Minutes of the OCASC Secondary School Committee
Thursday, February 10, 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:
Anne Teutsch (Merivale), Bessie Giovanopoulas (Sir Robert Borden), Lise Pennie (Colonel By),
Becky Hughes (Woodroffe), Janet Patch ((Cairine Wilson), Nadine Clarke (Chair),
Guest Speaker: Barry Bickerton, System Principal, Curriculum Services OCDSB

Agenda covered at meeting:
Introductions
Agenda and Minutes
Presentation and Discussion: Assessment and Evaluation
Other Business
Presentation: OCDSB Assessment and Evaluation
Barry Bickerton, System Principal, Curriculum Services

Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting

Recently, in reference to assessment, evaluation and reporting of student achievement, our district has experienced an increase in collaborative practices among teachers, administrators and an increase in engaging parents and students in conversations about best practice This collaborative approach has been evidenced in the School Improvement Planning Process and the assessment and evaluation practices. Long before the report card comes out, students should know where they stand, what their strengths are and next steps fro learning through ongoing, timely and descriptive feedback. Research identifies the need to provide ongoing descriptive feedback to students through the learning cycle and the Board includes this is one of the two strategies in the Board Improvement Plan.

In Ontario, assessment and evaluation has moved from a norm-referenced system (e.g. comparing student performance to other student work, ranking, bell curves, sifting and sroting) to the achievement of the curriculum based on established criteria for levels across the achievement chart categories. This is the objective of assessment, evaluation and reporting.

The Assessment and Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools is part of the Ministry's "Growing Success" outlined in the OCDSB Policy P.083 CUR and Procedure PR.584 CUR.

The Mckinsey & Company Report issued in October of 2010 acknowledged that Ontario is in the top 20. The link to the full report: http://clients.mediaondemand.net/MCKINSEY/2010/SCHOOLS/player. A video of the report was presented which highlighted educational systems that had significant, widespread and sustainable change. Professional learning models are aligned with what we are doing in Ontario. School embedded professional learning for networks teachers is provided through our instructional coach model. Research and experience in the OCDSB elementary and secondary panels indicates greater impact on instructional strategies and raising student engagement and achievement if teachers learn in their schools rather than going to another place for a learning session then returning to their classrooms to implement the strategies independently. Now in its second year at the secondary level, our instructional coach model is a strength-based model involving professional collaboration (co-constructing learning goals and success criteria, observation of student learning and debriefing)

Video Presentation: How the World's Improved School Systems Keep getting Better

The authors of the Mckinsey report visited schools that had experienced sustained, widespread change. Questions asked: what interventions move systems to change, to make improvements happen; what circumstances are universal and in what context are changes made; how to get change started and how to sustain it. They looked at 20 school systems that had significant, big step change in student performance, sustained over 5 years and widespread over multiple grades or multiple subjects. The interventions were catalogued in clusters: a) poor to fair; b) fair to good; c) good to great and great to excellent. What were dominant patterns that characterized the performance change?

Poor to Fair:

Greatest Challenge is limited capacity of the system at the school and ministry level. Needs proscribed interventions to make it as easy as possible to teach; scripted lessons, cadres of teacher coaches, frequent assessment to see if students are learning, students getting to school, teacher incentives tied to student achievements. Efforts are all about reducing variation across classes and schools.

Good to great journey

Educators are already strong and therefore interventions are not proscribed. The system needs flexibility; there are higher expectations of teachers and hoe they work together. In recruitment of teachers the criteria of what is required to become a teacher is higher. Professional development includes learning from each other through demonstrations, peer pressure on each other to improve, career pathways on performance not tenure. Teachers learn from examples of great practices that are spread across the system. Shift from 50/50 capability building and accountability to 80/20 is unleashing the great to excellent. Focus is on learning not on teaching. It is inquiry based learning. The report refers to 9 lessons. Lesson number 3 is about structure, process and resource interventions; teaching and leading. It is the process that has changed in OCDSB so much over past three years. 70% of the changes were around process and 70% of those changes were around instructional strategies. The board is creating the opportunity for educators to talk about Assessment and Evaluation. The OCDSB aligns well with the 9 lessons in

the Mckinsey report. The appreciative inquiry model, instructional coaches, setting plans, providing feedback and co-constructing tasks are examples.

The report goes on to discuss how interventions get implemented; mandate versus persuade. Some systems convert data into performance targets to ensure focus and commitment – Canada, Britain and USA. Asia and Europe use data but not as targets. It is used in private dialogues with individual schools. It is not a right or wrong judgment but a decision on when you use either method to implement the necessary interventions.

In lesson 5, the median tenure in system leadership is addressed; 6 years for strategic leaders 7 years for political leaders. The timing is dependent on the need to make progress and get the next generation of leaders ready to take over.

The provincial direction is outlined in the Growing Success document: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools. Assessment and Evaluation is based on both content standards (Knowledge and Skills) and performance standards outlined in the achievement chart (Levels 1 – 4). Four categories of achievement across the four levels of achievement: Knowledge and Understanding, Thinking, Communication and Application. Assessment is done on an individual basis versus a comparison to others. The report shows a median not average or mean and it is across all classes in the course.

Assessment

Assessment is the process of gathering, from a variety of sources, information about student learning and performance as it relates to the curriculum expectations. It provides students constructive, descriptive feedback which identifies strengths and next steps for learning. The primary purpose of assessment is to improve student learning.

Assessment **as** learning; understanding based on feedback and having students thinking about their learning (metacognition, self-assessment).

Assessment **for** learning; examples are early drafts, first tries, practice assignments. Research and effective practice show that ongoing descriptive feedback is a greater lever for increasing student achievement than marks. Assessment **for** learning focuses on feedback (Feedback sequence: I get the feedback, I understand the feedback, I know what to do next, my teacher supports me).

Assessment **of** learning is a process of collecting and interpreting evidence of learning and making judgements about the quality of learning based on established criteria and assigning a value as a mark on an assignment or grade on a report card. Professional judgement is used to consider the student's most consistent level of achievement with special consideration of more recent evidence.

Evaluation

Evidence is collected over time from observations, conversations and student products. Students are responsible for providing evidence of their learning within established timelines and recognize the consequences of cheating, plagiarizing, not completing work and submitting work

late. There are a number of strategies to be used to help prevent and/or address late and missed assignments. One strategy is deducting marks. Late and missed assignments will be noted on the report card as part of the evaluation of learning skills and work habits. However, the result must not reflect a report card grade that misrepresents the student's achievement.

Cheating and plagiarism; Teachers utilize a variety of proactive strategies to help students understand the gravity of such behaviour. In some secondary schools, library teachers work with grade 9 students to understand what plagiarism is, as part of the prevention policy. Ministry policy requires school boards to develop policy to address prevention, detection and consequences. Consequences will take into account grade level, maturity, number and frequency of incidents and individual circumstances of students.

Report Card: Must be signed by the principal (or vice-principal); failing grades I the OCDSB appear between 0% and 49%; Code "I" may be used to indicate insufficient evidence to determine a percentage mark for grade 9 – 10. However, in grades 11 and 12, because universities and colleges require a final grade, this option ("I") is not available.

OCDSB Board Improvement Plan 2010-2011

- Strategy #1 - improve student achievement through focus on innovative, creative, critical thinking (higher order thinking skills)

- Strategy # 2 - improve student achievement through focus on ongoing assessment and feedback

 Joint assessment and evaluation committee was formed in 2009 with federation, central, school representatives to make recommendations for the revision of Policy P.083 CUR and Procedure PR.584.CUR to align with "Growing Success". The committee was co-chaired by the Federation President and Superintendent of Curriculum Services.

Dr. Gini-Newman spoke to school teams as well as OCDSB parents on critical thinking skills. During the 2008-2009 school year there were different interpretations and applications of the policy and procedure in our district. On September 28, 2010, the new policy P.083 CUR received Board approval and the procedure PR.584.CUR was approved by the Director's Executive Council.

Regarding zeros; "If the teacher has no evidence of the student's knowledge or skills related to the expectations evaluated, a zero will represent the student's absence of learning". This language in the procedure remained unchanged through the revision process. Professional Judgement and Professional Collaboration are defined in the procedure to ensure consistency across schools. Examples of new procedures relating to late and missing assignments: students will be given additional (not multiple) opportunities to complete the original or an alternate task. Deduction of marks cannot be used as a strategy until an additional opportunity is given when the student misses a due date. Subsequent to being given an additional opportunity, if a teacher is considering using mark deduction as a consequence for a late/ missing assignment, the teacher will communicate with administration in order to maintain professional collaboration and consistent school-wide practices. Students will be given opportunities to demonstrate their achievement of overall expectations over the course of a semester (in a semestered school) or the

school year (non-semestered school or non-semestered course). Teachers cannot assign marks for completing homework tasks nor for peer evaluations.

Secondary schools are revising their policies to align with PR.584.CUR

Questions: Public consultation is usually about policy not procedures. If there is additional feedback, Barry invited parents to send him an e-mail a Barry.Bickerton@ocdsb.ca. Clarification was asked for the number of opportunities to be given a student. The report card will emphasize strengths not weaknesses and next steps for improvement, as well as Learning Skills and Work Habits.

Other Stuff

Sir Robert Borden spoke about the exam schedule based on the period in which the class was held. So all period 1 classes wrote on Day1 and period 2 classes wrote on Day 2. There was some additional work to provide different exams for the same subject as the exam might fall on different days but overall Bessie thought it went well.

Calendar; most popular choice was to start the Christmas break on Friday, December 23 and beginning the school year on Sept 7 after Labour Day. Discussion followed about the short timeline between coming back from Christmas break, finishing course work and writing exams for secondary school students.

The board is in the process of seeking parent and community feedback on policies Religious Accommodation and Equity and Inclusive Education (jacqueline.lawrence@ocdsb.ca.)

Last month there was a question about whether other SS principals were experiencing difficulty signing all the report cards. Follow up was that some schools enlist the vice-principals to help with the signing of the report cards.

Action Item Summary

ID	Actions	Assigned to	Date Raised mm.dd.yy	Target Date mm.dd.yy	Status
ITEMS OPENED					
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
ITEMS CLOSED					
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	Nadine	02.11.10	Next meeting	Done

ID	Actions	Assigned to	Date Raised mm.dd.yy	Target Date mm.dd.yy	Status
	the semester exams				
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 lscott@ocri.ca or 613-828-6274 X247	All	09.10.09	Ongoing	Reminder
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 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 5th 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

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ID	Actions	Assigned to	Date Raised mm.dd.yy	Target Date mm.dd.yy	Status
CLOSED ITEMS					
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
A8 from A4	Can you be on school teams if you are in the 5th 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