

**Morinville Community High School Council Meeting**  
**Tuesday, September 15, 2015**

*"This is important: to get to know people, listen, expand the circle of ideas. The world is crisscrossed by roads that come closer together and move apart, but the important thing is that they leads towards the good."*

Pope Francis

Welcome to the 2015/16 school year. Much of what we hope to do this year is a continuation of the collaboration and work that went into the previous three years. MCHS is a strong and accomplished school and part of a community that is growing in diversity. We are building upon an earned reputation as an academic school and, as a school and School Council, need to continue moving forward with the vision developed with students, faculty and parents three years ago:

*Community leaders on a journey of opportunity and change;  
respecting and celebrating our unique and personal bests.*

This school is one of the top-rated high schools in Alberta and our collective efforts need to be able to further this, creating additional opportunities for outstanding student achievement. The Fraser Institute *Report Card on Alberta's High Schools 2012*, (p. 5, <http://alberta.compareschoolrankings.org/ChooseReport.aspx>) ranked MCHS in the top 18% for high school achievement and we believe that the next report to be released in June 2015 will rank our school even higher.

We firmly believe, and this is confirmed by research, that a focus upon culture and climate will have a positive and lasting effect on overall student achievement. Our desire is for all improvement to be sustainable and to continue to create an atmosphere of excellence.

As a faculty we will continue working to ensure a safe and caring environment that meets the needs of all learners. MCHS faculty is committed to ensuring that all students who chose to are able to graduate within the regular three-year time frame, with the courses that meet their needs and interests. To assist in this process, students, parents and faculty need to understand their role as equal partners in education.

Many strong and positive opportunities for MCHS students are underway:

- The Student Registrations Days of August 24-26 had a participation rate of 93.6%, up from

the 89.0% attained last year and was the highest in the four years that we have been utilizing this method. A total of 38 students in total did not attend this year's Registration Days, however a number of them did phone the school before hand to indicate that they were unable to attend

- The staggered entry day on August 31 allowed all faculty to meet with the 9's and 10's at separate times and provide them with a barbeque in the process
- The 11's and 12's were provided with a hot dog barbeque on September 4
- The Meet the School Faculty Barbeque was held on September 10. This was the fourth time that such an event was held at MCHS and we had a very strong and positive number of attendees on a beautiful and warm evening
- The pizza lunch offered to all new MCHS students (new to GSACRD) was on Friday, September 10
- The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Fred Scharmann Hiking Trip in the Rockies is September 16-19
- We will have our first Student Council Dance on Thursday, September 17
- 50 of our Grade 12 students have the opportunity to attend a Grad Retreat on September 24-25
- First PACK Day of the year is Friday, September 25
- Auditions for the *Mary Poppins* musical are complete
- Try-outs, practices and opening tournaments have begun for several sports
  - Volleyball
    - Grade 9
    - Junior Varsity Girls
    - Senior Boys and Girls
  - Cross-Country Running
  - Golf
  - Cheer Team (very soon)
- We are looking to reinstate a Wrestling Team this fall
- The 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Western Canadian Volleyball Challenge is October 15-17
- The trip to Japan (Spring Break 2016)

**MCHS offers many, many fun and exciting opportunities for students to learn and grow.**

## **Update**

The following is a brief historical update of what has taken place to this time. It is our custom at each School Council Meeting to share a report in this type of format for your review and consideration. Our hope is that we will discuss and revisit various topics throughout the term as

this document serves only as a starting point for discussion and action. This report serves only as a very brief introduction to a number of topical areas that will be examined in greater depth over the course of this school year.

The more information about MCHS that the School Council has will assist in permitting all decisions that are made are informed decisions. Education must be a partnership where communication is a two-way process that is open and transparent.

### **Student Enrolment as of September 15, 2015**

Approximately 556. This is down by 17 students from last year. We have had a number of families and students move out of the region completely. We had 4 move to Sturgeon Comp and 1 to Bellerose.

The student registration count will fluctuate a few students in either direction as the year progresses.

Grade 9 - 116

Grade 10 - 143

Grade 11 - 148

Grade 12 - 149 (approximately 10 of these are Returning 12's who have already graduated and are back to take additional courses)

Our Grade 9 class is a total of 16 students smaller than last year, due to the demographics moving up from GH Primeau. Our Grade 12 class is also smaller than last year's, again due to demographics. Next year's incoming Grade 9 numbers from GHP will be a comparable small group, with the 2017/2018 incoming 9's expected to grow, as indicated by the current demographics at GHP.

### **Budget**

The MCHS 2015/16 budget was originally created based upon an enrolment of 571 students. We are concerned that our actual student count is currently short by 15 students to this number and we will have to see how this unfolds as we close on the September 30 registration deadline submission to Alberta Education.

### **Timetable**

We do have a few large high school classes that have 35 students or more registered in them. We have attempted to address large classes as best that we can, but some classes we will not be

able to provide relief for due to their area of specialization or number (i.e. 36 students - too few to split and create 2 classes) or the course selection that students have chosen (i.e. their courses determine their schedule and this does not necessarily provide too much flexibility).

Some semester 1 Grade 12 class student counts are:

- Physics 30 – 34
- English 30-1 – 34
- Math 30-1 – 21
- Social 30-1 – 37
- Biology 30 – 38
- Social 30-2 – 29
- English 30-2 – 23
- Math 30-2 - 26

Our Grade 9 classes are in the 22-23 student range.

We continue to emphasize the fact that all students who chose to, will be able to graduate within the regular three-year period of high school with the courses that they need and are interested in. Our Grade Coordinators remain committed to working with students and parents to ensure that this continues to happen.

### **New Programming**

This year we are offering World Religions 35 for the first time. This course looks at all major world faiths from a Catholic perspective and there are currently 20 students registered in this for semester 2.

This year we are offering a **Diversity Club** as Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools is committed to using its LIFE (Lived Inclusion for Everyone) Framework as a guideline for the creation and operation of student groups that are comprehensive in their approach to inclusion and open to the exploration, in a Catholic context, of a variety of issues including bullying, sexual harassment, sexual orientation, gender identity, justice, and respectful relationships and language. This Framework is a component of the District's Safe and Caring Learning Environment Administrative Procedure, and is the result of a provincial collaboration of Catholic school jurisdictions.

## **MCHS University Preparation Program**

MCHS has again partnered with NorQuest College and their University Transfer Program to offer English (ENGL) 1011 in semester 2. A NorQuest professor will be again joining our faculty in February and this course will be offered in block 5/6 on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Eligible Grade 12 students must have completed English 30-1 or 30-2 prior to taking this course.

We are one of the only two high schools in Canada (the other is Bishop Carroll in Calgary) that offer university level English for high school students.

**English (ENGL) 1011 (3 regular university credits, 5 high school credits)** – Course content addresses three main genres: novels, essays, and short stories. Content will include two novels: one from the eighteenth century and one from the nineteenth or twentieth century. This course is directly transferrable to MacEwan University and the University of Calgary.

Course fees will be for materials (e.g. textbooks – approximately \$50) only. NorQuest will also provide opportunities for the high school students to participate in relevant NorQuest activities like the Student Business Conference, guest speakers, career fairs, student for a day and other enriching experiences. This means that students (and parents) will save the approximately \$550 course cost that they would normally pay.

Transferring these credits to universities other than the ones listed is possible, however it is not assured. Each institution is a unique entity, though basic courses such as the two above are common to all. The best way to determine if a course can be transferred to a different institution would be to contact the Registrar at that particular post-secondary.

An excellent source of information is the Alberta Advanced Education and Technology website link to the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer (ACAT), found at:

<http://alis.alberta.ca/ps/ep/aas/ta/sta/search.html>

Completion of the course would not guarantee admission to degree programs at universities or colleges. Admission is competitive. There may be limitations on the number of students admitted to the degree program at each institution.

Colleges/Technical Institutions will generally accept each other's courses for transfer provided the courses are applicable to the program transferring to and have been successfully completed

with an acceptable grade. However the final determination is made by the institution the student is transferring to, usually once the application has been made.

Dual credits permit high school students to complete a regular 3-credit university course and also earn 5 regular high school credits for the same course.

### **Student Positive Behaviour Supports**

We will continue to stress HOWLS (Honour, Ownership, Welcoming, Leadership and Safety) as we had last year. Our desire is for HOWLS to become truly embedded within the culture and climate of the school and for this philosophy to positively impact all areas of the environment.

This will continue to be ongoing all year and will involve many different learning opportunities. School Council will be part of the discussions that we have over the year.

### **Emergency Procedures**

MCHS will be ensuring that students and faculty are cognizant of regular emergency drills (i.e. fire drills and lock down drills), toxic spill, tornado and other emergency practices and procedures. Please do not be alarmed as we work through establishing a number of these procedures as these are expected to be standard operating procedures in all our schools.

This year, all GSACRD schools will again adhere to the Canadian Safety Association (CSA) and Alberta Safety requirements and participate in at least six fire drills, two lock-down drills and one tornado drill.

### **Grade 12 Grad Retreat**

We have scheduled our retreat to occur at Camp Mackicholea (Camp Mac), which is run by the United Church and is located near Larkspur, north of Westlock. The dates have been set for Thursday, September 24 (leaving at 3:30 pm) and returning on Friday, September 25 (at approximately 3:00 pm) and it is limited to the first 50 students who hand-in a completed permission form with the \$50 fee.

This retreat will undertake a service to assist Camp Mac prepare for winter, begin the planning process for graduation and provide an opportunity to bond as a class.

### **Graduation Date**

As has been publicized the Grad date has been set for June 11, 2015.

### **Graduation After Grad Party**

This is a reminder that this event must be planned by parents and cannot involve the school in any shape or form, for liability reasons since alcohol is a major part of the party. Any planning, discussion and other aspects (i.e. distribution of tickets, etc.) cannot take place on school property, as is the case for each high school in Alberta.

Some concern has been raised last year concerning the timing of Grad and the fact that it is at the start of Diploma Exams scheduled for the following weeks. We are in a similar situation to approximately 20 high schools from the Edmonton area and a large number across Alberta.

### **MCHS Summer School**

We were able to offer a few different Summer School courses at MCHS for the third year of programming. We had approximately 30 students complete PE 10, 55 students completed CALM 20 and again, a large number, 75 students earned Work Experience credits.

### **2015-2016 School Education Plan**

As a faculty, we began working on this during the last year. As a school and as a School Council there are two central questions that we need to address in relation to the plan:

*How do we, as a school, continue to work with the community in a collaborative manner?  
How do we support our domestic church?*

*According to the Second Vatican Council: "The family, is so to speak, the domestic church."  
This means that it is in the context of the family that we first learn who God is and to prayerfully seek His will for us.*

### **2016-2017 District Calendar Draft**

This calendar is being provided by District Office in a draft format and your comments and suggestions are encouraged. We need to be able to provide feedback to District Office following our next School Council Meeting on October 20.