



OCASC Assembly Meeting Minutes

Sharing Information • Facilitating Communication • Representing Our Membership

Date: January 23, 2014
Location: Fisher Park School, 250 Holland Avenue
Time: 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Attendance:

Member Schools (Total schools in attendance 39/59 =66%)

Adrienne Clarkson ES-Marti Falcone (Co-Chair)	Katimavik ES-Teri MacDonald
Berrigan ES-Susan Klimchuk (Co-Chair)	Lady Evelyn Alt PS-Kim Petersen
Briargreen PS-JP Larochette	Longfields-Davidson Heights SS-Susan Klimchuk
Bridlewood Community ES-Stacy Krahn	Manordale PS-Cathy Babyak (Membership)
Canterbury HS-Alison Shaker	Manotick PS-Sheri Edwards
Castor Valley ES-Alka Moorjani	Maple Ridge ES-Cynthia Allen
Cedarview MS-Ellen Dickson (Treasurer)	Meadowlands PS-Loma Moharam
Earl of March SS-Donna Garnons-Williams	Mutchmor PS-Jonas Naphtali
Fallingbrook Community ES-Bev and Dan Naylor	Pleasant Park PS-Andrea Thomson
Farley Mowat PS-Mostafizur Khan	Riverview AS-Amelia Usher
First Avenue Public School-Gerry Nera	Roberta Bondar PS-Kelly Dubinsky
Glebe CI-Carol Malatesta	Roch Carrier ES-Shannon Walker
Glen Cairn PS-Diana Brunce	Rockcliffe Park PS-Corrina Arsenault
Glen Ogilvie PS-Joel MacKinnon	Stephen Leacock PS-Donna Garnons-Williams
Greenbank MS-Maria Schnarr	Steve MacLean PS-Dayna Robinson
Hawthorne PS-Louise Crawford	Stonecrest ES-Jen Muise
Hilson Avenue PS-Barbara Bekooy	Trillium ES-JP Grimes
Hopewell Avenue PS-Karen Goodrich	Westwind-Carolyn James
Huntley Centennial PS-Mark Tymowski	Woodroffe PS-Tara Finlay
John Young ES-Mike Hickey	

Non-Member schools (6)

Agincourt Road PS-Trish Rossiter
Elmdale PS-Megan Richardson
Emily Carr MS-Robert Hawgood
Jack Donohue PS-Gina Patzer
Knoxdale PS-Geoff Pearce
Sir Wilfrid Laurier SS-Cathryn Pelosa

Guests (3)

Paula Marble (OCDSB Policy Analyst)
Trustee Mark Fisher, Zone 7
Marie-Claude Lang, RN, Ottawa Public Health

- 1. Welcome:** 7:05pm
- 2. Approval of Agenda:** approved, all in favour
- 3. Approval of Minutes from Nov and Dec 2013:** two changes to the Nov minutes from Farley Mowat. Susan to amend minutes.



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4. Chalk-It-Up:

a) First Avenue: gerry.nera@cta-otc.gc.ca

Looking for feedback/options on providing shade in the school yard. They had Dan Fournier in to provide guidance, and discuss the building code (seismic standards.) That option was not cost effective. John Young suggested a removable fabric shade. Trillium suggested Canadian Tire, or a builder from Quebec that builds gazebos. The price range was \$700 and it was placed on interlocking brick.

b) Pleasant Park: hcfourney@gmail.com

Looking for suggestions on how to apply for Board and City grants. Adrienne Clarkson will forward information. Trillium jp@tosca.ca has completed the process and can be contacted directly. Glen Cairn and John Young would also be willing to share information.

c) Cedarview: ellenian@rogers.com

Looking for information/feedback/suggestions on how each school runs “group projects”. Example: Do the students form their own groups, or does the teacher choose? Is the grading equitable and the workload split evenly? A.Y. Jackson’s child’s teacher draws names from a hat.

d) Earl of March: kitotam@gmail.com

On Thursday February 27 at 7:00pm, the Earl of March will be hosting a parent information session on '(How to) Talk to your Kids about Sex'. Today's youth are learning more about sex than many parents realize. They are exposed to it through social media, Internet porn, and pop culture like music videos, movies and TV shows. Parents should be the #1 resource in teaching kids about healthy relationships and sexual values, but for many of us it is a difficult conversation to have. Join us as Jocelyn Wentland, human sexuality researcher at Ottawa U, discusses how to talk to your children about sex. She will present tools on how to approach and engage your children on this difficult but important topic. If they're not learning about sexual values from you, who are they learning them from? Parents from all over the District are invited to attend, but please, no kids or teens for this learning event for grown-ups.

e) Stephen Leacock: kitotam@gmail.com

Mary Vincent, Stephen Leacock Chair, is looking for information on “Safe Management of Car Drop-Off” in school parking lots: how is your school dealing with traffic congestion and kid safety? Huntley Centennial has a similar problem. They have tried communicating to parents via a newsletter to drop off at the back of the school, and have the kids walk through the field. They have also suggested having parents drop their kids off farther away, and having them walk a short distance. Pleasant Park has three separate drop-off zones. There is signage that lists the times the parking lot is closed, and the principal is present in the morning. Steve Maclean has suggested “active transportation” and used Synervoice to communicate that to parents. Lady Evelyn uses newsletters to communicate to parents and found that speeding was still a problem. They had the city install speed radar posts in the area. Westwind had their City Councilor come to a Council meeting and they



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had no-parking signs installed. Note: “Walking School Bus” to be discussed under agenda item number 6.

f) Rockcliffe Park: corrina.arsenault@gmail.com

Looking for suggestions on good ways to facilitate financial transactions for their used book sale.

Trillium advised that she could email him directly for information. (jp@tosc.ca) Maple Ridge

suggested using “Square.ca”. Mutchmor suggested contacting their council chair directly because they have been experimenting with different options. First Avenue has tried many options; they all didn’t work, so they use cash. Hawthorne set up a PayPal account and used “fusebill” a local company.

g) Briargreen: jplarochette@gmail.com

Looking for suggestions for a lice program. Huntley Centennial uses parent volunteers and goes class by class per month. “The Lice Squad” is a company that you can hire to provide lice treatments.

Follow-ups required because lice has 3 life cycles. Stephen Leacock uses parent volunteers. First Avenue had a bad experience with parent volunteers, so they now use an external company.

h) Learning Disabilities Association of Ottawa-Carleton: info@ldaottawa.com

They will be hosting Dr. Maggie Mamen, who will be talking about ‘Understanding and Managing Emotional and Behavioural Issues in Children and Adolescents with Learning Disabilities’. The event will take place on Thursday, February 27, 7-9pm at Mindware Academy (985 Pinecrest Road). Tickets are \$20 or \$30. Details are on the OCASC website.

i) Sir Wilfrid Laurier: cathrynpeloso@gmail.com

Scientists in the School- a hands-on workshop (also in French) that could include parents and therefore be considered for a PRO grant. Refer to www.Scientistsinschool.ca

j) Westwind: There is a large wooded area that backs onto their school and they are having issues with supervision. Maple Ridge uses parent volunteers wearing a safety vest to patrol their wooded area. The suggestion was made to contact Ann Coffey at www.Evergreen.ca . Elmdale suggested having the City trim the bottoms of the trees up higher so that you could see through them. John Young had a problem with visibility so they had their forest thinned out. Hawthorne suggested contacting local senior homes to solicit for volunteers, or contacting Ottawa Volunteers.

5. Trustee Mark Fisher – Cyclical Replacement of Play Structures:

Motion:

<http://www.ocdsb.ca/calendar/AGENDA%20DOCS/2013%20DOCS/September%202013/07di%20Motion%20re%20cyclical%20replacement%20of%20play%20structures,%20Fisher.pdf>

The school board is made up of a mix of schools, old and new. The older schools are facing the pressure of raising money to replace play structures. A large amount of time and energy is spent on raising the money for the structures, which results in some school councils missing out on some of the



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other things they could be focusing on. (e.g.: the School Improvement Plan) Trustee Fisher is working on having the cost of play structures included in the School Boards' annual budget. He would like to see the Board develop a multi-year capital plan that would provide for the replacement of school play structures. He would like to focus on how to determine the needs of the schools and prioritize accordingly. He is looking at re-tabling his motion, and asking the Board to develop a new process to allow for the replacement of school play structures. He would like staff to develop a process in conjunction with school councils. He would like to ask the Board to pay for the play structures. He made note that 15 years ago, \$7500 went a long way to building a new play structure. In today's market, much more money is needed in order to build a play structure to meet everyone's needs. Where there is a greater need for a play structure, he would ask the Board to purchase one.

If the school is adjacent to a City park, a motion would require staff to work much more closely with the City of Ottawa to better use the space and share resources so no efforts are duplicated.

Trustee Fisher is looking at the timing of making his motion. He would like to know how we as a group can raise awareness. He would like us to approach the matter collectively. The Committee of the Whole will meet in Feb and Mar, and if there is enough support, he is willing to go forward with his motion. He is looking for support so that there is not just one person asking, but there is a large group of parents/students asking.

Questions:

Pleasant Park wants to thank Mark for bringing the issue forward, and would like to know how school councils can help. Trustee Fisher would like school councils to read his motion and provide feedback/suggestions. Once his motion is finalized, he would like to bring it to the trustees, so he is looking for the support of the trustees. Please visit the Facebook page for Mark Fisher for more information. His email address is mark.fisher@ocdsb.ca.

Woodroffe would like to see the motion go forward sooner. There is a lot of time being spent by school council raising money for play structures, when their efforts could be spent elsewhere. She also wanted to note that the Board seems to be moving towards having councils raise less money, and focus efforts in other areas.

Elmdale wants the process to be equitable, so it does not produce a climate of "have" and "have-nots". A play structure is a big part of a child's education, and the process needs to be standardized.

Trillium was surprised by the removal of their play structure. They would like to see schools notified well in advance of the removal date, so that they can plan for a replacement. There seems to be a disconnect between the inspectors, and the school councils. The School Councils need to know the realistic time frame so that they are not caught off guard. Trustee Fisher suggested that schools get their playground reports. He will report back through OCASC the list of schools that are on the first strike list. Trillium looked into using the play structures that were adjacent to the school in city parks,



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but they were advised that they should not be monopolizing the city structures. Trustee Fisher would like to start communication on how to share spaces with the city.

Roberta Bondar had to replace 2 structures. They did a lot of fundraising, and would like to raise the point that there are a lot of long term affects regarding too much fundraising. There is burn out within the community and there are repercussions to other fundraising needs.

First Avenue feels that play structure maintenance should be systematic just like regular school maintenance. He would like to see a data base created that has information on all the play structures at all of the public schools.

Roch Carrier would like to know if “play stations” would be included in the proposal just like play structures. It was recognized that accessible play structures are more expensive and Trustee Fisher advised that that would be built into the process.

Westwind would like to know if accessibility concerns are the reason why the sand is being replaced in playgrounds. Trustee Fisher has not heard of this issue and also advised that he has not ruled out free standing play stations.

Emily Carr would like to know if there are any tradeoffs to introducing this into the budget. Trustee Fisher discussed that \$60 000 per site will add up, and there will need to be some catch-up. We are looking at \$2-3 million over a 3-4 year span. There would be a transparent process required so that the burden would be shifted from the school councils. The cost would be spread out over a few years, so the effects felt would be negligible.

John Young would like to share that when they built their play structure, they could not duplicate any of the structures within a 1.5 km radius. They could not have any of the features that were on those structures.

Bridlewood had a parent who is a Project Manager for Accessibility for the City of Ottawa. It was noted that with the new accessibility requirements, only 1/3 of the play structures can now be built using the existing budget. Trustee Fisher can contact Bridlewood directly for more details. Trustee Fisher is aware of the provincial laws that are in place regarding accessibility. He wants to know how we can break down the administrative levels of each government so that we can make this happen.

Katimavik School would like Trustee Fisher to be prepared for the critics who will say that the play structures can only be used for 4-5 months of the school year is it worth the money?

Trustee Fisher would like feedback on the substance of his motion, as well as the timing of his motion. He will be back to OCASC next month for follow-up.

6. Marie-Claude Lang – Active Transportation:

Ottawa Public Health would like to encourage students/parents to use “Active Transportation”. Some school councils have introduced “International Walk to School Day” in Sep/Oct. There is a “Winter Walk to School Day” on Feb 5th, and “Walking/Wheeling Wednesdays”. There are “walking clubs” and “walking school buses”. Resources can be found on the Ottawa Public Health website and each



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school has been assigned a public health nurse. The Ottawa Safety Council does pedestrian safety talks.

Steve MacLean used "Green Communities Canada." Contact Dayna Robinson:

Dayna_andMatt@hotmail.com. They used a survey to communicate to parents and now hand out a "Golden Shoe" award.

Hopewell would like to know how to go about getting a crossing guard. They need to contact the City of Ottawa. Rockcliffe Park had congestion problems because there are 5 schools in a 1.2km area. They needed additional crossing guards. Stonecrest is a rural school and would like to know what options are available. There needs to be an awareness that you can walk/cycle to other places than just school. There could be a safe zone close to the school where the bus can drop the kids off.

Hawthorne would like to know if OSTA is willing to drop the older kids off farther away. Marie-Claude advised that there will be discussions with OSTA. Woodroffe has a conflict with security and walkability. The gates on the playground are locked to provide security but that prevents families from walking through the play yard. Roch Carrier has implemented a walking school bus once a week with parents wearing a safety vest for visibility. Reflective wear/armbands are available through Public Health. Knoxdale would like to encourage biking but there is no covered area for bikes and their lock up area is not secure.

7. Chairs' Report:

We are in need of a Secretary and a Communications Officer. (Facebook, twitter, social media) To revisit next month.

8. Executive:

Treasurer: Current balance \$17 000 of which \$7000 is a PRO grant. The allocation of funds will be discussed at the next meeting.

Adjourned at 9:00pm.