

Minutes of the OCASC Secondary School Committee
Thursday, April 9, 2009
7:30 to 9:30 p.m.
Fisher Park PS

The objectives of the Secondary School Committee are to:

1. Increase parent knowledge of and involvement in secondary school education in Ottawa-Carleton;
2. Promote the development of school councils and parent associations to represent parents of students in each Ottawa-Carleton secondary school;
3. Sponsor and encourage research into and study of education issues and concerns in Ottawa-Carleton secondary schools;
4. Formulate recommendations regarding secondary school education in Ottawa-Carleton, and to assist in implementing such recommendations.

Participants:

Juliet Hamilton (Bell), Alix MacLean (Nepean), Lorna Rankin Worley (Sir Wilfrid Laurier), Anne Teutsch (Merivale), Farzi Khazi (Earl of March), Beth Doubt (OCASC Rep. To SEAC), Brenda Packman (Woodroffe H.S.), Elizabeth Verbruggen (John McCrae), Thankamoni Valliyangoor (Glebe), Nadine Clarke (Canterbury, Chair), Elizabeth Melanson (Lisgar), Jean MacIsaac (Glebe)

Guests:

Catherine Deschambault, OCDSB Principal, Continuing Education and Cathy Quigley, Continuing Education Officer (Summer and Night School), Lynda Hall and Judith Haney of "Growing Up Organic", a Project of Canadian Organic Growers

Agenda covered at meeting:

Introductions

Presentation: Continuing Education Presentation for Secondary Students in OCDSB

Agenda and Minutes/Action items

Chalk It Up

Board's RFP for Food Services: Organic Food

Education Committee report

Other Business

Next meeting

Continuing Education Presentation

Chair Nadine welcomed Catherine Deschambault, Principal, Continuing Education and Cathy Quigley, Continuing Education Officer (Summer and Night School), to talk about Continuing Education in respect to meeting needs of HS students

Summer courses are offered in OCDSB from July 2nd to 27th. Students must sign up in advance. Registration is from May 4th to June 5th. Only as many sessions as can be supported by the sign-ups and the teachers available are offered, so some courses are

cancelled or there is a waiting list. Course sizes vary from 20 for remedial to 30 for reach-ahead courses. Home schools must sign off that student hasn't taken the course, and is eligible for it.

- Last July, approx. 3000 students took summer courses for credit in a variety of courses at Sir Wilfred Laurier, Sir Robert Borden, AY Jackson
- Information on these courses is made available in Brochure available at every Secondary School, in the Learn Magazine published by the OCDSB to advertise continuing education credit and non-credit courses), and on the web www.ocdsb.ca/secondary_websites/elearning/index.htm
- These courses cater to all learners:
 - "reach ahead" courses (most popular)
 - For grades 8-11 ==> may take courses not available at home school, in fall, or free themselves up for other activities. They take 110 hours of class-time over 4 weeks & required homework.
 - New for summer 2009: Grade 9 Prep math course for grade 8's. This session pre-teaches grade 9 math concepts. It is targetted at level 3 students who want to do academic math in high school; they are doing okay in Grade 8 math, but may struggle with many new concepts of grade 9 math. There will be 2 classes offered this summer at Sir Wilfred Laurier, AY Jackson H.S.
 - make up course: students have taken the course before, but they wish to:
 - improve mark
 - meet expectations of course and get credit. This is part of Boards drive to increase graduation rates
 - on-line courses
 - Enables student to do course work at home, with more control over time-table;
 - Kids who have taken these courses have done well
 - BUT it takes student who is mature, committed, and able to work alone: about 190 hours of work to complete these courses (including homework and extra reading), Work load is heavy: a lot of Reading and homework to do along with the work
 - A Popular one: Careers & civics at grade 10: 2 full sections with a waiting list last year

Co-op in summer

- 180 spots: but only 30-35 are selected/choose to get credits for these
- Also for kids spend meaningful time in summer / not just career related
- Some students are clear about the career track and want to work on it in summer
- Other students might want to try something out: teacher guidance re areas to try.
 - Teachers work with them to see what might work
- **Students-at-risk** programs are offered in collaboration with other community agencies
 - YSB: Summer jobs for youth
 - Students who have not worked before
 - From high needs neighbourhoods

- Get their first job: might otherwise have difficulty getting a job
- **School Year Numeracy/ Literacy Help for Grades 7-10**
 - Schools can get funding for grade 7-10 support literacy/numeracy support. Could be an after-school numeracy program which would help them with their skills (math clubs, homework clubs, ...); or an evening where parents can go and learn about math and literacy in order to help their children
 - There has to be an interested set of students available at the intended time (impacted by bussing issues). It can be offered before or after school, or at noon-hour, or even on Saturday am. It is directed by principal and staff: they know what will help at that school. Some offered as all year long; others might be for 6 weeks, twice a week, etc. Before or after school, it can be a teacher (or others); at noon: could be an EA, parent or community member. There is a bank of information on school offerings. Examples of other courses are:
 - School could offer a math course in the first semester when students are taking grade 9 math in the second semester and Continuing Education will pay for the teacher.
 - Being done at a few HS: Gloucester, Sir Wilfred, Rideau, Ridgemont

Funding for literacy-numeracy support (Parenting Workshops)

- This funding supports schools offering literacy, numeracy for broad range of topics for parents so they understand how they can help students learn
- Principals can use funding to provide food, facilities or speaker.
- Provide a workshop at school
 - How can a parent improve the way that their child learns at school
 - e.g. Understand new math curriculum
 - Or read with child at home/ get boys to read

Questions: Could SSC offer some of the Parent Learning sessions?

- Continuing Education Department provides the funds to a school and principal (or a combination)
- Support student learning through educating parents, create meaningful discussion with parents,
- Could also be on things like bullying because that facilitates safety which helps children to learn
- Some schools do a course on how to prepare you child for grade 9 (math?)

Could Summer courses be advertised earlier?

- These courses are advertised after the students have done their sign-up for next grade courses at their schools. This makes it difficult to balance whether to sign up for summer course or not, because they don't know what the options are:

- Kids are interested in doing a number of things in the summer
- Can they not have the schedule available (or at least the courses available) early on? Otherwise it makes it kind of difficult for kids to convince their schools to let them sign up for the course, make their own decisions, etc.

E-learning also available during school year:

- Continuing Education consults with the OCDSB E-learning coordinator about what she/he thinks will be successful as on-line course
 - Need to have a great teacher for it
 - Has to be an engaging course
- Courses offered through e-learning during the year are the same as those offered during the summer.
- During session, ministry also offers on-line courses which are accessible to students. All courses are to Ministry of Education standards including some math (OCDSB does not offer any math courses on-line).

Agenda and Minutes/Action items

Agenda and Minutes from March meeting were accepted with no changes.

Chalk it Up:

Transfer Policy (Lisgar)

- Lisgar noted that the proposed draft policy on student transfers is more restrictive, as well proposing a change in how school capacities may be calculated. Lisgar, which is at the attendance level that makes a school workable (about 1000) could lose 200+ kids, thus resulting in loss of teachers, programs, etc. Programs like the Strings Program and Latin (unique to a community school in Ottawa), could be lost.
- If other schools are having problems retaining students, the Board needs to ask: why are people leaving: why are students not wanting to go to their community school.
- Merivale: This is a bigger/ broader problem than the transfer policy. Framework for the Secondary Schools has never been implemented, and the Secondary school ad-hoc committee has not met.
- Merivale: capacity issue is an issue that might be of interest to several schools. Some see eliminating so many transfers as being positive
 - Beth: need to make assessment of why students are leaving schools on basis of reality-- not of people's "perceptions"
 - **Severall:** School profile on -Line is an issue; really need to look at why some schools have trouble maintaining their populations.

"Growing up Organic" -- a project of the Canadian Organic Growers

Presenters: Linda Hall, Project Manager for "Growing Up Organic"

Judith Haney, project leader for getting organic produced into high school cafeterias

- Getting organics into schools started 2 years ago at Muchmor with a salad bar which was very popular and produced a 30% profit.
-
- The High School Cafeteria tender provides an opportunity to get better food into high schools. The goal is to source some of the ingredients in High Schools cafeterias to be

organic. They would like to influence RFP to require a small %age of organics (e.g. 5% of products) and are prepared to work with whichever supplier is selected to help source from local organic farmers. (Note that 21 of 24 High schools will have the same supplier, who will be one of a handful of suppliers). Canadian Food Service providers are already responding to these sorts of requirements: - in Toronto, and partially at Carleton U. Besides providing healthier choices to students, this would encourage the move towards food sustainability by decreasing petroleum use in transportation and manufacture of fertilizer.

- Examples of success can be found in the UK where there are goals are to work towards having 15%-20% of offering as organic products, and Italy where they are getting good organic products in schools. In Ontario, the Maitland District school board operates the: "Screaming Avocado Cafe" as an alternative to the regular cafeteria in schools: 200-300 meals per day served from this cafe.
- In January OCDSB sent out request as to whether people were interested in issue of choices on school menus--Esp. Organic. A committee of principals has been formed from several impacted schools. Linda sent them a package in February, and offered to be part of solution by helping them to source the farmers. However there seems to have been hesitation about issuing a survey--an online email one for School Councils is difficult to do without having it printed out. We can't change the whole system over-night; but we can start small by putting some organics in high schools and build over time.
- What can SSC DO?
 - Mechanism for getting information out is not clear
 - SSC can offer an opinion that represents a number of schools, and should therefore be listened to;
 - Nadine can send out information to various school councils & ask for information: depending on response back, can feed back information to Michael Clarke
 - On-line petition at <http://www.petitionspot.com/petitions/organicsatocdsb>
 - Let Board know %age of schools that are interested in pursuing this

Other Activities of "Growing Up Organic"

- Going to AY Jackson with a chef (to do a cooking session(s))
- Alpenblick farm summer camp: 12-16 year olds; organic food near an urban centre
- Build vegetable garden at schools, etc.
- Working on coop students for farming (get younger people into farming)

Education committee

2nd Phase of FSL dealing with Secondary French Language review is coming up but not till June

- The Board is conducting a review of intermediate level programs as part of its regular cycle of review.
- Considerations under discussion include:

- Reducing the number of configurations for schools. Presently there are 5 different types. Trustees and staff would like to limit # of configurations of schools
- The number of teacher contacts that students have per week which ranges from 2 – 10 teachers per student depending on the school.
- Review of longer blocks of time for literacy and numeracy instruction, daily instruction in language arts and math, less movement between classes and a cross-curricular approach to program delivery

- **Board Speaker Series**

- This will be offered as separate sessions for teachers and for parents. There will be a limited numbers of spots. Day-care will be available.
Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) Provincial Reaching Out (PRO) grant

Speaker Series:

May 13 Barry MacDonald Effective Strategies for Parenting Boys
7 – 9 PM
Albert Street Education Centre, 440 Albert Street.

June 3 Dr. James Cummins Engaging English Language Learners
Sept TBD Dr. Debbie Pushor Parental Engagement

Action Item Summary

ID	Actions	Assigned to	Date Raised mm.dd.yy	Target Date mm.dd.yy	Status
ITEMS OPENED as a result of this meeting					
A14	Further discussion with Continuing Education about funded parent programs to help improve student learning	Anne/ Nadine	04.09. 09	05.14.09	
A15	Secondary School feedback to Board staff about why students transfer to other than their home schools. The action item arose from a chalk it up question on the transfer policy review	Anne/ Nadine	04.09. 09	05.14.09	
A16	May meeting agenda topic "Why are students transferring out?" Discussion about school choice	Nadine	04.09. 09	05.14.09	
A17	Once Judith provides links to the organic food options sites, to send to Secondary School members for their council discussions.	Nadine	04.09. 09	05.14.09	
A18	Send "on-line" survey to Judith Haney and Nadine so that Judith may determine whether this is the consultation the Board agreed to conduct	Liz	04.09. 09	05.14.09	
A19	If SS Councils provide feedback, send to Board	Nadine	04.09. 09	05.14.09	
A20	Send to Nadine comments on "what do parents want/look for in their schools" "What do they value in their school communities" "What information do school councils and parents want on public websites	SSC members	04.09. 09	05.14.09	
CARRY-FORWARD actions					
A1	Record locations and numbers of students enrolled in focus programs for secondary school (T&T completed)	Anne	09.11.08	11.13.08	Anne reported on the Trades and Technology. Will update after the SS Steering Team meeting
A3	What are schools doing to help students transition to post-secondary education. Consider school councils hosting sessions in which guidance counsellors present	Nadine and Anne	09.11.08	11.13.08	Anne updated that the staff is interested but overloaded now.

ID	Actions	Assigned to	Date Raised mm.dd.yy	Target Date mm.dd.yy	Status
	options. Check and ask Board to consider preparing a booklet or web based outline for transitioning help				Follow up with timing later
A4	What is the Board position on students taking a 5 th year. What are the schools authority to allow or limit	Nadine and Anne	09.11.08	11.13.08	Answered than additional questions asked for clarification
A11 of 2007-2008	Check at the end of the SSC term to see if any change to Action # 6 on consultation	All SSC Reps	2007.10.11	2008.06.12	OUTSTANDING
A24 of 2007-2008	Action items 12 and 13: update SSC on gifted centres and mandate at SSPP. Define issues and decisions	Juliet	2008.03.06		uncertain
A06 of 2007-2008	Check whether consultation on program changes occur with their school council	SSC reps	2007.09.13	2007.10.11	Responses that the consultation varies across the board. Some councils are asked for input, some consultation and some no request.
A12 of 2007-2008	Form discussion group to focus on Secondary Gifted Centres issue.	Chairs	2007.12.13	asap	Revised
A13 of 2007-2008	Write, get email okays and send feedback on Secondary Gifted under SSPP mandate to Education Committee	Juliet?	2007.10.11	2008.01.22	Revised
A31 pf 2007-2008	Invite principal(?) from Gloucester HS to speak about LINK pilot project	Chair	2008.05.08	2008-2009	
CLOSED ITEMS as a result of this meeting					
A2	Record those exams which are board wide exams	Nadine and Anne	09.11.08	11.13.08	Sent 10.16.08 and again 11.13.08
A5	What options are there for students and parents to follow up the evaluation and final report for students (after the school year ends and summer starts)? What options to close the feedback loop for students at the end of the school year? Is there a Board process, policy or protocol?	Nadine and Anne	09.11.08	10.09.08	No policy or protocol
A6	What is the credit recovery option?	Nadine and Anne	09.11.08	10.09.08	Credit recovery, credit rescue and upgrading explained

ID	Actions	Assigned to	Date Raised mm.dd.yy	Target Date mm.dd.yy	Status
A7	Send link to the elementary phase of the FSL Review	Nadine	10.09.08	11.13.08	Sent 10.16.08
A8 from A4	Can you be on school teams if you are in the 5 th year of secondary school? If you graduate after 4 years, how does your average calculated with the additional courses?	Nadine	10.09.08	11.13.08	Reported 11.13.08
A9	What new curriculum is expected next year which will require new textbooks? Who's going to pay; province or board?	Nadine	10.09.08	11.13.08	Reported 11.13.08
A10	What is the Sir Robert Borden presentation date?	Nadine	10.09.08	11.13.08	Sent 10.16.08
A11	What is the school policy on parents' choice of class timetable for siblings of the same age?	Nadine	10.09.08	11.13.08	Reported 11.13.08
A11 from NOV 08	Send link for student University Choices and S. Carleton Newsletter	Nadine	11.13.08	ASAP	Sent 11.14.08
A12 from Nov 08	Send link to Board website for FSL and Gifted Review	Nadine	11.13.08	ASAP	Sent 11.14.08