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(Virtual via Microsoft Teams)

**Attendees:**

Andrea Carvalho, Rosa Augusto, Carlos Rios, Teresa Barbieri, Carmen, Catherine Monast, Clare De J, Marc Clare, Cristina, Crystal DaSilva, Dana Monteleone, Lewis Dervon, Kandy Harkin, Judy, K Wells, Rose Manju, David Montoya, Michael Morris, Adriano Perusin, M Priya, Renee Kerr, Rick Morris, Rocio Farrell, Sm, and Phaedra Renaud

**Halton Catholic Children’s Foundation – Guest: Marc Clare (Executive Director)**

* Short video and slides presented
* Independent/arms length charity that is self funded and goal is to help students with achievement gaps and mental health challenges that stem from financial challenges.
* HDSB partners with HCCF to enable students/families to access funds to assist with needs not met. (i.e., food, clothing, holidays, bus passes, wellness services in community)
* This is important: “*When our needs are met, we move towards wellness*.”
* Since pandemic started HCCF has assisted 802 HCDSB students and allocated over $115,000 in financial aid.
* There are many opportunities to help, please reach out if you would like to help raise funds or be a part of the foundation. [Home - Halton Catholic Children's Foundation (hccf.ca)](https://www.hccf.ca/)

**Mental Health Update - Crystal Da Silva (Child and Youth Counsellor at STA)**

* A wonderful way to support students and social workers is to donate to HCCF as that gives the social workers like Crystal the ability to provide funding to families in need.
* Information on website under students/wellness to access information to assist students with transition back to school and dealing with Covid.

[Student Wellness | St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Secondary School, Oakville (hcdsb.org)](https://secondary.hcdsb.org/sta/students/student-wellness/)

* Please feel free to contact with any concerns or needs. [dasilvacr@hcdsb.org](mailto:dasilvacr@hcdsb.org)

**Uniform Updates – Guest: Carlos Rios (McCarthy Uniforms)**

* This year they have added hoodies and fleece jackets to elementary schools.
* Establishing new pieces, creating/designing, takes between 6-8 months to address and add to school uniform portfolio.
* If there is a uniform piece request, he would be to discuss/address it.
* Feedback/requests received via Teams chat: ¼ zip sweatshirt, skirts, comfortable pants for women, rugby shirts?
* Uniform assistance program – provided over $1,000 in assistance to STA.
* Mr. Perusin suggested another visit when we are in person so we can feel and see samples.

**COVID-19 Update**

* Return to building and in-person school on January 17th, 2022
* Students will be provided three-ply cloth masks (supplied by the Ministry of Education). Students can also use their own mask.
* Teachers will be wearing N95 masks (supplied by Ministry of Education).
* Screening is in place and will be mandatory on a daily basis for students, teachers, admin staff, etc. [COVID-19 School Screening Tool](http://track.spe.schoolmessenger.com/f/a/NhctAwyytS4w1_hn-9iMJQ~~/AAAAAQA~/RgRjwKJaP0QtaHR0cHM6Ly9jb3ZpZC0xOS5vbnRhcmlvLmNhL3NjaG9vbC1zY3JlZW5pbmcvVwdzY2hvb2xtQgph39pu32Ewig-IUhRwaGFlZHJhcmVuYXVkQG1lLmNvbVgEAAAAAg~~)
* Rapid antigen tests will be given to elementary schools first and then secondary schools are to follow. They will be distributed on an as needed basis by the school administration.
* Students can continue with remote learning; however, they can only return to in person learning at the start of semester 2 - February 7th.
* Ministry of Education has been trying to make policy and adjustments to ensure schools stay open (i.e., to address staff absenteeism they have increased the number of days retired teachers can work).
* Question asked via Teams chat “What happens if there are positive cases in the class?” Mr. Perusin said he is awaiting further direction from the Board.
* Question asked via Teams chat “If a student doesn’t pass the screening, would they be able to attend class online?” Mr. Perusin has added this to the meeting agenda for tomorrow and will report back.
* Mr. Perusin shared that in February STA is moving to a semester model which means we return to 75-minute classes. He is under the assumption that if the Ministry moved back to remote learning the semester schedule would remain in place.
* Question asked via Teams chat: “What is the plan for Graduation?” Mr. Perusin said the plan is to have a traditional graduation. He hopes to have more information as things unfold.
* Question asked via Teams chat: “Will the cafeteria be open?” Mr. Perusin said yes, the cafeteria will be open.
* Question asked via Teams chat: “Will unvaxxed be allowed to attend graduation?” Mr. Montoya said they do not have specific direction on this subject matter. Based on past decisions with respect to sports attendance it could be possible that vaccination will be required for attendance to graduation.
* Question asked via Teams chat: “If my child tests positive how does the school notify other parents from the same class?” Mr. Perusin said he has added to his list of questions for his meeting tomorrow. Presently, Public Health is not providing any reporting/tracing and the guidance is that there will be no notifications to parents.

**Sports/Extra Curriculars**

* Based on Ministry of Education guidelines, sports and extra curricular are on hold/paused.

**Course Selection**

* Option Sheet Presentations will be virtual.
* Mr. Perusin encourages students to visit classes and ask questions while at school.
* Course selection will be coming soon.

**SHSM updates & promotion of election courses**

* Mr. Perusin explained that our numbers are quite low in comparison to other high schools.
* It will be imperative to develop a plan to share with the community the broad scope of programming available at STA.
* Mr. Perusin envisions that STA is a school with many options for students. He wants to give kids multiple opportunities to be successful.
* Mr. Montoya reinforced that the reputation/word of mouth from parents in the community is what brings students into the school.

**IB**

* IB contributes to the student enrollment and is an integral and important piece of STA.
* Ms. Montanari is very dedicated to the quality and success of the IB program. Her business, marketing and accounting background has helped to promote and grow the IB program.
* This year STA has 180 applicants for the IB program.

**Technology Access**

* Thankfully, many students in our school community have access to technology.
* If a student needs technology, please reach out to school administration.

**Bullying Plan**

* STA is currently working on a written Bullying Plan.
* Mr. Perusin requested parental feedback/review of the written document.
* Please email Mr. Perusin if you wish to participate.

**Exam/Assessments**

* Culminating activities will take place as they did in Quadmester 1.
* Parents expressed via Teams chat “How will the teachers address that fact that students haven’t written exams for two years? Will teachers help them prepare academically and psychologically?” Mr. Perusin took note of this concern and will share with teachers.
* IB exams are going ahead this year, scheduled for May.

Future meeting date to be determined. Mr. Perusin suggested we meet in late February and keep meetings more frequent considering COVID.