

OTTAWA-CARLETON ASSEMBLY OF SCHOOL COUNCILS

Meeting of Thursday March 25th, 2010

Fisher Park PS Library

ATTENDANCE:

Total Membership: 93

Member schools

Adrienne Clarkson ES – Lisa Bloom,
Carrie Eaton
Agincourt Road PS – Norah Vollmer
Alta Vista PS – Lillian Thomsen
Barrhaven PS – Donna Blackburn
Berrigan ES – Susan Klimchuk
Briargreen PS – Suzanne VandenHeuvel
Broadview PS – Carrie Myres
Cairine Wilson SS – Janet Patch
Canterbury HS – Diane Beckett, Bob
Weist, Nadine Clarke (SSC)
Castlefrank ES – Brona Little
Castor Valley ES – Heather Wilson
Cedarview MS – Donna Blackburn
Churchill Alt S – Dave Fortier
Connaught PS – Madelaine Stewart-
Dmaj
D. Aubrey Moodie IS – Sherri Smith
Elgin Street PS – Peter Stieda
Fallingbrook Comm. ES – Peter
Kokkovas
First Avenue PS – Kristen Underwood
Forest Valley ES – Janet Patch
Glebe CI – Deborah Lemkow
Glen Cairn PS – Mike Hickey
Henry Munro MS – Patricia Cole
J.H. Putman PS – Maria Di Rosa
Jockvale ES – Jamesee Winchester

Lisgar CI – Kate Preston-Thomas, Beth
Doubt (SEAC)
Longfields-Davidson Hgts SS – Dwight
Thompson
Manordale PS – Cathy Babyak
Meadowlands PS – Karen Desjardins
Merivale HS – Anne Teutsch
Mutchmor PS – Cindy Kirk
North Gower/Marl. PS – Sandra Acacia
Pleasant Park PS – Nancy Schenk, Truda
Baines
Rideau Valley MS – Sandra Acacia
Riverview Alt S – Gabe Thirlwall
Roch Carrier ES – Brett Wilson
Rockcliffe Park PS – Joel Berger
Sawmill Creek ES – Gennifer Stainforth
Sir Winston Churchill PS – Karen
Desjardins
South Carleton HS – Sue Carswell
South March PS – Chris Bridgen
Stephen Leacock PS – Enang Akan
Steve MacLean PS – Jen Carter
Woodroffe Ave. PS – Maria Di Rosa
Woodroffe HS – Christine King, Lillian
Dinelle

Non-member schools

Hopewell Avenue PS – Geoff Hall

Guests and other persons in attendance:

Juliet Hamilton (OCASC Recording Secretary), Emeka Ndukwe (CCEE), Terrena
Bennett, Cheryle Watson (OCDSB), Cathy Curry (Chair of OCDSB and Trustee, Zone
2), John Shea (Trustee, Zone 8), Rob Campbell (Trustee, Zone 9), Jennifer McKenzie
(Trustee, Zone 10)

CALL TO ORDER: 7:06 p.m., Anne Teutsch in the chair.

AGENDA: Approved with no changes:

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Minutes of Feb. 18, 2010

Chair's Report
Chalk-It-Up
Approval of Constitution
Presentation and Discussion: Cathy Curry, Chair, OCDSB
From your Executive
 Budget Talk
 Nominating Committee for 2010/2011 OCASC Executive
 Spec Ed. Workshops for Parents
 Updates

MINUTES of February 18, 2010: Accepted with one amendment:

- Chalk-It-Up item on Grade 8 Grad – email address for Sue Carswell should be carswell6@xplornet.com.

CHAIR'S REPORT – Anne Teutsch

- Plan to use this agenda item to follow up on old items and report on what's happening behind the scenes and between meetings.
- PRO (Parents Reaching Out) Grant
 - Norah and Anne met with the two principal reps of the PIC (Parent Involvement Committee) to talk about ways of communicating with teachers and administrators throughout the board. One, from a very multicultural school, told of paying for buses to bring parents to council meetings. A story from another school was about a pyjama night to bring families into the school. Want to hear and pass on success stories such as these.
 - Also met with two superintendents, and have been invited to speak at a meeting of principals.
 - Have been getting great feedback from councils; please keep sending it.
- Budget corner has been meeting before each OCASC meeting for the past several months and also had a telephone conference – group is coming up with great ideas and suggestions.
- Have met with Michele Giroux, Cheryle Watson and Diane Pernari-Hergert (Manager of Communications and Information Services) of the OCDSB regarding OCASC's goals of furthering consultation, communication and collaboration. Michele will take the results of those meetings to the Director's Executive Council.
- PICs (Parent Involvement Committees) are going to be mandated by the province. Consultation is underway to determine that mandate and Anne, as Chair of the OCDSB PIC, is involved in that consultation.
- Upcoming OCASC meetings
 - April 15th meeting will be held at the Ottawa Technical Learning Centre (OTLC) at 485 Donald Street. Will have a presentation on the Balanced School Day.
 - May 20th, at Fisher Park, will have a presentation on the Community of Character program of the OCDSB. Also the OCASC Annual General Meeting (AGM).

- June 11th meeting will be a Super Chalk-It-Up. To aid in building relationships with senior staff, plan to invite several superintendents to attend and answer questions. Questions will be given to them ahead of time so they can prepare their answers in more detail. Anyone with questions they wish addressed please send them to Anne. (ocasc.chair@ocasc.ca).

CHALK-IT-UP

OCDSB Environmental Policy

Diane Beckett (dianebeckett@hotmail.com)

- OCDSB has prepared a draft environmental policy and will be consulting on it using a survey, which will be posted on their website in mid-April.
- The policy can be found on the OCDSB website at http://ocdsb.ca/Documents/Board_Meetings/Meetings/2010/March_2010/Ed_Mar23_2010/8_Report%2010-069%20Environ%20Ed%2023%20Mar%202010.pdf
- Will be examining the role of the MacSkimming and Bill Mason Outdoor Education Centres.
- Also looking at shifting from EarthCARE to Ontario EcoSchools, which is in 1/3 of all Ontario schools now.
- Policy looks good, and fits with Ministry guidelines, but board is open to changes based on feedback, especially specific to local issues.
- Environmental Education Steering Committee has 14 members (of which Diane is one, but not as an OCASC rep) and will become an implementation committee. OCASC could look at getting an OCASC rep on the committee.

Auction

Woodroffe HS – Chris King (lking@magma.ca)

- Woodroffe HS is holding its 8th annual auction on Wednesday April 21st. Viewing at 6:30; auction starts at 7:30.
- Items are donated from school's tech shops as well as the community.
- \$10 for the night. Cash bar and goodies. Live and silent auction.
- It's a big project, but very successful, and she's willing to share how it's run. Will write something for the website.
- Info will be posted on the website. (Reminder to all schools and councils that any events (fundraisers, presentations, concerts, etc.) can be posted on the OCASC events calendar – just email Anne with the details (ocasc.chair@ocasc.ca).

Successful Fundraising – Measures and Ideas

Sawmill Creek ES – Gennifer Stainforth (stainers@rogers.com)

- Looking for help with:
 - Fundraising in a low-income community, and how to measure the success of fundraising – thinking of trying to target fundraising outside the school community.
 - Dwindling participation at council meetings – only 2 of 7 meetings got enough members for quorum, and the majority of members have students who will be graduating. Already offer childcare.

- North Gower/Marlborough PS – Have same problems. Two things they are trying:
 - All council members are trying to bring a friend to the next meeting.
 - Next newsletter will have an article saying that council has money and needs ideas on what to spend it on, and inviting interested people to come to the next meeting.
- Carrie (Vice-chair) – Refer to the minutes of the January 2010 meeting, which had a presentation on parent involvement and strategies.
- Canterbury HS – Have a parent from each class act as volunteer coordinator. At the beginning of the year hold a BBQ, and parents meet council members.
- Connaught PS – Are very successful at connecting with parents. Some of their activities include:
 - A welcome celebration in the fall.
 - Seminar nights, covering issues such as behaviour or homework.
 - Family nights instead of meet-the-teacher nights.
 - Potlucks.
- Briargreen PS – Also a low-income school. Have found QSP magazine sales work well for fundraising. To attract parents to meetings, suggest:
 - Keep meetings short.
 - Listen to see what hot topics on the playground are, and advertise meetings covering those topics well ahead of time.
 - Offer goodies.
- Castor Valley ES – Holds an open house for parents of JK and SK students. Council chair goes and talks to those parents. Effective in getting parents new to school to try a council meeting.
- Woodroffe HS – Few years ago there was a report on how to get volunteers. Some suggestions were:
 - Bring a friend.
 - Invite people directly – on the playground or by phone.
 - Have good job descriptions of volunteer positions.
 - Aim for people who aren't already very active at school.
- Guest – Tell parents what the money from each fundraiser is aimed for, so they know what their money will be used for.

Children's Village

South March PS – Chris Bridgen (christopherbridgen@gmail.com)

- Children's Village is the daycare provider at their school. A few weeks ago got a letter that when full-day kindergarten starts they will be closing their facility – they were told by the OCDSB that they would lose their lease.
- This is more of a heads-up. Is OCASC working on the issue at all?
 - Anne – Keeping an eye on it – still early days.
 - Carrie – Came up at the exec meeting. Her school also has Children's Village.
- Beth – Early Learning will be providing before and after care for kindergarten, but what about other ages? A: Believe it will deal with students up to grade 5.
- Adrienne Clarkson ES – Concern about language used in letter regarding before/after hours care: mandated vs expected.

Secondary Gifted Review

Lisgar CI – Kate Preston-Thomas (kpt@istar.ca)

- A review of the gifted program at the secondary level has been going on over the last few years. A report was released in November, and another one recently at Education Committee.
- Concerned about closings and what the long-term plans are. If the secondary gifted program were to close, figures the elementary program would eventually as well.
- Concerned about designated catchment areas – sending Lisgar’s gifted program to Gloucester doesn’t make sense.
- Gifted program has been at Lisgar for 20 years and is part of the school community. Need to consider those students part of the community – give community school a broader definition.
- Advises parents/councils to take ownership of the spec ed classes at their schools.
- Susan (OCASC rep on Education Committee) – The report does not advocate closing all the gifted centres, just reducing the number to three. Board realizes that even though their philosophy is to focus on community schools, that is not the solution in all cases. Recognize there are some things in the new report that are not reasonable. Will be coming back to Education Committee.
- Anne – Are people interested enough in this topic to have someone from the board come and speak at a future OCASC meeting? Yes, lots of people.

Garage Sale

Berrigan ES – Susan Klimchuk (susan.klimchuk@rogers.com)

- Berrigan ES will be hosting its 2nd annual garage sale on Saturday May 8, 7am – 1pm. People buy a table to sell their things at. Money for tables goes to council, sellers keep money they earn from their goods. Was lots of fun last year, with baked goods and lots of treasures. Proceeds go towards June BBQ.

Parent Support Group

Beth Doubt (on behalf of Learning Disabilities Association – LDAOC@rogers.com)

- The Learning Disabilities Association of Ottawa holds parent support group meetings. On Thursday April 1 they will have a presentation: Self-Esteem and Learning Disabilities. The speaker will be Geordie Walker, a principal with the OCDSB. Will put more info on the OCASC website (ocasc.ca).

APPROVAL OF CONSTITUTION

- Wasn’t done right before, because we need majority of membership, not just majority of members present. Lisgar rep raised a point of order regarding validity of email proxy votes. Total membership: 93 Votes in favour needed: 47
- Results of vote: In favour: 36 Proxy in favour: 10 Against: 3 FAILED

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION:

Ottawa-Carleton District School Board

Cathy Curry – Chair, OCDSB

- Purpose of the OCDSB is to ensure that every single student’s needs are met.

- Main approach used is the Community School Model. Can't offer every program in every school, but try to have a variety of programs accessible relatively closely.
- In every community, elementary schools offer strong English programming, Core French, and French Immersion options (Early and Middle immersion, with Late Immersion being phased out). Alternative programming is available in some areas.
- In every community, secondary schools offer courses to access 4 program pathways: Work, Apprenticeship, College, University.
- Additional secondary programs that are offered in one or more schools across the board are: International Baccalaureate (IB) Program; Advanced Placement Program; High Performance Athlete Program; Fine Arts Program – Dance, Drama, Literary Arts, Music and Visual Arts; Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program; Trades and Technology Programs; Extended French Program; Alternate Program; Cooperative and Career Education; French Immersion Program; Adaptive Program.
- Specialist High Skills Majors Programs and Focus Programs allow students to attend another school for one semester and focus on specific area of interest: Information and Communications Technology; Manufacturing; House Building/Construction; Arts and Culture; Hospitality and Tourism; Environment; Cabinet Making; Dance; Landscape and Design; Musical Theatre; Advanced Culinary Education; Broadcasting/Digital Media; Communication and Design; Fabrication; Green Learning; Tool and Die.
- District Programs are attended for all years of secondary school: Arts Program – Canterbury; High Performance Athlete Program – John McCrae; International Baccalaureate – Colonel By; Alternate Program – Elizabeth Wyn Wood (Nepean), Frederick Banting (Kanata), Norman Johnston (Gloucester), Richard Pfaff (Ottawa); Adaptive Program – Sir Guy Carleton, Ottawa Technical Learning Centre.
- Special Education is offered using a Tiered Model
 1. Regular classroom/potential accommodations
 2. Regular classroom with interventions/support
 3. Additional support from multi-disciplinary team
 4. If necessary, specialized class in community school/school board schools
 5. Section 23 – provincially mandated
- Location of special education programs change from year to year to reflect changing populations and needs. Try to match area needs with programs in order to decrease travel times. With greater integration and the tiered model students don't need to travel as far. Have moved from having programs clustered together in a small area to a broader distribution of programs across the region.
- Superintendency model (district is divided into several smaller areas, each overseen by a superintendent) has changed over this board's mandate. Used to have specialists who worked all across the district. Now have multi-disciplinary teams assigned to each Superintendency, which include psychologists, language specialists, etc. They work as a team and become familiar with students and staff, thus reducing the chance that a student falls through the cracks.
- Board's motto is "Our strength is our people."
- Education is all about collaboration, not just in and between schools, but in and between provincial ministries such as education, health and social services as well.
- Many methods are used to improve quality of teaching and services:

- Instructional Coach Model – Send excellent teachers into other schools for several weeks to work with teachers there.
 - School Effectiveness Framework Review Teams – Spend day and a half at a school and review findings with staff.
 - Professional Learning Communities (Primary, Junior, Intermediate Teams) – Teachers work together as a team, sharing ideas and talking about issues.
 - Data Walls – Allow school to keep track of the reading levels of all the students.
 - Electronic Data Walls – Students move into the next grade seamlessly as all their information from the previous year is already available.
 - Student Success Teachers – Secondary schools have teacher responsible for high-needs students.
 - Community Hub Model – Working towards having all the services that students need (i.e. health, social services) available at the school.
 - Accommodation Reviews – Board is constantly reviewing programs, schools, areas, to see what can be improved.
 - Diversity and Equity – Ensure everyone has a fair chance and that labels are eliminated.
 - Leadership Initiatives – Recognize that everyone has a strength; need to celebrate and capitalize on them.
 - Continuing Education – Provides education opportunities for the wider community, brings community members into the schools. Provides the board with a bit of extra income at the same time.
- Closing thought: “It takes a whole village to raise one child, but it takes a system to raise every child.” – Michael Fullan
 - Woodroffe Ave PS – Why are some students being asked to stay home, or go home part way through the day? A: In the Education Act a principal can, as a last resort, ask a student to go home early or stay home for a day or more. Could be that the student has had a particularly traumatic day at school. Student may be getting violent, and other students need to be kept safe. It could be the result of too much stimulation. In some cases the school may need a few days to organize things so that the student’s needs can be met. It’s not desired, but sometimes a reality. Some schools are getting calming rooms to help meet the needs of such students.
 - Beth (SEAC) – Are very concerned that teachers are sending kids home because they don’t have the resources to deal with them. It’s important that shortened days be used only for the student’s needs, not the school’s needs. They should not be used arbitrarily. A: Agree that it is a concern. If there are specific instances where that is the case, please contact Superintendent Paxton of Learning Support Services and Superintendent Piovesan of Safe Schools with the specific details.
 - Churchill Alt PS – Why does board think community schools are best for elementary students? Why not pepper area with various options (i.e. French Immersion or Gifted hubs) to offer stronger programs? A: Do try to distribute congregated programs across areas, for programs that work best in a congregated way. Regarding the secondary gifted program, present recommendation is to reduce the number of

centres to three. Could conceivably close the program, but only if another option would work.

FROM YOUR EXEC

Budget Talk – Nadine Clarke

- Starting in January a small group of interested people have been getting together before the OCASC meeting to discuss the budget and what role OCASC could take. Also held a teleconference last week, and have done hours of research.
- Have decided to focus on three things:
 - Timing of provincial grants (which affects OCDSB decisions on staffing)
 - Salary gap
 - Inequities in the funding formula i.e. transportation, special education, ESL (English as a Second Language)
- Thinking of moving ahead in two ways:
 - First, writing a letter to the Minister of Education
 - Then creating literature to develop a groundswell of understanding in schools and parents

Nominating Committee for 2010/2011 OCASC Executive – Carrie Eaton

- Need a committee of three people. Carrie will be one.
- The OCASC constitution has a list of executive positions and information on each. All positions except committee representatives and SSC Chair are voted on at the May AGM.
- Anyone interested in becoming a member of the executive please contact Carrie (ocasc.vchair@ocasc.ca)

Special Education – Beth Doubt

SEAC

- Board has voted to cut some spec ed positions; say there will not be an impact – at secondary level Student Success teachers will help students.
- SEAC is doubtful – system at secondary level works well now, and at the elementary levels there are already students who must be sent home partway through the day. Things can only get worse.
- All speculative at this time because firm budget numbers are not available.

Workshops for Parents

- The OCASC Spec Ed subcommittee has offered 3 sessions for parents, which have been well attended and positively received.
- Going to use some of the PRO grant money to bring these to the wider community. Maria Di Rosa will be coordinating.
- Four workshops are planned. The first one will be held in May (date TBA) and targeted at all parents. The discussion will center on how to advocate for your child – what is the process, what can you ask for, etc.
- The other three workshops will be IEP/IPRC specific and will be offered in different parts of the region – one in the east end of the city, one in the west, and one in the south. These will occur in September, and will be advertised in advance.

- Will have babysitting, and are looking into transportation.

Membership Update – Madelaine Stewart-Dmaj

- Now have 93 schools as members – when she first started the job that number was in the fifties.

Education Committee – Susan Klimchuk

- Secondary gifted program review – Discussion was deferred to April 19th. Delegations that could not be presented at the recent meeting will be able to present then.
- Environmental education – OCASC and councils will be consulted.
- Preliminary report on why students leave OCDSB before graduation – Staff want a plan to get more comprehensive information.
- Update on secondary FSL (French as a Second Language) initiative – Board planning a pilot project of new grade 12 proficiency testing (DELF). Will be first board in Ontario to use it. Will test 150 randomly selected students from all streams (Core French, Extended French and French Immersion). No fees will be charged in the pilot project, but if board adopts test then students will be charged if they wish to take the test.

Announcement: The Community Council on Ethnocultural Equity (CCEE) will hold its general meeting on April 8 at 6:45. The work of CCEE ties in with the Board's diversity and equity initiatives. Would like to see a more diverse attendance, so encourage OCASC members to attend.

NEXT MEETING:

- Thursday, April 15th, 7:00 pm at **the Ottawa Technical Learning Centre (OTLC), 485 Donald Street.**

Meeting adjourned at 9:06 pm.

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