



Alexander Mackenzie High School School Council

Monday, October 15, 2018

Minutes

Present: Loren Thorburn, David Mountain, Karl Brumund, Kelly Levson, Andrea Kalmin, Ruby Thind,, Christine LaForge, Otilia Olteanu, Jay Perri, George Ellinas, Cathy Clarke

Regrets: Sabira Pradhan, Gail Harris

Guests: Lana Fisher, Nazila Reyhani, Amanda Backal

Minutes

1. Student Report ([Amanda Backal](#))

- Green Acres day for Grade 9 was a big success, focused on team building and leadership. Grade 11/12 students volunteered to help.
- Halloween activities planned for lunch time
- Semi-formal theme has been set to Starry night
- Pep-rally getting this into motion
- Bake sale planned for fundraising

2. Teacher Report – i) Departmental Reports ([Cathy Clarke](#))

- Library is now open for students, positive environment dedicated to student learning
- See full report at end of minutes

3. Administration Report ([Otilia Olteanu](#))

- Library opened today – might be a good idea to schedule a tour as part of the next SC meeting.
- Library no longer has security gates to emphasize trust and responsibility for students, goal is not to catch student stealing books. If this becomes an issue then school will revisit.
- 10 more computers have been ordered which will help reduce the lineups
- IB Info night – Wednesday, October 17th. Last year 850 parents/students attended. Expecting around 900 this year. IB Application starts on Friday.
- Parent's night – Thursday, October 18th. Booking can be completed through Edsby
 - Some parent's indicated they didn't receive notification from Edsby. Only receive notification if you have not already registered on Edsby.
 - Weekly bulletin also not going out to all parents. School will look into this.

- Expectation for parent/teacher meeting is to put name to a face. Not much discussion can happen in five minutes. Use as an introduction and student progress. If further discussion is required parents are encouraged to email teacher to set up appointments.
- Students and teachers will be monitoring times closely to keep on schedule
- Maps and student volunteers will be available through the night to help parents navigate through the school

4. Teacher Report – ii) Mental Health Initiative ([Lana Fisher, Nazzy Reyhani](#))

- See the full presentation at the end of the minutes
- Multiple committees have come together to focus and participate on the Well Being school Team
- Parents who want to be involved in this can get in touch with Ms. Reyhani

5. School Council Business ([Loren Thorburn](#))

- i. Sharing of email addresses – anyone who does not want to share their email address, please let Ruby know.
- ii. Approval of September minutes - approved
- iii. Treasurer’s Report (Karl)
 - Closing balance from 2017/2018: \$2516.40
 - New balance (October 2018): \$2729.99
- iv. Parent Survey Report – ([Andrea Kalmin](#))
 - Full summary available at the end of the meeting notes
 - Good response rate, with most of responses being from those parents whose kids are enrolled in specialized programs (Arts, IB)
 - Increase communication of when school council meetings and what school council does
 - Post school council minutes on school website in timely manner (Ruby to send to George Ellinas to post)
- v. PRO Grant workshop- ([Loren Thorburn](#))
 - November, 26th, Title – You Don’t Have to Beg, Borrow, or Steal to Finance Post Secondary Education
 - No status on current Pro Grant application
- vi. Council Representatives (Parents’ Night, Grade 8 Information Night)
 - Need volunteers, please contact Loren if you can help out

Approval of minutes

Motion to accept minutes put forth by Karl Brumund, seconded by Loren Thorburn.
Ruby Thind, Gail Harris, Sabira Pradhan, Kelly Levson, Christine LaForge, David Mountain,
Andrea Kalmin approved minutes via email.

Reminder: In order to conserve paper, hard copies of the minutes and agenda will not be provided at the meeting.

2018-2019 Council Members

Chair: Loren Thorburn
Secretary: Ruby Thind
Treasurer: Karl Brumund
Parent Reps: Gail Harris, Andrea Kalmin,
Christine LaForge, Kelly Levson,
David Mountain, Sabira Pradhan

Meeting Dates:

Tuesday, November 27th (PRO Grant speaker event)
Monday, January 21st
Monday, March 18th
Tuesday, May 21st



Arts Mackenzie

It's application time for Arts Mackenzie. Information about applying to Arts Mackenzie for September 2019 available on our website: www.artsmackenzie.com . Applications received by November 30th will be guaranteed an audition in January 2018.

Dance/Theatre

End of semester showcases are as follows:

- Winter Showcase January 15th at RHCPA (Theatre Arts/Dance Graduate Showcase)
- Arts Festival January 17th Studio 121 (Showcase of Work From Junior Grades)

The dance and theatre students enjoyed workshops and performances at the Stratford Festival during the Arts Mackenzie trip on October 4th to see Music Man and Teaching Shakespeare Program trip to see Coriolanius on October 11th. Dance students are looking forward to their trip to Harbourfront Centre of November 8th.

The Theatre Arts students will be partnering with AMHS Jack.org to develop a theatrical piece to advocate for mental wellness. AMAC Jack Chapter is a club that is unique in which we advocate for students mental wellness by bringing awareness about mental health issues, breaking the stigma and connecting people with resources for getting help. On October 16th, senior students and SHSH students will join the AMAC Jack Chapter to participate in a full day of training.

Music

The music ensembles are preparing for their Showcase performance on November 14th at the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts. Tickets for *Les Miserables* will be available starting next week. Information will sent home via the parent/guardian bulletin.

Visual Arts

On October 10th, 22 students attended the Marktd shoe competition at OCAD University. One visual arts student made it to the finals. Overall, all of the students really enjoyed the experience and meeting students from around the GTA. Photos from the day can be seen on our twitter account: @amhsvisa

Our department's Open Studio will be starting up next week on Tuesday's at lunch. All members of the Alexander Mackenzie High School community are welcome to drop by on Tuesdays and create art.

Arts and Culture Council is going to start selling candygrams next week for Halloween and is working on organizing a paint night. More details to follow.

Follow the Arts Mackenzie Departments on Twitter:

Dance/Theatre @AMHSPA

Music @AMHS_Music

Visual Arts @amhsvisa

Geography

Geography is taking their learning outside the classroom by embarking on a walking tour of Cabbagetown, Regent Park and Riverdale Farm in order to explore urban land use, growth and gentrification. We've also made some changes to the assessments for the academic course by eliminating their exam and having the students complete a large inquiry based project.

History

AMHS' Remembrance Day assembly will be held on Friday, November 9th. The assembly will include dance, drama, film, and vocal music presentations to commemorate the 100 year anniversary of World War One.

International Baccalaureate Program (IB)

It's application time for Alexander Mackenzie's Preparatory Programme for the 2019-2020 grade 9 class. Here are some upcoming dates for the application process:

IB Information Evening

Wednesday, October 17th at 7:00 pm

Online Registration

The online registration/application window:
opens on Friday, October 19, 2018 at 9:00 am and
closes on Wednesday, November 7, 2018 at 11:59 pm.

Assessment Days

Saturday, November 17th, 2018 (9:00 am-11:30 am) OR
Thursday, November 22, 2018 (6:30 pm-9:00 pm)

Library Learning Commons

The Library Learning Commons (LLC) is now open. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we worked through the renovation process. Our library hours are 8:00 am to 3:30 pm.

We will continue to offer all of the same, great services as before. These services include electronic and print resources, research support, citation support, access to computers and printing, and a vast selection of fiction and non-fiction reading materials. In addition, we now have a number of new spaces and services such as:

Collaboration Lab

This space can be used for multiple purposes including student collaboration, peer tutoring, and rehearsal of presentations. The collaboration lab is equipped with a smart TV for presentation purposes.

Work Spaces

The LLC has a number of new and modern areas throughout the space. These areas include: café tables, modular furniture, reading nooks, benches and lounge furniture.

Charging Stations

Charging stations are available for student wishing to charge their electronic devices.

Makerspace Activities

To encourage creativity, problem solving and collaboration skills, the LLC has acquired a number of different resources for student use. Students are encouraged make good use of these resources.

Please feel free to drop by the LLC on Parents/Guardian's Night on October 18th to see our new space and hear more about the ways in which we support student success and well-being.

Quest

On November 15th, representatives from the Alexander Mackenzie High School community will be presenting at YRDSB's Quest Conference. The workshop, entitled "From Awareness to Action - Revitalizing Your School Culture" highlights how our school community has used the principles of equity, innovation and student voice to enhance student achievement and well-being. More details about Quest available here: <http://www.questconference.ca/>

SHSM

Grade 11 and 12s are invited to apply for one of our Specialist High School Major by October 30th: Arts and Culture, Business, Health and Wellness, Transportation. Interested students should speak to their subject teacher and/or guidance. Application: <http://bit.ly/YRDSBSHSMapp>

Special Education

Individual Education Plans will be distributed to students on Tuesday, October 16th. Please write any feedback as needed on the IEP. Please sign one copy and return to Room 148. Please speak to your child's SERT if you have any questions/concerns.

The Special Education Department is organizing a free trip to the Ontario College Information Fair on October 24th for our department's grade 12 students. If interested, please have your child stop by room 148 and pick up a permission form. Space is limited. Registration is on a first come, first served basis.

Follow our Special Education Department on Twitter @AlexMackSpecEd

Technological Education

Technological Education = Experiential Learning ***Tell me and I forget. Lecture to me and I may remember. Involve me and I learn. Teach me to do it and I learn best.***

It has been a very busy and rewarding first semester for the staff and students in the Technological Studies Department at Alexander Mackenzie.

The Grade 10 **Technological Design** and the 11 and Grade 12 **Architectural Design** students have been busy designing and learning to draw using AUTO CAD (a Computer Aided Drafting (CAD) program) to create manufactured goods and residential house designs.

The **Grade 9 Exploring Technologies** classes have been very busy researching, brainstorming, learning to design and currently studying the safety component of the course in order to build projects such as a CO₂ Powered Dragster and a Robotic Arm powered by hydraulics.

News from the Hospitality and Tourism Classes!

Our kitchen is a busy place! The Mackenzie Room; preparing five course menus for up to 30 people each week! In early October we had our Annual Thanksgiving Turkey lunch and now we are preparing large amounts of baked goods for Parent Interview Nights. Delicious!

The **Transportation Technology** students have been very busy learning how to safely service and repair student's and teachers cars during the semester and learning more about the technological skill set needed to be successful in this trade.

REAL KNOWLEDGE, REAL SKILLS, REAL WORLD, REAL JOBS

*Alexander Mackenzie High School Twitter @AlexMackHS
York Region District School Board Twitter @YRDSB*

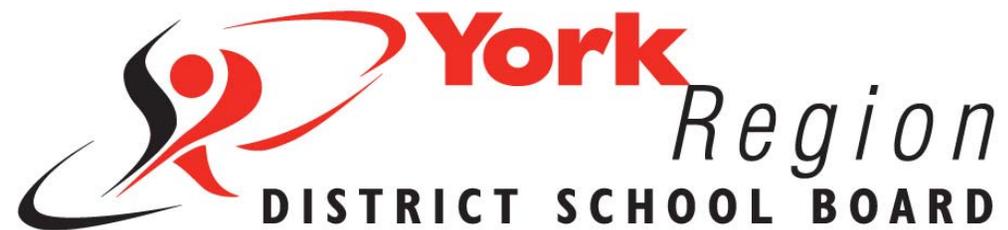


@ AMHS

2018-2019

Director's Annual Plan – 4 Compass Points

- Aligns with the Board of Trustees' Multi-Year Strategic Plan
 - A. Foster Well-being and Mental Health
 - B. Champion Equity and Inclusivity
 - C. Build Collaborative Relationships
 - D. Empower Ethical Leadership



Well-Being School Team

- The board is asking to put our school's name on the list of well-being school team
- Formerly we were called safe school teams, PC4L teams, PC4LW teams.
- Schools should have five components that each school team must have:
 - *Positive mental health (Wellness Committee)*
 - *Equity and inclusivity*
 - *Caring and safe schools and workplaces*
 - *Healthy schools and workplaces*
 - *Eco schools and Eco workplaces*

Each Well-Being School Team must have a minimum of:

- One administrator (George Ellinas)
- One student
- One parent
- One teacher (Nazzy Reyhani)
- One non-teaching staff member (Kevin Aversa)
- One community partner

For students:

- Variety of Clubs (Jack.org, Up Girl, GSA, etc...)
- Intramurals in the Gym at lunch time
- ELL Equity Student Council – weekly
- IB Council
- Guidance & Physical Education Departments partnerships
 - Teaching lessons within the Health Curriculum to Gr. 9 students - Stigma
- Assessment Practices that align with instruction
- One Google AMHS calendar (better planning)
- Restorative Conversations (helping kids manage conflict)
- Lunch-n-Learns (to support transitions, time management)
- New Library and resources
- Outside Support Personnel:
 - Nurse Health Practitioner from Mackenzie Health on Mondays and Fridays
 - Social Worker on Tuesdays and Thursdays
 - New Grant from CMHA --- health practitioner on Thursday afternoon



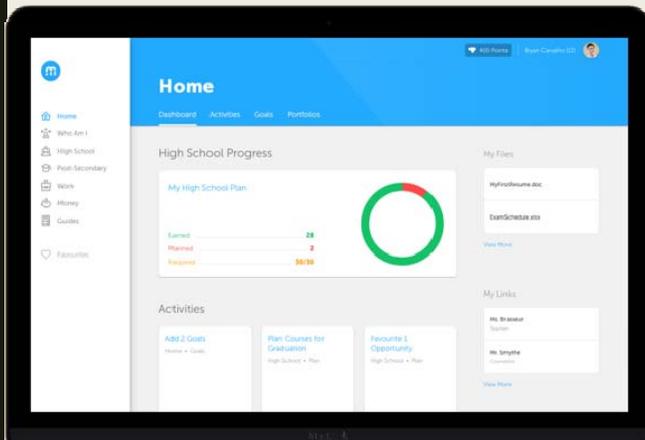
Student Voice

- Junior Town Hall – Oct. 3
 - AMHS newspaper – run advice on “Healthy Self” “Wellness strategies”
 - Once a week (Friday) – wellness thought/advice on the announcement
 - Encourage teachers to communicate to one another when it comes to tests and assignment (School anxiety)
 - Encourage more students to join clubs (sense of belonging)
 - Resources & activities during lunch (i.e. yoga, anything that decreases stress)
- Senior Town Hall – Oct. 10
 - Planning of Wellness Week – Create activities that are more related to student needs
 - Surveys for students ran by teachers monthly to uncover how students are feeling in their classes
 - Gr. 12 students and Guidance counsellors visit homeroom classes to promote support services
 - All inclusive assembly or human library displays to promote different cultures @AMHS
- Jack. Org Presentation – November
- Cultural Fair
- Bullying Awareness Week



For Parents:

- Increased communication through: weekly bulletin, newsletter and Twitter account
- My Blueprint tool – supports career & pathway conversations
 - <https://myblueprint.ca/>
- Parent Series by Guidance
- Individual Appointments with Counsellors
- Resources (located in Guidance)



**PARENT
INFORMATION
SESSION**

For staff:

- Coffee, Chai and Chat – once a month
- Redesigning of Staff room - survey
- AMHS Wellness Committee Google Classroom
<https://classroom.google.com/u/0/r/MTczMTg1Njk4OTZa/sort-last-name>
- Strategies on recognizing signs of stress/anxiety in students
- “Spark Activities” with staff --- implemented with students
 - Promote physical movement



Green House & Community Class



- Green House Project

Planting Herbs:

- shared with the hospitality department
- used to prepare dishes in their classroom

- Mindfulness Mondays - connect students with the Earth; encourages patience and relaxation
- Milk Bag Project - students are weaving milk bags in mats. These will be donated to different shelter for those people who are in need of a comfortable space to sleep
- Sewing Blankets - Students will sew together pieces of fabric to create a blanket to be donated to FNMI communities
- Learning to make Dream Catchers - to bring awareness about FNMI Communities
- Collaborative Drama/Community Class project
- Hospitality Department - Through experiential learning- students go to the kitchen and learn to prepare different meals



AMHS School Council: Parent Survey (2018)

Presentation of Preliminary Results (Monday, October 15, 2018)

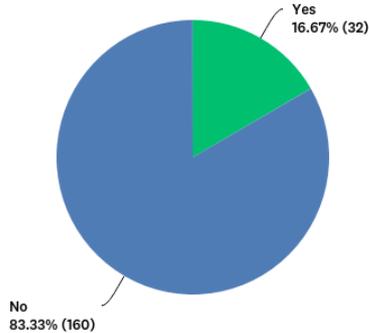
Who filled in the survey? (n = 194)



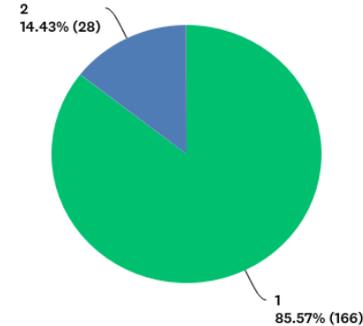
63% of respondents (n = 122) has a child enrolled in a specialized program at AMHS

- ARTS Mackenzie – 55% of those in specialized program (n = 67) or 35% of entire sample
- IB – 35% of those in specialized program (n = 43) or 22% of entire sample

Have you ever attended an AMHS school council meeting?



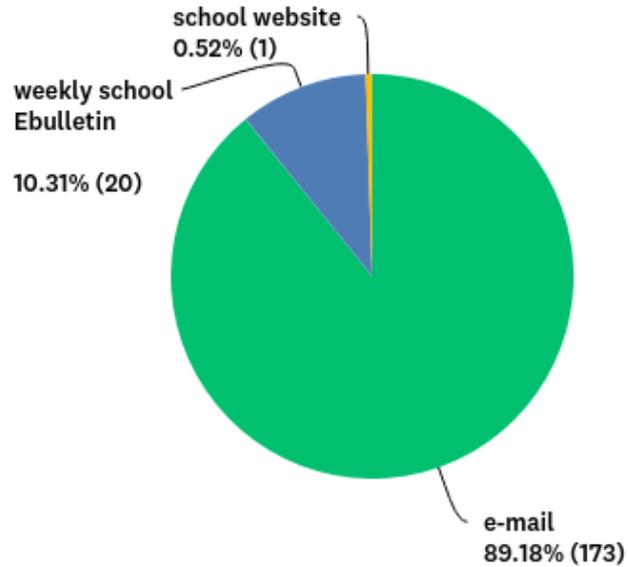
How many children currently attending AMHS?



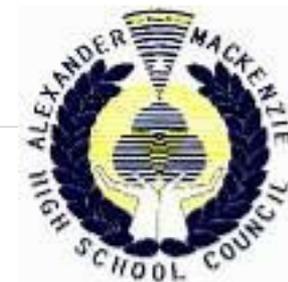
What grade is your child(ren) currently in?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
9	45.60%	88
10	31.09%	60
11	16.06%	31
12	18.13%	35
Total Respondents: 193		

Most effective way for AMHS School Council to communicate



Attendance: School Events



	VERY LIKELY	LIKELY	UNLIKELY	VERY UNLIKELY	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
Arts or Music nights	39.78% 74	27.96% 52	13.98% 26	15.05% 28	3.23% 6	186
Parent-Teacher night	64.77% 125	26.94% 52	2.59% 5	3.11% 6	2.59% 5	193
Annual musical at the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts	36.46% 70	27.08% 52	19.27% 37	10.42% 20	6.77% 13	192
Social and community building events	16.75% 32	40.84% 78	24.61% 47	5.24% 10	12.57% 24	191
Presentations by guidance (eg. transitions, post-secondary, pathways...)	43.01% 83	41.45% 80	6.74% 13	3.11% 6	5.70% 11	193
Presentations/workshops by external speakers (about issues related to raising teens)	25.00% 48	36.46% 70	22.92% 44	8.33% 16	7.29% 14	192
Health and wellness workshops (interactive)	20.42% 39	36.65% 70	23.04% 44	9.42% 18	10.47% 20	191

When are you more likely to attend AMHS events?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Weekday Daytime Mornings (9:00am-12:00pm)	12.63% 24
Weekday Daytime Afternoons (1:00pm-4:00pm)	12.63% 24
Weekday Evening (6:00pm-9:00pm)	81.58% 155
Weekends	32.63% 62
Total Respondents: 190	

School events not listed...

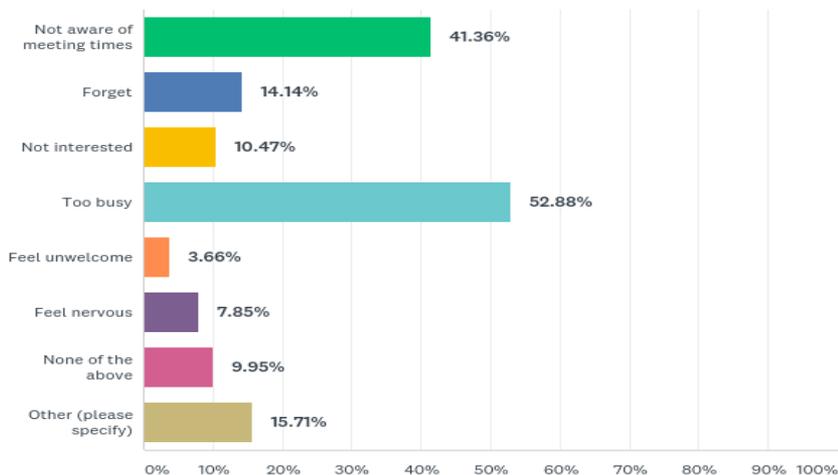


- "providing appropriate support at home * coping with stress strategies * how to talk so your teenager would listen"
- "Mental health and teens, digital addiction in teens."
- "There was no mention of athletics (i.e. events, banquets etc)."
- "Where is the Chess Club? It is shocking that a school this size does not have a Chess Club..."
- "Sport events such as school soccer team playing on the regional level."
- "No. Particularly interested in gaining support and guidance about pathways and academic excellence."
- "Preparing for university and application process."
- "Talent show"
- "Leadership development workshops."
- "Special needs"
- "University information nights"
- "Long Term Partnering with local Charity/Community groups - joint local concerts, exhibitions, community murals/art, culinary partners and/or pop-up events at the mall or hospital or retirement home. Also invite local guest groups/soloist for joint concerts or join with another school for joint concert."
- "Presentations by external speakers should be offered to students, not only to parents. Cyber security, workplace dynamics, innovation in science and technology, business development (bit coins, cannabis) etc - could be the topics of interest."



Attendance: School Council meetings

What are the reasons that may prevent you from going to a school council meeting?



- "Not sure I could help with anything."
- "I don't really know what they are."
- "Interested in understanding the agenda and more about the mandate of the Council."
- "It doesn't matter how good the intensions are The principal always has the final say, its a controlled environment."
- "I attended 2 sessions and noticed lots of meeting time and energy was spent on small details..."
- "I'm interested. I don't have time. What about online?"
- "Not sure what's expected in the meeting."
- "English is not good."
- "Parking around the school is very difficult."
- "I think you do a great job, without my involvement. Go Lisa!"
- "I was always welcomed and comfortable in the meeting, however I was not sure how I could contribute and be more engaged in the school activities."
- "Unsure what they do and if i would have a voice."
- "The parking at the school is not great. It's always stressful not knowing if you'll get a spot or not."
- "It's just our first year in this school."

More likely to attend if held the same night as a school event?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	54.45%	104
No	46.07%	88
Total Respondents: 191		

Importance: Enriching the learning environment of AMHS



	ESSENTIAL	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	NOT REALLY IMPORTANT	IRRELEVANT	TOTAL
Enhancement of learning spaces (eg. library modernization...)	54.45% 104	41.88% 80	3.14% 6	0.52% 1	191
Technology enhancements	76.84% 146	21.05% 40	1.58% 3	0.53% 1	190
School programming (eg. athletics, health and wellness, music, math...)	64.58% 124	33.85% 65	1.04% 2	0.52% 1	192
Parent education (eg. speakers, workshops...)	21.99% 42	44.50% 85	28.27% 54	5.24% 10	191
School beautification	10.99% 21	59.16% 113	27.23% 52	2.62% 5	191
Building our parent/student community	31.09% 60	55.96% 108	10.88% 21	2.07% 4	193
Specialized programs (eg. ARTS Mackenzie, IB...)	58.42% 111	31.58% 60	7.37% 14	2.63% 5	190

Likelihood: Participation in fundraising activities



	WOULD NEVER PARTICIPATE	UNLIKELY TO PARTICIPATE	LIKELY TO PARTICIPATE	WOULD DEFINITELY PARTICIPATE	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
Sales (eg. plants or gift cards, book bazaar...)	6.28% 12	26.18% 50	56.54% 108	7.33% 14	3.66% 7	191
Family Friendly Community Event (eg. school bbq...)	2.59% 5	12.95% 25	60.10% 116	18.13% 35	6.22% 12	193
Parent's Night Out (social event)	10.00% 19	39.47% 75	32.11% 61	9.47% 18	8.95% 17	190
Health & Wellness Event (regularly scheduled Yoga, Tai Chi, meditation...)	13.61% 26	32.98% 63	32.98% 63	11.52% 22	8.90% 17	191
Events Combined with Parent-Teacher evenings (raffle, silent auction, food truck...)	2.63% 5	13.16% 25	53.16% 101	25.26% 48	5.79% 11	190
Direct Monetary Donation via School Cash Online	6.28% 12	18.85% 36	46.60% 89	17.80% 34	10.47% 20	191

Willingness: To help school council



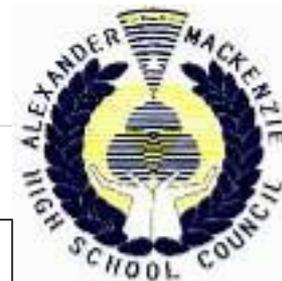
83% of respondents (n = 160) indicated a willingness to support school council activities in some way



- "Arts events and community engagement."
- "It's a time question whether I can participate."
- "Volunteer if needed and time permits."
- "I would only support if the money goes directly to the students needs."
- "Donations."
- "No idea."

Sharing particular skills and passions...

Our amazing parents are willing to share their SKILLS, RESOURCES AND EXPERTISE



19% of respondents (n = 32) were willing to share a particular skill or passion with our school

- "Making fancy jewelleries, knitting, attention to details."
- "Computer Networking and Musical Sound Engineering."
- "I am an Artist and an Art Conservator."
- "Maybe. I don't know what is needed."
- "I am willing to help, but I don't know how I can help."
- "Health sustaining cooking class."
- "Not sure, but I can work hard."
- "Trip planning, i.e. grad trip or otherwise."
- "Resume writing/mentoring/interview prep."
- "Zumba Instructor"
- "I am good at Excel form, if needs help anytime."
- "visual arts activities"
- "Investing, Technology"
- "I am a Registered Holistic Nutritionist and would be willing to give a seminar or talk."

- "BAKING"
- "I have no particular skills to share, but am willing to help."
- "I am a recipe developer (home economist) with Smuckers - I can donate product and my time."
- "Nursing skills."
- "Not sure at this moment, but willing to share if any skills needed."
- "Make chinese dumpling."
- "baking goods for fundraising sales, maybe"
- "I'd like to help international students in all kinds of situations"
- "I'm a store manager in subway restaurants, I can give you some promotions or great deal if you need it"
- "Experience on Elementary school council"

A Recurring Theme: Communication with Council & AMHS



Who we are. What we do. What help we need. When we meet.

- *"I would like to attend all school functions I just don't know what day and time they are held on..."*
- *"Communication between teachers and students for improvements of teaching skills, teacher dedication and caring of learning issues, student's learning feedback and suggestions."*
- *"Just a reminder that it would be great if we could get detailed notifications about workshops (external) I could not get any info about a favourite one even by calling the school. I had seen the flyers on the hallways while attending the parent teacher interview and could not get the info later."*
- *"More frequent information night/meeting for each grade between AMHS and parents."*
- *"Extra help information for visa student. More effective communication with teachers. Career path way study for students."*
- *"Curriculum Night presentations by department - For example math, english, science, french, etc."*

Next steps?



- **Continued analysis of the data**
 - Any questions or comments?
- **Deliverables**
 - Brief summary to provide to participants and broader AMHS community
 - Final report of analysis to School Council (with concrete recommendations to inform action and future practice)
- **A call for more sub-committee members**
 - Anyone want to join in on the fun?

Immediate application of recommendations re: Parent Workshop (November)

- Direct e-mail communication
- Fundraising opportunity? (silent auction, 50-50 draw...)

You don't have to beg, borrow or steal to finance post secondary education

Looking for answers?

OMG! How can we pay for all this?

What expenses will we face beyond tuition, books and residence?

How can we help prepare my teens financially?

Scholarships, grants, loans, OSAP, RESP.

Join us at **AMHS** on **Tuesday, November 27** from **7:15pm to 8:45pm**.

Panel discussion and Q&A session.

Robin Taub, CPA

Author of A Parent's Guide to Raising Money-Smart Kids

She is a personal finance writer & speaker and a Chartered Professional Accountant.

Lana Fisher

Head of Guidance for AMHS

Post-secondary representatives

Financial Aid/OSAP

Student Accessibility

Former student/alumni

Sharing their experiences about post-secondary.

Bring your questions to ask the experts.

This event is open to parents and students of AMHS and all other schools.



Scan to your calendar