

# LETTER OF AGREEMENT

**SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD HIGH SCHOOL**  
**Upper Tantallon, N.S.**



## Letter of Agreement

The purpose of this letter is to establish the terms and conditions of the agreement between the Halifax Regional School Board, Sir John A. Macdonald High School Community Advisory Council and the Department of Education and Culture to operate an advisory council at the school level.

The partners agree to the following:

### 1. October 2013 until June 2014

The agreement begins the date the agreement is signed. The agreement will be reviewed annually by the members, at our June meeting. Any mutually agreed upon revisions can be made at that time.

### 2. Structure of the Council

- (a) The membership of the advisory council will include:

- The principal
- 4 parents
- 2 students
- 2 teachers
- 2 vice principals
- 2 community members

- (b) Council members will serve for the duration of:

<b>Partner</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Completion of Term</b>
Principal	Agnes Greer	June 2014
Vice Principal	Trina Canavan	June 2014
Vice Principal	Randy Pulsifer	June 2014
Community Member	Todd Leader (Chair)	June 2015
Parent	Lisa Zwicker	June 2016
Parent	Shawna Stanhope	June 2016
Parent	Bob Williamson	June 2015
Parent	Cheryl Williams	June 2014
Student	Malcolm Anderson	June 2014
Student	Nate Rostek	June 2014
Teacher	Nancy Martin	June 2016
Teacher	Pascale Chambon-Dias	June 2016
Community	Constable Andrew Cruthers	June 2014

- (c) Sir John A Macdonald High School Community Advisory Council will make decisions in the following manner:
- all decisions will be made by consensus
  - if a consensus cannot be reached, and if appropriate a discussion will be postponed until the next scheduled meeting. There will be consultation and discussion with the appropriate partners and information will be brought back to the next meeting. In all other situations a vote will take place on the matter at hand.
  - in regard to topics of importance: materials will be distributed one week before the monthly meeting to all members.
  - only decisions that have the general consensus of the school advisory council will go forward to the school principal.
- (d) Meetings will be scheduled the last Wednesday of each month, from 6:30-7:30 p.m. with the exception of December and June. The first half hour (7:00-7:30 p.m.) will be open to the public. In order to further extend the length of a meeting, the members must agree by consensus to the extension.
- (e) Seven members will constitute a quorum, with at least one teacher, one parent, one student and one community member.

### **3. School Council Commitments**

Sir John A. Macdonald High School Community Advisory Council will be responsible for:

- providing all members with input in decision making
- discussions will be held with school staff about the school CSI plan.
- assisting with school policies which promote academic excellence and a positive and safe learning environment
- developing methods to improve and support extra-curricular programs and special projects in the school
- offering suggestions to the principal and staff concerning school-related issues (i.e. curriculum, programs, school practices, policies and parent-school communication)
- informing the school board about changes in program, student support services, development of policy and issues regarding funding
- preparing our annual report which will include results of specific achievements, school improvement, activities which took place during the year and the factors that contributed to meeting the school's goals
- regular monthly minutes will be recorded and distributed for approval by all members

### **4. School Board Commitments**

Halifax Regional School Board will commit to providing the following support to Sir John A. Macdonald High School Community Advisory Council:

- provide sessions for council members and workshops on pertinent topics
- provide a facilitator for the school/community advisory council if required
- respond, in writing, to the school/community advisory council in regard to their annual report
- provide written and accurate information on updates to school board policies and procedures as soon as the board is aware of any changes or updates
- meet yearly with the school/community advisory council executive, unless situations require further meetings
- work within the parameters of the school board policy; the Halifax Regional School Board will support the decisions made by the school/community advisory council

## **5. Department of Education and Culture Commitments**

The Department of Education and Culture will support Sir John A. Macdonald High School Community Advisory Council by:

- supplying and creating materials to support school/community advisory councils
- providing to the school board accurate and written information in regard to updates on any educational changes which will affect school board policies and procedures
- any education changes which will affect school board policies and procedures
- supporting the decisions made by the school/community advisory council consistent with the Department of Education guidelines for the council
- providing ongoing training for regional school advisory councils and support teams
- ensuring that professional development activities and in-service sessions are provided

## **6. School Advisory Bylaws**

See the attached Appendix "D"

### **Sub-Committee Dealing with Discipline Matters and Suspension Appeals**

The duties of the past board of school trustees with respect to suspensions, suspension appeals, and discipline matters will be performed by a committee of the school advisory council known as the discipline board, under sections 122(3), 124(3) and

125(1b) of the Education Act. Due to the geographic makeup of the areas that serve Sir John A Macdonald High School, the council unanimously agreed to consist of 6 people. These people will be: the six parents / community members. A quorum of three people will be needed to conduct discipline issues. The discipline board will meet as required by school board policy.

**7. Parties to the Agreement**

We clearly understand and agree to follow through on the commitments made in this letter of agreement.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sir John A. Macdonald High School  
Community Advisory Council Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Halifax Regional School Board

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Department of Education and Culture

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## APPENDIX 'D'

### Sir John A Macdonald High School Community Advisory Council

#### By-laws

School Council by-laws are intended to guide the structure and operations of the council.

- Membership** The council for Sir John A. Macdonald High School will have 13 members including: 6 parents / community members of students enrolled in the school, 2 students, 2 teachers, 1 support staff member and 2 Vice Principals. The principal will serve as a permanent member. Every effort will be made to include individuals who reflect the diversity of the community and represent the communities served by the school. This includes, but is not limited to, African Nova Scotians, First Nations, other racially visible persons, and persons with disabilities.
- Elections** Parents and community representatives will be invited to serve on the council. Teachers and support staff will elect their representatives. Students will elect student representatives.
- Conflicts** Membership disputes which cannot be resolved at the local level will be referred to the school board. The Department of Education and Culture will resolve any dispute which the board cannot resolve.
- Vacated Positions** The council will refill vacated positions by holding a special election for that position or by appointing a person for a term deemed appropriate by council. Vacant positions must be refilled by individuals from the same membership group as the person who vacated the position.
- Executive** The executive of the council (Chairperson, secretary and additional member) shall be annually elected from among the members. This election must take place before September 30<sup>th</sup>.
- Meetings** All council meetings will be open to the public except the meetings of the discipline committee. The Public can participate in an SAC meeting by submitting a written request to the Chair of SAC two weeks prior to the meeting. Discipline committee hearings will be held in camera. The council will meet monthly except for December, June, July and August. The council will hold an annual meeting in September.
- Agenda/Minutes** The executive of the council will develop meeting agendas in consultation with the principal, the chairperson and the other school council members. The agenda may be distributed at least a week prior to the meeting if need be.

**Support**

The school will provide, within the limits of its financial resources, support services, communications and other reasonable assistance associated with the council's activities. The costs are expected to be minimal.

**Annual Report**

Sir John A Macdonald High School has an enrollment of 957 students. The school is located in Upper Tantallon and serves the community of Beechville, Lakeside, Timberlea, Upper Tantallon, Hubbards and the St. Margaret's Bay area. The staff consists of 1 principal, 2 vice principals and 43.5 classroom teachers. Student support consist of 2 guidance counselors, 1.5 learning center teachers, 2.5 resource teachers, 5 educational program assistants, a credit recovery program, 1 library support specialist and 2 secretaries. Sir John A Macdonald also has 20 to 30 international students each year through the Nova Scotia International Students Program.

Students are offered the full compliment of DOE courses in both English and French Immersion. Students are also offered Advanced Placement courses at the Grade 12 level. Students who are interested in an education program designed with a combination of high school credits and hands on learning in class and in the workplace can do so through the Options and Opportunities (O2) Program or the Academic Co-Op Program.

Sir John A Macdonald is a Board pilot for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning. There has been a tremendous influx of technology including interactive white boards in every classroom, three class sets of iPods and three class sets of iPads. Students are able to connect their technology to our wireless network. Teachers are creating lessons with the 21<sup>st</sup> Century in mind. These lessons are designed to reflect what is relevant in the lives of our students. Sir John A Macdonald High School is and will continue to be a model for 21<sup>st</sup> Century pedagogy.

**Adopting/Amending By-laws**

By-laws will be adopted or amended by a consensus decision by council members. If consensus cannot be achieved, the council will use a super majority of two-thirds procedure.

**Decision Making Structure**

The council will agree on a decision making process that outlines procedures and strategies to ensure the involvement of all the partners.