

OTTAWA CARLETON ASSEMBLY OF SCHOOL COUNCILS

Meeting of Thursday November 19th, 2009
OCDSB Board Room, 133 Greenbank Road

ATTENDANCE : Total Membership: 78

Member schools

Adrienne Clarkson ES – Carrie Eaton
Agincourt Road PS – Norah Vollmer
Alta Vista PS – Lillian Thomsen
Barrhaven PS – Ellen Dickson, Donna Blackburn
Berrigan ES – Susan Klimchuk
Bridlewood Comm. ES – Tracy Cledgett
Broadview PS – Carrie Myres
Cairine Wilson SS – Janet Patch
Canterbury HS – Bob Weist, Nadine Clarke
Castlefrank ES – Brona Little
Castor Valley ES – Heather Wilson, Natasha Robb Burrows
Cedarview MS – Donna Blackburn
Colonel By SS – Tammy Jones
Connaught PS – Madelaine Stewart-Dmaj
D. Aubrey Moodie IS – Sherri Smith
Devonshire Comm. PS – Odette Rurigambe
Elgin Street PS – Peter Stieda
Elmdale PS – Stephanie Bolt
First Avenue PS
Forest Valley ES – Janet Patch
Glashan PS
Glebe CI – Deborah Lemkow
Glen Cairn PS – Mike Hickey
Glen Ogilvie PS – Cathy Galligar
Henry Larsen ES – Susan Heckbert
Hilson Avenue PS – Tarin Richards
J.H. Putman PS – Maria Di Rosa

John Young ES – Susanne Bowen
Katimavik ES – Nihan Kavaslar
Lisgar CI – Beth Doubt
Longfields-Davidson Hgts SS – Dwight Thompson
Manor Park PS
Merivale HS – Anne Teutsch
Metcalf PS – Kevin MacPherson
Mutchmor PS – Gwenda Ko, Cindy Kirk
North Gower-Marl. PS – Sandra Acacia
Ottawa Technical LC – Daniel Oickle
Pleasant Park PS – Nancy Schenk
Rideau Valley MS – Sandra Acacia
Riverview Alt S – Gabe Thirlwall
Roch Carrier ES – Lisa Pike-Young
Rockcliffe Park PS – Joel Berger
Sawmill Creek ES – Gennifer Stainforth
Sir Robert Borden HS – Bessie Giovanopoulos
South Carleton HS – Sue Carswell
Steve MacLean PS – Jen Carter
Stittsville PS – Rhonda Drakes-Blais
W.O. Mitchell ES – Brenda Verch
Woodroffe Ave. PS – Maria Di Rosa, Heather Tyrie
Woodroffe HS – Christine King

Non-member schools

Heritage PS – Denise McLean
Jockvale ES – Jamesee Winchester
Manordale PS – Cathy Bubyak
Manotick PS – Michaela Stuart

Guests and other persons in attendance:

Jacqueline Lawrence (OCDSB Diversity and Equity Coordinator); Cheryle Watson (OCDSB); Pam Fitzgerald (Trustee, Zone 5); Rob Campbell (Trustee, Zone 9); Juliet Hamilton (OCASC Recording Secretary)

CALL TO ORDER: 7:15 p.m., Anne Teutsch in the chair.

AGENDA: One item added by Chair, then approved:

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Minutes of Oct. 15, 2009

Chalk-It-Up

From the Ministry of Education – Doug Tateishi

Sharing Best Practices – Mutchmor PS Milk Program

From your Executive

Follow-up on Action Items

OCASC Constitution – Vote to Approve

Election of OCASC Representatives to OCDSB Committees

Calendar Committee Update

Exec Updates

Presentation: Jacqueline Lawrence – Diversity and Equity Coordinator

MINUTES of Oct. 15, 2009: Accepted with no amendments.

CHALK-IT-UP

Communication with School Community

Jen Carter – Steve MacLean PS (jenwolff@hotmail.com)

- School is three years old and growing quickly. Wondering how to best get information out to the school community. Right now sending a paper newsletter home with students once a month. What is working well at other schools?
- First Avenue PS – School has Synrevoice, an automated telephone system that calls parents with a recorded message. A quick show of hands indicated that about half the schools attending had Synrevoice.
- Barrhaven PS – Some schools use the \$500 parent involvement grant money to mail information directly to parents. Information coming in the mail is more likely to be read than a newsletter in a backpack.
- Lisgar CI – Many schools have websites.
- Castor Valley ES – Used to do the monthly newsletter on paper, now use electronic newsletter service called ‘Constant Contact’. Council has class reps who collect email addresses. School has about 520 families.
- Rideau Valley MS – Principal sends news via email, paper copy sent home with those without email. Also have a website.
- Rockcliffe Park PS – Council chair sends newsletter to the secretary, who sends it to teachers to email to parents. Teachers are the ones who tend to have parents’ email addresses.
- Woodroffe HS – Very difficult to send information home with teenagers. Principal sends electronic message every week. Council sends out news electronically as well. Every function at the school provides parents with the opportunity to sign up their email address.

Playground/Playstructure Replacement

Natasha Robb-Burrows – Castor Valley PS (Council chair: wilsonheather@rogers.com;

Natasha: tioman_1998@yahoo.com)

- Rural school of 300 students, have a septic bed to deal with. Would like advice from other schools regarding raising money, things to consider, pitfalls.
- Bridlewood Comm. ES, Glen Ogilvie PS, Heritage PS (new rural school, ran into problems) will all email with information. Broadview PS would like to receive copy of info.
- Manor Park PS – Just replaced their play structure. Received \$7500 from the city, \$7500 from the Board, and also approached community groups. There are now different requirements for the material under the play structure – very expensive.
- Manordale PS – Are in process of putting in a new play structure. Got the same grant from the city. Found it a good exercise in community building. Funding/materials for making the structure more accessible for student with disabilities may be available from Ronald McDonald foundation.
- Woodroffe Ave. PS – Have replaced one and are replacing another. Suggest people talk to Jeff Casper of Evergreen, who is on contract with the Board (can get contact info through Cheryle Watson – cheryle.watson@ocdsb.ca). Be careful with city grants: there are both minor and major capital grants. TD and Evergreen have funding available, but most is geared toward greening.
- Glen Cairn PS – Topic is of great interest, so could information go on website?
 - Yes – anyone with information to share please send it to Anne (ocasc.chair@ocasc.ca).

Parents Voting on Motions

Carrie Myres – Broadview PS (carrie.myres@broadviewparents.org)

- Have longstanding tradition of letting all parents vote at every meeting, not just at AGM. What is the practice at other schools?
- Quick show of hands indicated that 15-20 schools attending do this.
- Alta Vista PS – Have a large council (22 parents), usually reach decisions by consensus, but have a formal vote on any expenditure of funds. Only parents who have signed up to be members of council can vote at that time, not any parent that walks in.
- Metcalfe PS – Not a big council. Established rule to have 12 voting members, who have to attend regularly. Only they can vote.
- Pleasant Park PS – Has found the School Council Guide published by the Ministry of Education very informative. It is also on the Ministry's website.
- Rockcliffe Park PS – There's a distinction between what's on paper and what happens informally. If the issue is non-controversial can have a show of hands from everyone. Otherwise need to follow rules.
- Woodroffe Ave. PS – Aren't all parents automatically members of school councils?
- Secondary Schools Committee – Need to clarify distinction between council member and parent. Council's constitution should be the final guide. Has run into problem of having many parents appear at first council meeting of the year and sign up to be members, thus setting a high number for quorum at subsequent meetings, and most don't come back. Need to be able to remove membership status based on lack of attendance.

Library Funding Priorities

Joel Berger – Rockcliffe Park PS (jesmacberger@gmail.com)

- At council's budget meeting principal asked for money for three different library projects: literacy room, classroom libraries, and research material for school library. Material for the literacy room and classroom libraries seem like they should be funded by the ministry. School is on same block as a public library, and is only JK-6, so question whether research collection needs to be top-of-the-line. What should council priority be?
- Berrigan ES – Not uncommon for their council to commit to multi-year funding of similar projects. Holding book fairs can make lots of money which could be used for research material.
- Alta Vista PS – Scholastic book fair good fundraiser. Council budget organized in blocks: literacy, music, technology, phys. ed., clubs, etc. Council supports items within each block based on recommendations/wishes of teachers. Also have classroom allocations and an annual big project. The three projects listed by the Rockcliffe rep would all fit in the literacy block, and the funding allocated to that block would have to be divided between them.
- John Young ES – Have funded level readers for last two years. Board isn't funding them and teachers were begging for them. School gets readers relatively inexpensively through a service that allows them to download books and print them themselves on a regular black and white printer (www.readingatoz.com). Works very well and it's easy to replace books that go missing. Council feels these readers impact students every day as opposed to research material in the library.
- Castor Valley ES – Thinks ministry gave school money this year for library materials.
- Riverview Alt. S – Got a wish list from librarian and went to a second-hand book sale at local Montessori school – great deals.

SmartBoard Resources in French

Nancy Schenk – Pleasant Park PS (nschenk@rogers.com)

- Have a SmartBoard in a grade 5/6 split class. Teacher uses the Discovery Education streaming service which they access using the SmartBoard. Are an immersion school and would like Board to subscribe to a French equivalent. How can they approach Board about it? – Will follow up with Anne.

Balanced School Day / Lack of Trustees and Board Staff at Reception

Manor Park PS (pawg_5@magma.ca)

- School switched to balanced school day this year. There was no consultation. Seems to be a major shift in programming, based on documentation that is more anecdotal than scientific. Would like presentation on this topic at OCASC.
- Came to reception hoping to speak to trustees and staff about issues in community, but was disappointed in how few were present.
 - Anne responded that unfortunately there was a conflict with the official opening of LDH high school, but that previous receptions had been very well attended.

- Barrhaven PS – OCASC had a presentation on balanced day a few years ago that should still be available.
- Longfields-Davidson Heights SS – Has two children at Farley Mowat PS, which changed to balanced day. Were concerned at beginning, but like it now.
- Alta Vista PS – Hamilton-Wentworth board did a formal post-implementation study that may still be on their website.
- Asked for show of hands:
 - Who would be interested in a presentation from Board staff on balanced day – many.
 - Who would be interested in hearing from schools now using balanced day – still many, but less.

FROM THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION – Doug Tateishi

- Research has shown that kids do better in school when their parents are involved. The Ministry of Education has a huge commitment to parent communication. Minister of Education will be in Ottawa next Friday to meet with parents and staff of all school boards.
- Getting More Involved in Your Child’s Education
 - A Town Hall Meeting to discuss the importance of parent involvement and learn how to get more involved in your child’s education.
- Kathleen Wynne (Minister of Education), Phil McNeely (MPP) and Madeleine Meilleur (MPP)
- Friday November 27 from 5:00-6:30 pm at Cairine Wilson SS.

SHARING BEST PRACTICES – Milk Program at Mutchmor PS

- Milk program coordinator at Mutchmor PS was told by principal that it was the most well-organized program she’d ever seen. Thought other schools might be interested in learning about it.
- Has an on-line order form which includes:
 - student’s name, drop down menu for teacher’s name, choice of drink for 3 periods (Sept-Dec, Jan-March, March-June)
 - option to reduce payment if child will be absent for a week or more
 - ability to include orders for siblings
 - payment by cash or cheque, using tracking number to link order and payment
 - place on order form for parents to volunteer to help sort milk. Uses 10 parents, each work once per two week period.
- 200 students served by program, which takes 10-20 minutes before lunch for student volunteer.
- Quick summary of method:
 - Box divided into 18 cubbies labeled with class number.
 - Cloth bag for each classroom (found Superstore bags worked very well). Class number painted on side of bag. Tag with how many of each drink attached to bag.

- Bag is returned to box after use. Easy for office to see which classes have not returned bag. If class away on school trip, office removes bag from box before lunch.
- Volunteer takes box to fridge, uses tag info to put needed drinks in each bag, lines bags along wall where student(s) from each class come and get bag at lunch. Handles on bags make it easy for two younger students to carry together. Class teacher has list of who ordered what.
- Unused milk goes into office fridge.

FROM YOUR EXEC

Follow-up on Action Items – Anne Teutsch (Chair)

- Plan to start reporting back on actions taken from items raised at previous meetings.

OCASC Constitution – Vote to Approve – Anne Teutsch (Chair)

- Discussions at recent Assembly meetings have resulted in a few more changes to the proposed amendments to the constitution. The old and amended versions have been on the OCASC website for the last few weeks. Would now like to bring it to a vote.
- Discussion tonight included following points:
 - Concern about appointment of committee reps
 - People can still volunteer at any time. Will solicit volunteers in September and October for rep positions.
 - Positions are usually hard to fill.
 - Assembly still needs to ratify (approve) reps, at which time objections can be voiced and appointments vetoed. Won't have nominations from the floor.
 - Having reps on Board committees unique opportunity; exec can look for people with appropriate background and knowledge.
 - Need information about when dues must be paid – put in OCASC info package.
- Motion to adopt constitution made by Berrigan ES, seconded by Cedarview MS. Motions to defer and to amend wording were both defeated. Constitution was adopted with 36 in favour, 1 opposed, 4 abstaining.

Calendar Committee Update – Anne Teutsch (Chair)

- Recommending that 2010/2011 school year start September 7th.

Election of OCASC Representatives to OCDSB Committees – Anne Teutsch (Chair)

- Have a full set of candidates, but still have some alternate positions to be filled. Excellent way for new people to get involved. Have a handbook to help reps and their alternates. If interested, contact Anne (ocasc.chair@ocasc.ca).
- Slate of representatives for Nov. 2009- Nov. 2010, accepted unanimously:
 - Advisory Committee on the Arts – Lillian Thomsen (rep), Madelaine Stewart-Dmaj (alt)
 - Budget Committee – Anne Teutsch (rep), Nadine Clarke (alt)
 - Business Services Committee – Lillian Thomsen (rep), no alt

- Children and Youth at Risk Advisory Committee – Donna Blackburn (rep), no alt
- Community Council for Ethnocultural Equity – Emeka Ndukwe (rep), Donna Blackburn (alt)
- Calendar Committee – Nadine Clarke (rep), no alt needed
- Strategic Planning Committee – Anne Teutsch (rep), Carrie Eaton (alt) (automatic that chair and vice-chair are rep and alt)
- Education Committee – Susan Klimchuk (rep), Enang Akan (alt)
- Human Resources Committee – Donna Blackburn (rep), Madelaine Stewart-Dmaj (alt)
- Parent Involvement Committee – Anne Teutsch (rep), Carrie Eaton (alt)
- Special Education Advisory Committee – Beth Doubt (rep), Tammy Martin (alt)
- Trades and Technology Committee – Nadine Clarke (rep), Anne Teutsch (alt)
- Two Liaison Officers have had to resign (Alex Ribeiro and Jeff Esau). Kevin MacPherson (Metcalf PS) has volunteered, will cover Jeff's area. Looking for someone in the Kanata area.

PRESENTATION: Jacqueline Lawrence – OCDSB Diversity and Equity Coordinator

- Has been Diversity and Equity Coordinator for one year, since position was created.
- Given the changing dynamics in the community, the OCDSB has decided to make equity and diversity a priority, embedded into all areas instead of simply an add-on program.
- OCDSB strategic plan is built on three pillars: learning, leadership and community. Diversity and Equity is housed in the community pillar. Within the Board the word 'community' is very significant, comprising of the learning community, the work force community, and the public community (of which parents are a key part).
- Working on several key areas:
 - Senior management and communications staff have worked with a strategist on why diversity is important and the need to ensure that integration occurs. Initiative is major part of Board's goal to have a 90% graduation rate by 2020. Non-immigrant school population is declining while the number of immigrant students is growing. Have to foster relationships with parent community.
 - Need to ensure structures to support diversity are in place. Various definitions of diversity exist, but Board is taking a very broad view, mainly that any difference implies diversity. Also considering the intersection of different elements, for example an African-Canadian disabled student.
 - Bringing Board policy in line with provincial initiatives. Copies of the booklet published by the Ministry of Education entitled 'Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy' were available. Work done up to now by OCDSB meshes well with provincial strategy.

- Have to get as many stakeholders as possible to align and implement strategy at Board. Taskforce has been set up to oversee the work, consisting of members from senior management, longstanding partners (such as OCASC, SEAC, CCEE, and others), people from the community at large, teachers at large, federations, faith communities, and learning partners such as Ottawa University and Algonquin College. Membership has just been finalized. Taskforce will undergo training in December and become active in January.
- Several phases to this work:
 - Information gathering – important to have the right information in order to make informed decisions.
 - Have undergone an employment systems review to document perceived and actual barriers. Final report due by end of November and this report will be shared with fellow organizations.
 - Plan to do a workforce census and student census to gather the unique and diverse characteristics of these groups.
 - Need to develop an effective measurement tool to evaluate progress.
- Would like to return to OCASC and share how things are going.
- Would like OCASC representative to help with vetting the student and workforce survey.
- Heritage PS – Will there be more involvement at individual schools as program rolls out over the next few years? Who will help with that? A: Yes, the initiatives move from the Ministry to the Board to the schools. Jacqueline’s role is to support principals and teachers.

NEXT MEETING:

- Thursday, December 17th in the library at Fisher Park, 7:00 pm.
- Will have a 1 hour meeting, then a potluck.
- Come to the meeting and bring a friend, and bring something for the potluck.
- OCASC will provide drinks and items such as cups, plates, napkins and cutlery.

Reminder by Beth Doubt of the special meeting for parents to discuss Individual Education Plans (IEP’s) for special education children. It is being held next Thursday, November 26th at 7:00 pm in the library at Fisher Park. All parents are welcome.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Items to report back on:

- Playground/playstructure information
- Balanced Day presentation at OCASC

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