

## **Humber Park Elementary**

### **School Advisory Council Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday, January 27<sup>th</sup> 2021**

In Attendance: Marilyn Smith (Chair), Tracey White, Nick MacDonald, Fiona Coulter, Erin Madden, Kate MacLean, Teaira Cain, Hollie Pearce, Jeanine Goulet, Lyndsay Watts.

Regrets: Larissa Lee, Christine Dixon.

Meeting called to order at 6:00 PM

- Ms. White began the meeting by recognizing the contributions of former SAC members Lyndsay Watts and Roger Johnson. Both had been long serving members of the Humber Park SAC and the support they have provided to the school was greatly appreciated.
- The committee discussed the SAC grant and the options for spending the funds. Ms. White reviewed some of the past purchases including African Drums and lessons, a keyboard for the music teacher and books for classrooms libraries.
- Ideas for spending the current funds were discussed.
  - o Ideas included a sprucing up of student bathrooms including positive messaging for students. This has been done at several other schools with positive results.
  - o The music teacher at Humber Park has been using ukuleles with some of our upper elementary classes and has expressed a desire to have the school purchase a class set (she is currently borrowing a set from another school).
  - o Ms. White also noted that she would like to continue to make the lobby of the school more inviting by adding additional décor such as a mural.
- Ms. Smith suggested connecting with a local artist to seek out support in planning the décor, mural, etc. She also noted that ideally we would allocate the funds to support more than one initiative.
- The committee agreed that the next several weeks would be spent gathering cost estimates for ukuleles, bathroom décor, and the assistance of a local artist. The costs would then be forwarded to the SAC for review and a final decision on spending the funds.
- Ms. White shared about some of the work that has been undertaken at Humber Park in relation to the Black Lives Matter in Education initiative.
  - o Beginning with our September PD session, staff at Humber Park has worked to identify areas of strength and areas that require growth when it comes to educating our students of African descent.
  - o As a result of those conversations we have developed an Action Plan for moving forward. This plan includes three parts:
    - 1) Students will engage in the African History challenge. A focus will be had on notable local leaders such as Alma Johnson for example. Classes will conduct

research (this will look different depending on the grade level). From these efforts, entries for the Delmore “Buddy” Daye History Challenge will be selected.

- 2) Each class will also work collaboratively to create a bulletin board.
  - 3) Staff felt that it was extremely important for students to have the opportunity to share their voice in the classroom. Teachers agreed to work toward providing a weekly time for students to have the opportunity to engage in meaningful and important conversations in an age appropriate manner.
- Ms. Goulet noted that it may be helpful if classrooms provided an opportunity for students to put forward ideas for class discussion in a discrete way (ie: a slip or paper in a drop box). The committee agreed this would be a good idea and it will be shared with teachers.
  - Ms. Cain shared that there is an outreach program through the Halifax Public Library. The program is accessible to schools and serves to provide support for educators in supporting African Nova Scotian Students. Ms. Cain will forward the contact information to Ms. White.
  - Ms. White also shared that the school is purchasing “Big Dreamers: The Canadian Black History Activity Book for Kids”. A copy will be provided to each student who has self-identified as African Nova Scotian and a copy will be provided to each classroom.
  - Mr. MacDonald shared about some of the other projects in the works at Humber Park.
    - o A grant was received from the Cole Harbour Foundation to purchase graphic novels that feature diverse characters represented for the grade five classroom. The school then purchased additional copies to place in our other upper elementary classrooms.
    - o Several picture books were also purchased that feature characters of African descent. Many of these books also address social issues. These books are available to all teachers to use as models for mini-lessons or as conversations starters.
    - o Mr. MacDonald is working on securing some virtual guests to speak to students on topics related to African Nova Scotian history and culture. These are still a work in progress but he has reached out to Dr. Henry Bishop and the Black Loyalist Heritage Center in Birchtown.
    - o Mr. Bundy, our African Nova Scotia Support Teacher has also been supporting our classroom teachers on several levels. This includes supporting teachers in their planning and working with teachers to facilitate in-class conversations.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> at 6:00 PM