

**ROYAL OAK MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**PAC Meeting – Administration Report**

**Wednesday, May 6th, 2020, 7:00pm**

Since there hasn’t been a PAC meeting since February, Principal Karen MacEwan and Vice Principal David Mark gave a detailed report on what has transpired since the beginning of the pandemic.

* (Karen MacEwan) Premier’s Announcement was today. It is a good opportunity to look ahead to the rest of May and June.
* We haven’t met since February, so we will start with a summary of what has happened since the beginning of spring break.

**Health and Safety**

* During that second week of spring break, we worked in the school putting all the health and safety aspects into place. Custodial and teaching staff needed access to school, which had to be done safely. There was a massive deep cleaning. Fogging of all of the areas. Every time staff or students come into the school, cleaning protocols happen in that area of the school.
* (David Mark) We’ve been following Dr. Bonnie’s lead. There has been amazing leadership at the district level. We made sure students could come into the school to access their possessions and learning materials. We had to make sure we had technology in place for remote learning. It was a slow roll out of these things. Through the whole process, safety has been our focus. We are happy with how things have gone.
* People have been coming into the school with physical distancing and cleaning protocols. It has been nice to see those kids who came in to the school, as well as the staff, even with physical distance.
* Our district is aligning well with the province. Directives come from the province, then to the district, then to our school. We are not cutting corners; we are following protocol to the “T”. It was like Costco with people coming in and out of our school. Still, that little bit of connection was positive.

**Getting Technology Tools in Place**

* After spring break, there was the transition to remote learning. One big hurdle was the technology aspect of this. MS Teams platform was the choice, not Zoom. MS teams will be used in the future beyond pandemic. It was worth it to invest the time to learn it. ROMS is a tech savvy school. Many teachers were already on google classroom, but there was a steep curve for teachers who weren’t. Teachers use Google classroom; some teachers have teacher websites; many use email – there are the different tools used, but not all teachers used them before the pandemic.
* There is a collection of resources for parents from the district on the website. Parents have been sharing resources too as we shift from classroom learning to remote learning.
* (David) ROMS tech team. We decided to focus on our communication. We had a good system before, but we knew we needed help with having staff members at different places tech-wise. We had 5 staff members who had roles to do with tech. They stepped up quickly to move to a place where all staff were up to speed and online. It is a thankless job – it happens behind the scenes. Feedback from district has been that our in-house IT team is so effective, it has taken the load off the district IT team.
* With different levels of understanding of technology when we started, where we are now is impressive. Staff have pushed themselves to embrace the changes.
* The next step was to gather technology in the whole district and plan how to share it out; figuring out who are the most needy families – they need support first. It seemed slow but it was a huge process.

**Re-Structuring – Communication, Educational Support, Food Support**

* (Karen MacEwan) One other piece of all this is the re-jig of learning services (counsellors, educational assistants) and how they connect to classes. It has been a huge success. A positive change. Improved communications between everyone has been a silver lining.
* Also huge was figuring out with 70 staff members – what is everyone’s job now? Karen MacEwan, as principal knows her job, but what it looks like now has changed. It was a challenge to establish new roles for everybody. Counsellors, behaviour support, learning support – getting these supports in place was priority. Teachers were trying to set up routines, and in the background, administration was trying to connect all these supports. Education assistants (EAs) are now in place. Every week we are adding new students for them to support. It looks very different now. In school, an EA comes to classroom, but now in this virtual world, EA’s have to virtually go into homes with virtual meetings going onto google classroom. Different than what normally happens. EA’s are checking in with families directly now. There has been lots to sort out. That is now all happening.
* Another piece has been getting other folks on board. Clerical processes involving paper – must transition to fillable forms. We have to develop new ways to communicate and get information. For example, with the grade 5 transition: Normally ROMS meets with gr 5 teachers and they give us forms and we use big posters and sticky notes to make the classes; all this must be done digitally now.
* Another piece was distributing chrome books out of ROMS. This has been happening every week; as has food distribution out of ROMS.
* (David Mark) Those above two items are district initiatives, but ROMS is in a central location so we are the south zone centre for both.

**The Community Has Stepped Up**

* We see communities coming together to support families in need. Dominos Pizza donated 30 pizzas. So many people have stepped up. One example is Miss Shirley, a custodian, dressed up as our school mascot and has helped make these processes very smooth. EA and clerical staff volunteered to do food etc. If families can’t come in, items get delivered.
* Tech – district tries to ensure no family has hindrances in getting technology. Requested help from Telus to offer internet – in different communities in Saanich. Making sure these families are on the internet.
* We are proud of our community stepping up to put families and students first.

**Looking Ahead to June and September**

* (Karen MacEwan) Remote learning is now ongoing and going well. We are looking ahead to what report cards will look like. We will be discussing this in the coming weeks but there will be a report card at the end of June - will look at first two terms as well as the current remote learning term.
* We are looking forward to September and hope we will be back in session. We are also thinking about transitions: grade 5 and grade 8. The process of moving to the next grade should not happen without closure, without celebration. We are giving thought to what that will look like. Kids are looking for connections with their teachers and friends before they move on. The Gr 8 farewell will not be able to go ahead as groups of more than 50 are not allowed through summer which is a sad thing for all.
* In terms of helping with closure, we can focus on little things like picking up year books at the end of the year – working on a plan for that. This will be important.

**Silver Linings**

* ROMS has a great staff – they have risen to the occasion and there has been a lot more collaboration during this time. In normal circumstances, teachers can be in their own classrooms all day and don’t get the opportunity to collaborate during the day. Now, in this remote world, there have been more grade group meetings, tech meetings, FAAS meetings. This has been very positive.
* This is unlike anything we’ve ever done before and we are working to stay motivated. All of the staff at ROMS talk about how much they miss the kids.