

**Minutes of the OCASC Secondary School Committee  
Thursday, January 13, 2011  
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:**

Jean MacIsaac (Glebe), Erma Cassie-Richard (Earl of March), Chris Ellis (Rideau), Lori Siewecke (Canterbury), Anne Teutsch (Merivale), Bessie Giovanopoulos (Sir Robert Borden), Lisa Stevenson and Tammy Watkinson (Sir Guy Carleton), Lise Pennie (Colonel By), Nadine Clarke (Chair),

Guest Speaker: Mark LaFleur, OCDSB System Principal, Student Success Lead

**Agenda covered at meeting:**

Introductions

Presentation and Discussion: Student Success

Introduction:

**Presentation: OCDSB Student Success**

Student Success is a grade 7 – 12 initiative. Mark told that group that speaking to the public and parents was one way to help in meeting the Ministry of Education objective to increase public confidence in public education. He framed his presentation with an introduction to Sir Ken Robinson and the video of his talk “Bring on the Learning which can be found at

[http://www.ted.com/talks/sir\\_ken\\_robinson\\_bring\\_on\\_the\\_revolution.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/sir_ken_robinson_bring_on_the_revolution.html)

Similar to the climate crisis or crisis of natural resources, there is a crisis in human resources. We make poor use of our talents and there are many who don't know what their talents are. There are 2 groups of people; those who enjoy what they do and others who don't. Those who don't, endure and wait for the weekend. Those who enjoy find their work an authentic expression of their self and it is the minority. Education is the problem. The education system is being reformed but it is not enough to fix what is broken; we need a revolution not evolution to create the fundamental change that is necessary. The great problem of reform or transformation is the ‘tyranny of common sense’ It is hard to innovate. A quote from Abe Lincoln “The Dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate for the stormy present...we must rise with the occasion...we must disenthral ourselves..” Many of our ideas are formed to meet the needs of the previous century, not the current century. We need to “disenthral” ourselves of our ideas in

education. Examples of ideas we are enthralled with in education: Linearity - that you start here and end there. But life isn't linear it is organic and symbiotic. We are obsessed with going to college and it starts early. The world needs a diversity of talents, not singularity of ability. College does not begin in kindergarten. Conformity is another idea that our system embraces. We have the fast food model of education. All is standardized, impoverishing our energies in the same way fast food impoverishes our bodies. Human talent is diverse and we should be exciting the spirit and energy of our learners. It is about passion. If you do something you love, time has a different meaning. People opt out of education if it doesn't feed their spirit. We need a model based on the agricultural model not the industrial, manufacturing and linear model. Similar to agriculture, we can create the conditions under which they will flourish. Customize and personalize the education to those you are teaching. A movement to personalize the curriculum is needed. He quoted Y.B Yeats poem and then paraphrased its meaning - 'everywhere, every day, our children spread their dreams beneath our feet and we should tread softly'. Educators have the privilege to connect with the dreams of children, parents and families.

Mark then spoke to the model for student success as 'reaching every student'. We are underserving about 1/3 of our students. Think of it as not serving them well as opposed to that 1/3 not taking advantage of the services available.

Mark spoke to several messages.

African Proverb: "If you want to go fast, Go alone  
If you want to go far, Go together"

Goethe: Look at a man the way he should be and he will become that man.

Educators have the responsibility to look at students as who they can become. It is about building winning streaks for kids, building confidence, optimism, a strong desire to succeed, self-analysis in failure, high level of effort, stretching and risk taking. The characteristics of people who are on a losing streak are pessimism, expectation of negative results, self-criticism, sense of futility, waning effort, denial, cover up, fear of risk taking. Belonging, being, and becoming are aspects of student success. The challenges of adolescence have to do with the adolescent brain. They are highly emotional, fear based, poor judgement and decision-making. Building resilience, the ability to bounce back when things go wrong, is important in adolescents. A sense of humour is needed for both the child and the parents,

Dr. Michael Bradley, author of Yes Your Teen is Crazy and Loving Your Kid Without Losing Your Mind, identifies several aspects of the teen years:

- The importance of fear in the learning equation
- How to appreciate the mind of an adolescent – it isn't personal so don't let them bait you
- The teenage brain and pruning
- Understanding consequences. This is included in the Provincial "Growing Success" document as part of the assessment and evaluation

Sir Ken Robinson says you have to be willing to be wrong in order to be creative. Kids are often trying to balance a large number of things in their lives but are not very good at it.

Student success is about being equal not identical. There is a constellation of expanded opportunities from programming to the instructional practices. We need to change what is available for students so that we meet their needs. To increase the success of students we need to grow the definition of student success.

Mark then showed a video of Professor Leithwood on the challenge in Ontario education. It takes structure to move a system from struggling to doing well and creativity to move it from good to great.

What works well for moving the system from poor to average might not work for moving it from good to great. There is a ceiling effect and regression to mean. Nor does emulating other systems such as in Finland where 4 million go to one church. It doesn't work in a multicultural setting.

In the OCDSB there are 2 pillars to the strategy – creative and innovative thinking and ongoing assessment and feedback. Kids are getting better at asking questions, at saying they don't know what comes next. We are trying to change the definition of success for students. Who are the most underserved students and how do we change to serve them and let their dreams flourish and grow? When students don't succeed society suffers; the criminal justice system, social welfare etc. Our graduation rate has grown from 66% in 2003 to 79% last year. That means 16,500 more students graduated compared to 2003-2004. The board target is 85%. Failing a course and retaking it over and over again is not acceptable. Credit recovery programs help in this area. What are we doing to help students succeed: differentiated instruction, Specialist High Skills Majors, Dual Credit, Student Success leader teacher teams, mathematical literacy, a bigger and better definition of literacy, Co-op education and Pathways. The board goes out to kids in the workforce and helps them get coop credits for their work as part of the Winning Ways initiative. Credit intervention strategies include; effective assessment and evaluation, homework clubs, peer tutors, credit rescue, after school programs, extra time during exams, eLearning, ½ credit programs, continuous entry co-op, remedial literacy and mathematics. Teachers are becoming coaches versus judge and jury or gatekeepers. “We have it within us to insist on the visibility and inclusion of all of us.” To succeed, students must all feel comfortable and included. Instead of saying to a student “you're not getting this”, the assessment and evaluation process has the teacher saying “to get this done, we need to do...” The alignment prism has the triangle of the teacher, student and content focusing on completing a task. Richard Elmore, author of *Data and the Core Orbital Model: the instructional core* has levels of assessment and evaluation: International Assessment (results received after 18 months) EQAO and OSSLT (year long), school level data, student work with specific expectations and rubric assessments, task and moderation of student work. Effectiveness Review to see what works with teams going into schools, using appreciative inquiry, not the deficit model. ‘The most effective way to achieve right relations with any living thing is to look for the best in it, and then help that best to the fullest expression.’ The effort is to change the culture of secondary schools by sharing and learning together in teams. It is about engagement and cultural proficiency. We are challenged by our inability to reach aboriginal kids in the community. If students fail in grade 9, they have less than a 20% chance to graduate. Late leavers; 10% of students who get their 16 grade 9 and 10 credits but don't go on to graduate. The board is calling those kids who have left the system, telling them they have been underserved and to come back and let us do it right. There will be 21 Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) courses next year. We have gone from 400 to 2400 students enrolled in the SHSM programs. The Pyramid of Intervention is the re-entry to the system after working a bit. “The best time to plant an oak is 50 years ago. The second best time is now”. We need to be more flexible, break down the silos, find solutions that work for kids. Changing the notion that we have set up something good and if kids don't take the opportunities offered, it is not our fault.

### **Chalk It Up**

Jean McIsaac (Glebe) reported that the school principal had concerns about signing all report cards and wondered if other schools consider it an issue. None of the other schools in attendance expressed a similar concern. The principal also commented that the time lines make it difficult to share with school councils prior to being finalized. At Canterbury the school council chairs are involved in the creation of the plan and were invited to make observations about the implementation in the classrooms. Mark

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contributed the information that the Board's Improvement Plan template is an exemplar across the province. They are realizing that the school improvement plan does not have to wait on the Board's plan. The conversation is ongoing.

### **The School Calendar**

The input sought from the committee on the calendar this year is about the timing of the Christmas break. Feedback will be sought through OCASC newsletter and the secondary school e-mail distribution list. The start date for 2011-2012 will be September 6, after Labour Day.

### **CHEO Parent Information Evening.**

This year it will be hosted at Canterbury High School on Wednesday February 15<sup>th</sup>, starting at 7 pm and ending at 9 pm. The poster has since gone out to the committee and is on the OCASC website.

**Next Meeting**  
**February 10, 2011**  
**Fisher Park PS**

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**Action Item Summary**

ID	Actions	Assigned to	Date Raised mm.dd.yy	Target Date mm.dd.yy	Status
<b>ITEMS OPENED</b>					
A9	Send out minutes of the Trades and Technology meeting	Nadine	01.13.11	02.10.11	Attached to minutes
A8	Can students in credit recovery achieve greater than 50%	Nadine	10.14.10	11.11.10	Done
A7	Check previous Secondary School Minutes for information about the math curriculum changes for grade 12	Nadine	03.11.10		Done
<b>ITEMS CLOSED</b>					
A6	Send link to the updated Secondary School Gifted Program report (includes SEAC input)	Nadine	03.11.10		Done
A5	Send Link to the School Councils Handbook	Nadine	03.11.10		Done
A4	Send Link to the School Improvement Planning Handbook	Nadine	03.11.10		Done
A2	Is there a policy, procedure, recommendation or decision on "Turn-Around Day" evaluation process for end of the semester exams	Nadine	02.11.10	Next meeting	Done
A3	Presentation on the new testing format for standardized math test, Grade 10 and Assessment of the test	Nadine	02.11.10	April or May meeting	Done
A1	Request/Ask for information or for volunteers from OCRI for one on one tutoring. Contact Lee-Ann Scott at <a href="mailto:lscott@ocri.ca">lscott@ocri.ca</a> or 613-828-6274 X247	All	09.10.09	Ongoing	Reminder
<b>CARRY-FORWARD actions</b>					

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ID	Actions	Assigned to	Date Raised mm.dd.yy	Target Date mm.dd.yy	Status
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 options. Check and ask Board to consider preparing a booklet or web based outline for transitioning help	Nadine and Anne	09.11.08	11.13.08	Anne updated that the staff is interested but overloaded now. Follow up with timing later
A4	What is the Board position on students taking a 5 <sup>th</sup> 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 007-008	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 007-008	Action items 12 and 13: update SSC on gifted centres and mandate at SSPR. Define issues and decisions	Juliet	2008.03.06		uncertain
A06 of 007-008	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 007-008	Form discussion group to focus on Secondary Gifted Centres issue.	Chairs	2007.12.13	asap	Revised
A13 of 007-008	Write, get email okays and send feedback on Secondary Gifted under SSPR mandate to Education Committee	Juliet?	2007.10.11	2008.01.22	Revised
<b>CLOSED ITEMS</b>					
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

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ID	Actions	Assigned to	Date Raised mm.dd.yy	Target Date mm.dd.yy	Status
A6	What is the credit recovery option?	Nadine and Anne	09.11.08	10.09.08	Credit recovery, credit rescue and upgrading explained
A8 from A4	Can you be on school teams if you are in the 5 <sup>th</sup> 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
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

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### Trades and Technology Summary December 10, 2010

Action to compare notes from meetings and finalize the 2010-2013 technological Education Multi-Year Plan; Seven components of the Goals; Curriculum, Professional Learning Communities, Program Pathways, Facilities and Safety, Community Partnerships, Communication and Marketing. The group recognized the need to coordinate with the Business and Learning Technology (B&LT) group's DRIVE program. We still have hardwired technology labs. We also differentiate computers as opposed to dropping the numbers of computers in each school. Recognize wireless and handheld computer devices. EVERGREEN program required updates to computers which has been delayed due to budget.

The key is to keep software/technology connected to the curriculum, maintaining the same pace for change.

Discussion of the need for additional resources for the Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) programs. The example used was that of Sir Wilfrid Laurier which has MAC's so that there is a connection to Algonquin but other schools don't have MACs. However, that is why there are SHSM programs in designated schools. The cyclical plan is to replace computers only in the comtech areas and not others and to focus on handheld and wireless devices.

Update to on ComTech:

- Video cameras for 18 schools. 4 class sets for small engines in r schools with transportation shops.
- Testing 3D printers in 2 schools for delivering curriculum.
- Trained 50 intermediate science and technology teachers in hand tools and supplies and equipment.

SHSM communication plan.

Now in .pdf format and with the board's in-house communication department. Group asked that hard copies also be available particularly for intermediate schools as there are no guidance departments and not all have computers. And that there be more social networking. Suggestion that we use Algonquin volunteers for events and advertising. We need to support teachers/staff to help students. The group requested a grid of all the SHSM and Focus programs by school.

The School Operation Committee (Superintendents) are impressed with the breadth of choice and sectors across the district. It was noted that our enrolment in senior grades is lower than other boards our size. The response is that SHSM is about student success and must have outcomes related to Pathways – work, apprenticeships, college and university.

Intermediate Science and Technology

In the area of teacher professional learning communities, Kevin Shea reported a positive reception from 20 intermediate Science and Technology teachers learning at Greenbank School in December. A guide is forthcoming with resources for intermediate teachers with and without labs.

Skills Canada and Ontario partnership in the Elementary Challenge and Secondary Competitions in Waterloo. We have enough students in the elementary challenge for a run off this year in February. It is a challenge with the semester system in secondary school to identify teams so it is likely to be set in the first semester. It was noted that there is a need for templates for Ontario Competitions for a variety of schools sending students.