

OTTAWA-CARLETON ASSEMBLY OF SCHOOL COUNCILS

Meeting of Thursday May 20, 2010
Fisher Park PS Library

ATTENDANCE:

Total Membership: 93

Member schools

Adrienne Clarkson ES – Lisa Bloom
Agincourt Road PS – Norah Vollmer
Alta Vista PS – Lillian Thomsen
Barrhaven PS – Ellen Dickson
Berrigan ES – Susan Klimchuk
Cairine Wilson SS – Janet Patch
Canterbury HS – Diane Beckett, Nadine
Clarke (SSC)
Castlefrank ES – Brona Little
Cedarview MS – Donna Blackburn
Connaught PS – Madelaine Stewart-
Dmaj
Elgin Street PS – Peter Stieda
Elmdale PS – Stephanie Bolt
Fallingbrook Comm. ES – Peter
Kokkovas
First Avenue PS – Kristen Underwood
Forest Valley ES – Janet Patch
Glebe CI – Deborah Lemkow
Glen Cairn PS – Mike Hickey
J.H. Putman PS – Maria Di Rosa

Jockvale ES – Jamesee Winchester
Katimavik ES – Nihan Kavastlar
Lisgar CI – Stephen Wang
Manordale PS – Cathy Babyak
Manotick PS – Michaela Stuart
Merivale HS – Anne Teutsch
Mutchmor PS – Gwenda Lindhurst-Ko
North Gower/Marl. PS – Sandra Acacia
Ottawa Technical LC – Daniel Oickle
Pleasant Park PS – Nancy Schenk
Rideau Valley MS – Sandra Acacia
Riverview Alt S – Gabe Thirlwall
Roberta Bondar PS – Brenda Agard
Alleyne
Sawmill Creek ES – Gennifer Stainforth
Sir Robert Borden HS – Bessie
Giovanopoulos
South Carleton HS – Sue Carswell
Steve MacLean PS – Jen Carter
Summit AS – Richard Deadman
Woodroffe Ave. PS – Maria Di Rosa

Guests and other persons in attendance:

Juliet Hamilton (OCASC Recording Secretary), Cheryle Watson (OCDSB)

CALL TO ORDER: 7:06 p.m., Anne Teutsch in the chair.

AGENDA:

Changes:

- Correction of date of minutes of April meeting
- No presentation – Jacqueline Lawrence was unable to attend at the last minute
- Membership Report added to AGM agenda

Agenda accepted with changes:

Approval of Agenda

May Assembly Meeting Agenda

Approval of Minutes of Apr. 15, 2010

Chair's Report

Chalk-It-Up

From your Executive

Updates

Annual General Meeting Agenda

Approval of Minutes of 2009 Annual General Meeting
Chair's Annual Report
Treasurer's Annual Report
2010/2011 Proposed Budget
Membership Secretary's Annual Report
Election of Officers for 2010/2011

MINUTES of April 15, 2010: Accepted with two amendments:

- In discussion section of presentation on the Balanced School Day, comment by Trillium ES rep rephrased:
 - Trillium ES – Council was interested to learn more about it. At Trillium, teachers voted against it. We found it very illuminating to see the cons of the Balanced Day listed out by OCETF (Ottawa-Carleton Elementary Teachers Federation) alongside the pros. How can issue be re-evaluated?
A: Needs to be the right time, and it needs to first be vetted by teachers. At Barrhaven started talking a year ago. Brainstormed pros and cons of each. Very eye opening for teachers to look at cons of traditional day.
- Chair's Report was read by Carrie Eaton.

CHAIR'S REPORT – Anne Teutsch

- PIC (Parent Involvement Committee) Symposium
 - Held in Toronto at same time as last month's OCASC meeting. Wonderful chance to network with reps from PICs across the province and with ministry staff. Heard about how different PICs are formed and how they are functioning. Ours different from most because OCASC fills roles most PICs are striving for, such as linking school councils and sharing best practices. Rules for PICs are still being formalized.
- "Make a Positive Impact" Leadership Event
 - This was a 2½ day event organized by the OCDSB at the end of April. Unique in that parents were part of the organizing committee as well as participants. About 80 people attended, including principals, custodians, office and central admin staff, trustees, parents, Multi-cultural Liaison Officers, and federation reps. About half the participants were teachers.
 - Groups of 10-12 each visited 3 different schools one day, then everyone met the next day and shared all the positive things they had noticed. Discussions then grew out of how to encourage those positive things.
 - Event was organized based on the "Appreciative Inquiry" model. Idea is to change organization by looking at strengths, recognizing them and growing from them. Excellent book on the topic: Appreciative Inquiry – A Positive Approach to Building Cooperative Capacity. Authors: Frank J. Barrett and Ronald E. Fry. Published by the Taos Institute.

CHALK-IT-UP

Second Semester Meet-the-Teacher Night

Glebe CI – Deborah Lemkow (lempower@rogers.com)

- Attendance at Meet-the-Teacher night for the second semester too low to make it worthwhile. Do other schools have this issue? (Meet-the-Teacher Night – parents follow their student’s timetable and as a group have general intro to each class; Parent-Teacher Interviews – parents meet their student’s teachers one-on-one to discuss issues specific to their student)
- Sir Robert Borden HS – Do first and second semester in one night in September. Takes about 2 hours, starting with a short assembly followed by two 40 minute blocks, one for first semester, one for second.
- Canterbury HS – Have a mini-timetable night in first semester only.
- South Carleton HS – Have traditional meet-the-teacher night in first semester (very difficult with 3 kids). This year held a Family Night second semester – along with presentations and activities, each department had an area in the gym with displays. All teachers were present grouped by department, and parents could meet any teachers they wished. Council also had a table set up. It was a big success. (For more info, contact Sue Carswell at carswell6@xplornet.com.)
- Merivale HS – Had same issues with attendance in second semester. Instead, parents said they wanted more info on option sheet choices. This year combined meet-the-teacher with option sheet info. Used council’s \$500 PIC money to rent a sign and buy food (Global Community theme – food from different ethnic backgrounds). Students put on multicultural show, and gym was set up as an option sheet fair. Evening finished with a traditional meet-the-teacher. Worked very well. (For more info, contact Anne Teutsch at anne@teutsch.ca.)

Carpentry Focus Program

Glebe CI – Richard Deadman (rdeadman@deadman.ca)

- Concern that Board is not supporting the Trades and Tech focus programs that were set up a few years ago. Ongoing costs for a carpentry program are significant and Board is no longer providing funding. Principal told half the cost must come from school’s budget, but most students not from Glebe. Result is course will only run for one semester, even though there are enough students requesting the course to run in both semesters. Council has written a letter to the superintendent and their trustee.
- Woodroffe Ave PS – Need to talk to trustees about this. May be a way to connect with businesses such as Home Depot and reduce costs. Can’t afford to lose programs like that.
- Anne – OCASC will look into this to find out more information about it.

Class Placement Lists

Manotick PS – Michaela Stuart (michaela13@rogers.com)

- How and when do other schools notify parents about the classes their children will be placed in the following school year?
- Quick survey of reps present showed that only three schools notify parents in June, and always with the caveat that things can change over the summer.
- First Avenue PS – Used to find out in September, but last few years we know in June. New principal made the change.

- At Lady Evelyn Alt PS principal has indicated that parents' preferences will be taken into account.

OCASC Advocacy Workshop

Maria Di Rosa

- OCASC is hosting a workshop on how to advocate for your child.
- Thursday, May 27 from 7:00 to 9:00 pm in the library at Fisher Park PS.
- Presenter is Dale Ford, an education advocate.
- All parents/guardians are welcome. Childcare will be available in the cafeteria, but places need to be reserved ahead of time.
- More info is available at www.ocasc.ca.

Environmental Education Policy

Diane Beckett (dianebeckett@hotmail.com)

- OCDSB consultation is wrapping up, but can still call or email Pino Buffone at 613-596-8211x8515 or pino.buffone@ocdsb.ca.

FROM YOUR EXEC

Upcoming speakers/workshops

- OCDSB hosting two presentations
 - Cultural Proficiency – Tuesday May 25, 7:00-9:00 pm, Brookfield HS auditorium
 - When Things Get Crazy with Your Teen – Tuesday June 1, 7:00-9:00 pm, Adult HS auditorium
- OCASC and OCDSB jointly hosting a PRO Grant Application Workshop – Monday May 31, 7:00-8:30 pm, Fisher Park PS library. Speaker will be Doug Tateishi from the Ministry of Education.
 - PRO grant deadline now June 11. This year 42 schools in the OCDSB received a grant. Most schools that applied for a grant received one.

Education Committee – Susan Klimchuk

- Last met Tuesday May 18th.
- Number and location of secondary gifted centres was discussed again. Feeder schools/areas assigned to each centre were adjusted to make student access more practical. Committee proposing that four centres remain: Bell, Lisgar, Merivale and Glebe (English as well as French Immersion). Lisgar has space issues, therefore keeping Glebe open gives Board more options. Students currently in the Gloucester program would have a one-time option to either stay at Gloucester, return to their home school, or go to Lisgar. Also requested staff to begin a literature search on alternate ways to accommodate gifted students.

Budget Group – Nadine Clarke

- Letter to Minister of Education has been prepared. It outlines OCASC's concerns about the timing of funding decisions and the salary gap. Will put letter on website and OCASC News.
- Now working on Formula Facts – a visual guide to how the provincial funding formula works.

- Canterbury HS – Would it be possible to pull out a few highlights so people can get a quick overview without all the details? A: Hope to use drill-down format on website, so that the initial view is of general topics such as transportation or special education student numbers, and more information is available by clicking on the links. CHS – One aspect is numbers, other is policy. Will you examine that? A: Only using data available from EQAO reports and ministry documents.
- Alta Vista PS – Board staff is proposing reducing the number of MLOs (Multi-cultural Liaison Officers) by half. How can a council lobby to prevent that? A: Citizen and Immigration funds a certain number of staff. A few years ago received a grant to hire extra MLOs, but Board doesn't get that grant any more. AVPS – Newspaper said other groups such as the United Way were also contributors.
- Anne – Board is cutting back, not cutting out. Any council wanting to make a presentation to the Board's budget committee can book time for a delegation to speak. June 7 is the day delegations will be heard, and you need to book ahead of time.

Meeting adjourned at 8:06 pm. Followed by Annual General Meeting.

OCASC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, May 20, 2010
Fisher Park PS Library

CALL TO ORDER: 8:07 p.m., Anne Teutsch in the chair.

MINUTES of AGM of May 21, 2009: Accepted with no amendments.

CHAIR'S ANNUAL REPORT – Anne Teutsch

- Became Chair two years ago, at start of visioning process. Refer often to new statement of purpose, which identifies three areas of importance: sharing information, facilitating communication, and representing our membership. OCASC can help parents, trustees, and school board staff work together for the good of the students.
- One year ago the OCASC executive created a "Looking Ahead" document. It identified Outreach and the 3 C's – Consultation, Collaboration and Communication as areas to focus on. The following list summarizes efforts and results of the year:
 - OCASC membership has increased from 60 to over 90 school councils.
 - Visits to the OCASC website have increased by 50%, to approximately 120 visits per day.
 - OCASC has gone out to participate in meetings of many school councils this year.
 - OCASC has been involved with a number of the OCDSB's leadership events.
 - Principals relate that they are promoting OCASC to their school councils.
 - Senior staff at the school board invited OCASC participation in organizing the most recent "Make a Positive Impact" leadership event.

- OCASC partnered with OCISO (Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization) on our PRO grant this year.
- OCASC Chair was invited to participate in the CCEE (Community Council on Ethnocultural Equity) visioning process.
- OCASC has two seats on the OCDSB Parent Involvement Committee, which has representation from many partnerships and advisory committees. As one of the OCASC reps, I chair our PIC.
- OCASC sent five members of the executive to the annual People for Education (P4E) Conference in Toronto in November.
- Outreach, communication, collaboration, consultation – all tie together, and all are about respect, trust, working together, and understanding. The OCDSB uses similar attributes in its Community of Character Wheel: respect, cooperation, fairness, integrity, empathy, appreciation, responsibility, acceptance, optimism, perseverance. Just as students and staff try to embody these attributes in our schools, so should we as parents and school council members in the work we do within our schools, with the school board, and beyond.
- With the goal of working with school board staff to find ways to change and improve consultation, the following activities were undertaken:
 - Two meetings of OCASC executive with OCDSB Executive Officer and communications staff;
 - Letter to trustees indicating concerns with consultation process, following Alternative Education Review;
 - OCASC Education Committee representative speaking at a committee meeting about consultation process concerns;
 - OCASC Chair meeting with Director of Education and Chair of Trustees to discuss the consultation process and some potential solutions;
 - Numerous informal discussions with individual staff and trustees about the consultation process.
- Some progress is being made in improving consultation, as indicated by:
 - Revisions to the Consultation Plan document that is completed prior to every consultation;
 - OCDSB staff requesting to speak at OCASC Assembly meetings about events, reviews, consultations.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S ANNUAL REPORT – Madelaine Stewart-Dmaj

- Now have 93 school councils as members, out of 140 schools in the OCDSB. Last year's membership was 60. A breakdown of membership and attendance was handed out.
- Fallingbrook Comm PS – Is there a plan for pitching OCASC to schools who aren't members? A: Every year an information package is sent out, which will be even better this year. The website is an important tool. Anne has visited many councils. It would be a useful project for the membership secretary and LOs to form a group tasked with approaching non-member councils.
- Sir Robert Borden HS – Is the location of meetings an issue in some zones? A: Membership doesn't seem to be geographically based. Q: Is there a reason some areas are lower? A: Don't know, but it would be a good thing to look into.

- Pleasant Park PS – Should have zone meetings attended by Anne. Anne: Will talk to trustees.
- Roberta Bondar PS – Does every school have a council? Anne: Not all, but most do. Some do officially but are not active. Cheryle: Approximately 10% don't.
- South Carleton HS – Does membership report include all schools? A: Not Adult HS or the alternate schools (does include alternative schools). SCHS: It would be interesting to know which schools in zone are not members so that she could talk about it when she meets them.
- South Carleton HS – Upping membership can cause problems meeting quorum. Is that a concern? Anne: Quorum hasn't been issue except with passing the new constitution, which has much higher quorum requirements. Woodroffe Ave ES: If we put membership numbers and quorum requirements on each agenda, councils might be more aware of need to attend.

TREASURER'S ANNUAL REPORT – Anne Teutsch

- Propose waiting until September to give full report and proposed budget, for two reasons:
 - OCASC year goes from September to August
 - There are a few issues that still need to be addressed
- Woodroffe Ave PS – Are we allowed to have an AGM without a financial report?
- Can give a quick report based on the most recent bank statement:
 - Balance: \$6174.12
 - Total revenue from membership fees: \$2415 (with some cheques still to deposit)
 - Expenses to date: \$830
 - Includes food for meetings, attendance at P4E conference, insurance (\$180), honorarium for speaker at special education evening.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2010/2011 – Madelaine Stewart-Dmaj and Brona Little

- Chair: Anne Teutsch (by acclamation)
- Vice-Chair: Carrie Eaton (by acclamation)
- Treasurer: Daniel Oickle (by acclamation)
- Membership Secretary: Sandra Acacia (by acclamation)
- Recording Secretary: Juliet Hamilton (by acclamation)
- Communications Officer: Lillian Thomsen (by acclamation)
- Liaison Officers: Brona Little
Dwight Thompson
Janet Patch
Jen Wolff
Cathy Babyak
Chris Bridgen
Gennifer Stainforth
Kevin MacPherson
Peter Stieda

Enang Akan
Susan Klimchuk
Joel Berger
Peter Kokkovas
Madelaine Stewart-Dmaj
Gabe Thirlwall

- Vote to accept 15 LOs was unanimous

Wrap-up – Anne

- Planned a super-chalk-it-up for the June meeting, but the date now conflicts with a budget meeting. SSC is scheduled for June 3rd, had planned OCASC for June 10th. Do people want a June meeting?
 - Vote indicated not. **NO JUNE MEETING.**
- Woodroffe Ave PS – Will we be notified of budget developments? Anne: Will continue with website updates and OCASC News. If you're interested in the budget, keep an eye on the Board website. Cheryle: Staff recommendations come out May 31. Package not on website yet. Will send schedule by email.
- CCEE invites all OCASC members to attend their visioning retreat on June 5th. See OCASC website for more information.

Annual General Meeting adjourned at 8:52 pm.

NEXT MEETING:

- **No June meeting.** See you in September!

Past minutes and more information about OCASC can be found at www.ocasc.ca.