

OTTAWA CARLETON ASSEMBLY OF SCHOOL COUNCILS

Meeting of Thursday December 17th, 2009

Fisher Park Library

ATTENDANCE :

Total Membership: 78

Member schools

Adrienne Clarkson ES – Lisa Bloom
Agincourt Road PS – Norah Vollmer
Berrigan ES – Susan Klimchuk
Bridlewood Comm. ES – Tracy
Cledgett, Joanna Furlan
Cairine Wilson SS – Janet Patch
Canterbury HS – Bob Weist, Nadine
Clarke, Jim Moran
Castlefrank ES – Richard Perkins
Castor Valley ES – Heather Wilson
Connaught PS – Madelaine Stewart-
Dmaj
Dunning-Foubert ES – Marie Wills
Elgin Street PS – Peter Stieda
Fallingbrook Comm. ES – Peter
Kokkovas
First Avenue PS – Kristen Underwood
Forest Valley ES – Janet Patch
Glen Cairn PS – Mike Hickey
Glen Ogilvie PS – Cathy Galligar
Henry Larsen ES – Susan Heckbert
J.H. Putman PS – Maria Di Rosa
Jockvale ES – Jamesee Winchester
John Young ES – Gwen Foss

Katimavik ES – Nihan Kavaslar
Knoxdale PS – Paula Shaver
Lisgar CI – Beth Doubt
Longfields-Davidson Hgts SS – Dwight
Thompson
Merivale HS – Anne Teutsch
Metcalf PS – Kevin MacPherson
Mutchmor PS – Cindy Kirk, Margo
Williams, Dai Li
Ottawa Technical LC – Daniel Oickle
Rideau Valley MS – Sandra Acacia
Roberta Bondar PS – Brenda Agard
Alleyne
Sawmill Creek ES – Gennifer Stainforth
Sir Robert Borden HS – Bessie
Giovanopoulos
South March PS – Chris Bridgen
Stonecrest ES – Philip Matthews
Trillium ES – Tammy Martin
Woodroffe Ave. PS – Maria Di Rosa
Woodroffe HS – Christine King

Non-member schools

Hopewell Avenue PS – Geoff Hall

Guests and other persons in attendance:

Cheryle Watson (OCDSB); Juliet Hamilton (OCASC Recording Secretary); Jim Muckle
(Brains-in-Action Inc.)

CALL TO ORDER: 7:10 p.m., Anne Teutsch in the chair.

AGENDA: One item added by Chair, then approved:

Approval of Agenda
Approval of Minutes of Nov. 19, 2009
Chalk-It-Up
Sharing Best Practices – Stonecrest ES On-line Ordering of Hot Lunches
From your Executive
Follow-up Items
Spec Ed Info

Budget Talk

MINUTES of Nov. 19, 2009: Accepted with no amendments.

CHALK-IT-UP

No items.

SHARING BEST PRACTICES – On-line Ordering of Hot Lunches at Stonecrest ES (Philip Matthews)

- Use a system developed by a parent in BC that makes ordering and administration of the hot lunch program very easy.
- Found out about it in the spring, implemented this fall. About 40 schools use it now, mostly in BC.
- Parents create an account on the system; can have info about multiple children.
- The system is very flexible. Can offer multiple programs; parents can opt out of certain weeks. Students not locked into same meal for several months. Just have to print out the week's order and give it to your local supplier.
- Can have on-line payment through PayPal.
- System can also be used for the entire council website, broadcasting emails and hosting event calendars, discussion forums and classified ads.
- Developer is constantly upgrading the system based on feedback and requests from schools.
- Cost is \$500/year for entire system (what Stonecrest has) or \$300/year for limited version. Worth it for Stonecrest because, with 800 students, couldn't find volunteers willing to deal with all the paperwork and details involved in the administration of the hot lunch program. This makes it very manageable, so council is able to offer the program.
- There are similar systems available from the US that are 2-3 times as expensive and much less capable.
- Stonecrest is looking into selling other fundraising items through the system (i.e. movie tickets).
- For more information:
 - stonecrestcouncil.ca
 - hotlunches.ca or hotlunches.net
 - philip_matthews@magma.ca
- Trillium ES – Have a parent doing something similar using an open source system that is free. It is working well. System is hosted by that parent, who is very technologically knowledgeable. Will get information on that system and pass it on to Anne.
 - Stonecrest system is hosted by company providing system. Don't need any technology know-how to use it.
- Metcalfe PS – What kind of security audits has he done? A: His company makes websites for clients, so he's very aware of issues like that. And all on-line payments are done through PayPal.
- Adrienne Clarkson ES – Have hot dogs, pitas, pizza and hot lunch lady. Can system deal with multiple programs like that? A: Yes.

- Mutchmor PS – How is PayPal connected to the school? Does the money go to council or school? How long does it take to set up a PayPal account? A: Council set up the PayPal account, and money goes into the council bank account. It took about an hour to set up the PayPal account.
- Castor Valley ES – How does council information get on the website? A: Besides parent accounts, there are more powerful accounts that give you access to more of the system. Putting minutes on takes less than a minute.
- Glen Ogilvie PS – Is there a fee for PayPal? A: Yes. \$0.30/transaction plus 2.9% of the payment amount. Again, it's a tradeoff. Rather pay than not have a hot lunch program.

FROM YOUR EXEC

Follow-up Items – Anne Teutsch (Chair)

- Would like to compile information about hot lunch programs and put it on the website. The following schools indicated they had info to share: Trillium ES, Sir Robert Borden HS, Longfields-Davidson Heights SS, Dunning-Foubert ES, Katimavik ES, Fallingbrook Community ES, Henry Larsen ES, Berrigan ES, John Young ES, Forest Valley ES, Glen Cairn PS, Bridlewood Community ES, Castor Valley ES. Anne will contact those reps directly via email.
- Anyone else with information to share about hot lunch programs at their schools can email Anne at ocasc.chair@ocasc.ca.
- New community reps and Liaison Officer information now on website (ocasc.ca).

Spec Ed Information – Beth Doubt (SEAC Rep)

- Held a very successful meeting on IEPs (Individual Education Plans – each Special Education student has one) last month. Had 40 parents and a principal attend. Want to do it again in the spring since people found it very useful. Main message is to be involved:
 - the IEP is not something the school does to the student
 - school and parent do it together to create a good educational process for the student
 - your child is different from every other child in the Board
 - sit down and discuss with teachers
- There is a massive data error in a report put out by the Board regarding the number of student suspensions, which led to the conclusion that although the number of student suspensions was decreasing, the number of suspensions for students with certain exceptionalities was increasing. The report will have to be redone (the correct information is not available right now).
- The Board has published a report proposing some changes in spec ed programming. Adjustments are being made for needs based on numbers. The following exceptionalities are involved: Developmental Disability, Elementary Gifted, Elementary and Secondary Autism, Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Information is available on the Board website (www.ocdsb.ca). There will be a public consultation meeting at Gloucester HS library on January 7th at 7:00 pm. These changes are quite distinct from the changes being proposed in the Budget process. For more info contact Beth at ocasc.seac@ocasc.ca.

Budget Talk – Anne Teutsch (Chair)

- OCDSB Budget Committee met Monday night (Dec. 14). Anne and Beth attended.
- It's going to be a very difficult budget process this year. Current estimated deficit is \$14 million. Dependent on provincial grants, which are not announced until late spring/early summer. Province is in a bad financial position, therefore the expectation is that money from the province will be less than previous years.
- Board knew this would be a difficult year and started the process much earlier than normal. Michael Clarke (OCDSB Chief Financial Officer) has been going to zone meetings to talk to parents about the budget and the budget process.
- Total budget is ~\$700 million. Of that, ~\$600 million is set (~80% of budget is spent on teacher salaries). Therefore the \$14 million in cuts needs to be found in the \$100 million that is discretionary.
- Board staff created a report with options totaling \$17 million in cuts, to give trustees some room to maneuver. Trustees came up with 2 additional items, amounting to another \$1 million. List of options is available on the Board website, and a link will be included on the OCASC website.
- Next step is a public budget forum on January 25th at 7:30, location as yet undecided. Board has asked their various stakeholder organizations to send multiple representatives, trying to get a more varied attendance than previous budget meetings. OCASC has been asked to send 3 reps – if you're interested let Anne know.
- Proposed format of forum is for participants to be divided into 8-10 groups for presentations and round table discussions. Whether members of the public who drop in will be able to participate at tables will depend on how many show up.
 - Only other places for public to ask questions are zone meetings held by trustees. Anne will email the trustees and find out when upcoming zone meetings will be held, and post the information on the OCASC website (ocasc.ca).
 - School councils can invite their trustee to come and speak about the budget and other issues.
- Metcalfe PS – Have they mentioned full-day kindergarten? A: That has a 5 year rollout, and the province is providing separate funding. Whether the funding will be enough is another matter. OCDSB pays its teachers more than what the province provides, so having to hire more teachers will just increase that salary gap problem.
- Woodroffe Ave. PS – Heard that next year's deficit could be as large as \$22 million. If we cut programs this year, what do we cut next year? All these cuts are likely to result in students leaving the board. How are we as parents/OCASC going to talk to the Board and Ministry of Education? A: OCASC Exec is already thinking about those questions, will need to talk to Assembly about it.
- Castor Valley ES – Is the 80% number just teachers' salaries, or principals and such as well? A: Don't know.
- Woodroffe HS – Remember having this conversation every 3-4 years. There are always funding problems with teachers' salaries. What happens other years? A: They usually manage to take bits and pieces from other envelopes of funding, and the province sometimes provides money for specific initiatives. Areas that have been

severely cut back on to fund other things are facilities and textbooks. This year is different because of the extreme difficulties of the province's finances.

- Elgin Street PS – Is the funding formula issue the same for all boards in the province? A: No. The largest boards, Toronto and Ottawa, have the biggest problems. Our salary grids are most out of line with the province's salary settings.
- Is there an association of boards to put pressure on the province? Yes.
- Hopewell Ave PS – There is a way to run a deficit budget, isn't there? A: Yes, can get special dispensation, but only for a small percentage and with stringent requirements.
- Canterbury HS – The historical and on-going difference in transportation funding between the public and separate boards is a big part of the problem. If the OCDSB had gotten its fair share of funding in previous years it would not be in such a difficult situation now.
- Lisgar CI – Parent power is big power. If you are concerned, write a letter to the Premier.
- Metcalfe PS – When does the Board submit the budget? A: Usually around June.
- Sawmill Creek ES – Are historical figures available publicly? A: The information for all 72 Ontario boards is on the Ministry of Education website.
- Anne – Is there a group of people here who would like to meet early (at 6:15, like the Spec Ed corner) before OCASC meetings to discuss the budget and think about what OCASC could do?
 - About seven people expressed interest. The Budget corner will begin in January.

NEXT MEETING:

- Thursday, January 21st.
- *** **NOTE CHANGE IN LOCATION:**
 - Confederation Education Centre (previously Confederation HS)
 - 1645 Woodroffe Ave (just south of Hunt Club)
 - Library, 7:00 pm

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm, followed by potluck social.

Items to report back on:

- Hot lunch info.
- Zone meeting info.

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