

Morinville Community High School Council Meeting
Tuesday, November 17, 2015

"It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it.

Aristotle

Welcome to the third meeting of 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 four 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.*

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.

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.

Welcome

We would like to welcome our new Trustee Representative, Rene Tremblay who was recently elected to the Board. Mr. Tremblay will be attending our School Council Meetings.

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.

Thank you to the Rotary Club or Morinville who sponsored the last HOWLS Lunch on November 4. The Rotary had 8 volunteers come to serve the lunch to the 183 students who were invited to attend. Thank you to all.

Bullying Awareness Week

MCHS will be participating in this event and on Tuesday students and faculty will be able to post messages on a wall in center court that are respectful and inclusive. This is a provincial initiative that the district is part of.

Honors/Merit Breakfast Sponsorship

Twice a year, in November and April we host a breakfast for the students who have earned Honors or Merit on their report card. This breakfast is paid for by the school and cooked by our faculty, who also then serve our students. This is done to recognize students who have worked and achieved.

For Grade 9 students, the mark calculation includes all 4 core subjects, Physical Education and 1 option. For students in 10-12 the calculation must include 2 core subjects and 2 options. No core mark can be below 70% for all students.

Merit- 75%-79.9%

Honor – 80.0% or higher

The first Honors/Merit Breakfast for this year will be on November 26. We are excited that NAIT will be sending out a representative to provide information for our students on that day.

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.

To this date, we have participated in three fire evacuation drills including one under the supervision of the Morinville Fire Department and a lock down drill supervised by the RCMP a few days ago.

Parent Volunteers – Thank You!

MCHS parents and guardians need to become a much bigger part of our school culture. With your enthusiasm and energy we can do so much. The opportunities for involvement are endless and the abilities, knowledge, expertise and time that volunteers provide can only enhance the opportunities for our youth.

General Newsletters – Ideas and Suggestions

We look forward to your comments and suggestions regarding possible information items and articles for the MCHS General Newsletters. Our intent is to inform our stakeholders and strengthen community relationships. We also welcome information items from community services agencies in the newsletter as a further way to communicate in the greater community. School Council suggestions are welcome as we work to foster open communications.

School Resource Officer (SRO)

We are pleased that Cst. Jamie Short is again with us as our SRO. He is at MCHS every Wednesday and Friday. Cst. Short works with our Student Services personnel to address needs of students and their families, along with presenting to classes on a number of different topics.

Education Plan

Our plan is focused upon two items, a Faith Goal and a Learning Goal. Our Faith Goal ties directly to the GSACRD goal of supporting the domestic church and our Learning Goal focuses upon student engagement of their learning and achievement.

There are areas of concern that we are focused upon with this plan:

- PAT Excellence
- Diploma Excellence
- Diploma Examination Participation Rate (4+ exams)

As a faculty, we have spent considerable time and effort looking at how we may be able to address the above three areas of concern. We are confident that we collectively will be able to have a positive impact upon these items.

PACK Day

We are moving forward with the next PACK Days on November 20 and December 4 and we have numerous sessions that are helpful for students and also unique. At our last PACK Day on October 30, we had a student attendance rate of 79.45% which is average for the events from the PACK Days last year and the September one of this year.

NorQuest English Dual Credit Course Update

We have continued working with NorQuest College to again offer ENGL 1011 as a university level dual credit course. We are the first high school in Canada to offer this as a dual credit and Bishop Carroll High School in Calgary is also offering university level English as a dual credit.

This year the NorQuest course will be open for students who have completed English 30-1 and 30-2 to register in. Completion of this course will greatly assist to make a student's post-secondary application more competitive.

Catholic Education Sunday 2015

Every November, typically on the first weekend of the month, we celebrate Catholic Education Sunday in Alberta. This year, since All Souls Day fell on a Sunday, our celebration took place on November 1.

We recognize Catholic education as a gift – a gift that we treasure and protect. On Catholic Education Sunday, we acknowledge the value and blessing of our Catholic schools and give thanks for the faith-based education they offer. Here in Alberta, unlike some other provinces, we are especially blessed to have publicly-funded Catholic education, which benefits us in many ways, including:

- Our children and school staff have the opportunity to learn more about the Catholic faith and the Church that Christ instituted.

- Secondly, we enjoy the freedom and the benefit of prayer. In liturgical celebrations at school and in the church, our students and staff are free to live their faith and celebrate their faith.
- In every subject and in all aspects of school life, we can apply and connect our faith. Faith is integrated or permeated in all we do whether it be science or Language Arts, Christmas concerts or the way students are disciplined.
- Finally, in Catholic schools we have the opportunity to *inform* our young people in the faith and to help *form* them in the moral or Christian life. Through our work in Catholic schools and with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we also pray that our children will be *transformed* through their encounters with God.

MCHS School Discipline Report –

For the Period of August 31, 2011 to November 14, 2011 there were 26 suspensions earned by students.

For the period of August 31, 2012 to November 19, 2012 there were 22 suspensions earned by students.

For the period of August 31, 2013 to November 19, 2013 there were 15 suspensions earned by students.

For the period of August 31, 2014 to November 17, 2014 there were 11 suspensions earned by 7 students.

For the period of August 31, 2015 to November 16, 2015 there were 8 suspensions earned by 8 students.