoke with Geoff about the possibility of adding an external ramp. These ramps are expensive but can be researched further. It is possible to apply for a grant to help cover costs. We will work as a group and further this discussion. Mr. Quinn will arrange a visit at Tantallon Sr in the coming months to look at the set up there.

A discussion was also had regarding the elevator at the BLT Jr building. The elevator had not been in working condition for a number of months but has now been replaced and functioning well.

Principal Report from BLT Sr (Ms. Quinn):

Universal Lunch Program

- Parents were sent a link to provide their feedback last week.

- Lunches are consistently arriving on time.

Student Success Planning for Literacy- Cycle 2

- **Grade 2 and 3** teachers will provide explicit instructions to students who need it by using whole group and small group instruction to focus on supporting students in the following skills:

- Apply known strategies to solve unknown words
- Focus on hearing and recording sounds
- Development of oral language, particularly in French Immersion
- Supporting manipulation of phonological units (isolating, segmenting, and blending) using UFLI.

- **Grade 4 and 5** teachers will continue to use whole group and small group instruction to focus on supporting students in the following skills:

- Engagement with text: the selection and interaction with a variety of texts based on interest, enjoyment, and information.
- Strategic processing with text: any one of many simultaneous and coordinated thinking activities that go on in a reader's head to monitor comprehension. Thinking is reading!
- Responding to text: using the background knowledge provided through instruction, combined with prior knowledge, to generate and answer questions, and summarize information.

- **Learning Support Teachers:** We will look at scheduling all learning support teachers to support grouping of students for intervention and to maximize supports in each classroom within the school to support students who are not meeting.

- Collaborate with classroom teachers to support with grouping of students for small group instruction based on student strengths.
- We are meeting with each teacher this week to review data and update what student support will look like moving into 3rd term.

Student Success Planning for Mathematics- Cycle 2

- Teachers have decided we need to continue with computations fluency as a school wide initiative. Our added focus for this cycle is in gathering evidence of student learning daily to help inform instruction as well as target some grade four students who did not meet (level 1) during the spring 2024 provincial assessment for some targeted intervention.

- **Grade 2 and 3** teachers continue action from cycle 1 of implementation of a 30 minute block of learning focused on developing students' computational fluency. We will use anchor teachers to support our whole team with this strategy. This will be accomplished through modelling and professional development sessions.

- **Grade 3** teachers will begin to prepare for the LM3 in the coming weeks and information will be sent home to parents.

- **Grade 2-5** teachers will gather evidence of fact fluency and supporting students with next steps so that they can be computational learners. Evidence gathered of student understanding will be analyzed during our PLC to identify trends to inform next steps for instruction.

- **Grade 4** teachers will work intensively with the 18 grade 4 students who scored level 1 on the LM3 in the 2023-2024 school year. This will be supported through our Learning Support Teachers with targeted small group instruction with support from our resource team.

- Grade 4 teachers are working with the Math Coach and School Support Team with assessing students and creating groups where students are working on specific math computation, they are working together with 2 classes and support staff so that all the students are grouped according to their ability and once they demonstrate they have skill, they move onto the next group. This model will move into term 3 and other grade 4 classes will follow the same format.

Student Success Planning for Well Being- Cycle 2

- We are continuing with social emotional learning and supporting students with relationship building, problem solving, and conflict resolution. We are doing a school wide walk this week on the BLT Trail, we have a curling workshop coming to run clinics for some of our students. We have created a BLT Leadership award for grade 5 students that is drawn every week with our weekly awards.
- Lunch clubs will be starting up this term. They will be run by teachers volunteering.
- Several classes have participated in the Buddy Day Contest.

Fire Inspection

- The inspections have recently switched to provincial guidelines. They have been into the schools to make a list of changes that need to be done. The Fire Marshall will return and issue fines if the changes are not met.
- Examples of items teachers have been asked to remove include lamps, rugs, storage units, and papers or crafts posted on walls.

Principal Report from BLT Jr (Mr. Williams):

Student Success Plan

P-1 are using UFLI to focus on phonic and phonemic awareness to improve our literacy skills. The short-term goal for math is to improve fact fluency. For well-being, we are continuing our work with enhancing and fostering positive relationships and building upon our emotional vocabulary.

Special Events

- Maritime Centre for African Dance and Drumming
- February is registration month.
- Second Lockdown drill
- February 27th: French Immersion Information Night
- February 27th: School Assembly
- February 28th: Ramadan
- March 7th: Assessment and Evaluation, No classes for students
- March 10-14th: March Breakfast

Hazard and Fire Inspection Update

- Fire inspections were recently switched to the province's responsibility for all schools.
- Storage areas, sealing of cracks around pipes in the furnace room.
- Many changes to the way we post and store building wide.
- Still adjusting in certain areas and working with our building manager.

Library Update

- We purchased over 1000 new books for the school library.
- Also added new resources to the equity bins.
- Staff have received a copy of Choral Counting and Counting Collections.
- Looking to purchase magnet letter kits.

Other Updates

- We have been allocated 50% EPA, waiting to hear from HR.
- Students continue to have access to breakfast bins each morning. We continue to add a variety of healthy options for them to choose from.

- HRCE Program Department Elementary Program provide primary teachers with the book Hair Love ABC's. This is an alphabet book inspired by the book Hair Love, previously rolled out by the EECD.

Discussion regarding cross guards and bus loop congestion:

- It has been brought to our attention that the crossing guards on James St are not always present, particularly on snowy mornings. The general congestion of the bus loop is not safe for children and slows the efficiency of unloading the buses.

- On behalf of BLT SAC, we will contact Councillor Janet Steele and MLA Ian Rankin with the following concerns:

- Who can we contact if we notice the crossing guard is absent? Do they have a substitute available, or should we contact RCMP to direct traffic?

- If we need to close the bus loop to family vehicles, where could they park?

- The Maplewood Drive neighborhood is often congested at pick up and drop off times. Students would be much safer if sidewalks were available.

- There is a green space adjacent to the BLT SR playground owned by HRM. Is there a possibility to transfer this land to the provincial government to allow for more parking or an additional pick up/ drop off zone.

- We will invite Councillor Janet Steele and MLA Ian Rankin to visit our school during morning arrival and afternoon dismissal, as well as join our next SAC meeting to discuss our concerns.

Next SAC Meeting:

April 7th, 2025

6:30 PM

BLT Sr Cafeteria