

OTTAWA-CARLETON ASSEMBLY OF SCHOOL COUNCILS

Meeting of Thursday, January 20, 2011
Fisher Park PS Library

ATTENDANCE:

Total Membership: 63

Member schools

Adrienne Clarkson ES – Carrie Eaton
Barrhaven PS – Ellen Dickson
Bayview PS – Riley Brockington
Berrigan ES – Susan Klimchuk
Briargreen PS – Suzanne Vanden
Heuvel
Bridlewood Community ES – Lynn
Paterson
Canterbury HS (and SSC) – Nadine
Clarke
Castlefrank ES – Brona Little
Cedarview MS – Ellen Dickson
D. Aubrey Moodie IS – Sheila Mason
Dunlop PS – Ellen Lamarre
Elgin Street PS – John Higgins
Elmdale PS – Megan Richardson
Fallingbrook Comm. ES – Peter
Kokkovas
First Avenue PS – Kristen Underwood
Forest Valley ES – Derek Black
Glen Ogilvie PS – Robert Hawgood
Hilson Avenue PS – Mona Paré, Bobby
Chawla
Kars PS – Elaine Murkin

Katimavik ES – Nihan Kavaslar
Knoxdale PS – Suzanne Vanden Heuvel
Lady Evelyn Alt PS – Gabe Thirlwall
Lisgar CI – Liz Melanson
Manor Park PS – Alison Laidlaw
Manordale PS – Cathy Babyak
Meadowlands PS – Isabel Ruddick
Merivale HS – Anne Teutsch
Mutchmor PS – Hetty Mannethu
Nepean HS – Shirley Netten
North Gower/Marl. PS – Sandra Acacia
Pleasant Park PS – Sabrah Talib
Rideau Valley MS – Sandra Acacia
Sawmill Creek ES – Gennifer Stainforth
Sir Winston Churchill PS – Karen
Desjardins
South Carleton HS – Sue Carswell
South March PS – Chris Bridgen
Vincent Massey PS – Biba Fakhouri

Non-member schools

Glebe CI – Lillian Thomsen
Glen Cairn PS – Mike Hickey
John Young ES – Susanne Bowen

Guests and other persons in attendance:

Beth Doubt (SEAC), Juliet Hamilton (OCASC Recording Secretary), Paula Hall (OCDSB), Jacqueline Lawrence (OCDSB Diversity and Equity Coordinator), Mary Thorne

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

AGENDA: Approved with no changes:

Approval of Agenda
Approval of Minutes of December 16, 2010
Chair's Report
Chalk-It-Up
From Your Executive
 Budget Group
 Committee Representatives

Updates

Guest Speaker: Jacqueline Lawrence, OCDSB Diversity and Equity Coordinator
Equity and Inclusive Education Policy / Religious Accommodation Policy

MINUTES of December 16, 2010: Approved with no amendments.

CHAIR'S REPORT – Anne Teutsch

- All OCASC reps should be getting OCASC News. If you are not, check that membership secretary has your correct email. Can also subscribe on the OCASC website (www.ocasc.ca).
- Capital Educators' Awards – Do you know an outstanding educator? Go to <http://education.ocri.ca/education/capital-educators-awards/> for more information.
- OCASC booklets (full of council-related information) go out to councils at the beginning of every year. There are extra copies if you need one.
- Reminder to pay \$35 annual dues and submit membership info form.!
- Report is available from the Strategic Plan Renewal consultation session that took place during the November OCASC meeting. Will put it on the website and send it with the next newsletter. Complete report of all consultations is available on Board's website (www.ocdsb.ca).
- OCASC newsletter goes out twice a month, the second Tuesday after a meeting (with the draft minutes of the last meeting) and the Tuesday before a meeting. If you'd like something included in the newsletter, please submit it to Anne the Thursday before the newsletter is due out.
- Paula Hall (council liaison at OCDSB) will similarly be sending out information from the Board every Friday. Anyone wishing to have their notice included in that mailing should send it to her at least the day before.

CHALK-IT-UP

Playground Funding

Dunlop PS – Ellen Lamarre (chucknellen@rogers.com)

- School needs a new playground, and they are looking for tips on funding and applications.
 - Meadowlands PS – Can pass on name of person that headed their playground committee.
 - Pleasant Park PS – Took them about four years to get a new kindergarten structure, so don't count on things happening quickly. There are lots of places to get matching and double-matching funds.
 - Guest – Raised money for 24 playgrounds in Toronto, willing to share thoughts and ideas. Will email.
 - Bayview PS – Board will give up to \$7,500 and city will match those funds. Board only does 3-5 playgrounds a year, so get in touch with them now and get in the queue. Solicit money from community association and other community groups, because the playstructure is an asset for the whole community.

- Q: Is it a given that the city will match Board funds? A: Never seen anything else. But it's not automatic to get the full \$7,500 from the Board.
- Elmdale PS – In the same situation. Could you pass on any information you get?
 - Anne – If everyone cc's her on their emails to Dunlop, she can make it available to others and put it on the website.

CHEO Information Night

Canterbury HS – Nadine Clarke (clarkene@rogers.com)

- For the last few years CHEO (Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario) has held information evenings full of presentations of interest to parents. This year it is being hosted by Canterbury HS (900 Canterbury Ave.) on Tuesday February 15 from 7:00 – 9:00 pm.
- Parents will be able to attend two sessions. Topics will include online social networking, parenting your toddler, body image, and keeping your adolescent safe, as well as others. Evening will be of interest to parents of children of all ages.
- More information will be sent out as it becomes available.

Ski Club Liability

Sir Winston Churchill PS – Karen Desjardins (karldesjardins@rogers.com)

- Who is responsible for liability for ski clubs outside school hours?
 - Sawmill Creek ES – Will forward contact info of people who run the club.
 - SSC (OCASC Secondary Schools Committee) – If it's run by council or parents, must have insurance separate from school's insurance, or have everyone sign waivers. Or can have a registered ski club such as the Snow Hawks come in and take responsibility.
 - Elgin Street PS – Recently contacted Snow Hawks and they are sold out already – need to plan ahead for next year. Seemed expensive.
 - Does your council have liability insurance? A: Yes, but club has nothing to do with council.
 - Cedarview MS – Be aware of regulations on helmets and safety. Board has just sent memorandum that helmets are a requirement – make sure hill can provide them.
 - Paula Hall (OCDSB) – Sent a memo earlier in the year on insurance for councils. Usually if a school staff member is involved in organization liability is covered by the school's insurance. But insurance/liability is complicated, so individual circumstances should be checked with the insurance contact person.
 - Paula Hall (OCDSB) – Education Foundation has been collecting helmets which can be borrowed for school trips.
 - Bridlewood Comm. ES – Have Snow Hawks running their school ski trips.
 - Glebe CI – At Alta Vista PS council sanctioned the activity even though parents who ran it weren't on council.

Fundraising Ideas for Schools with Varied Socio-Economic Backgrounds

D.A. Moodie IS – Sheila Mason (sheila.mason@rogers.com)

- School has a very diverse socio-economic background. Wondering what the best fundraisers have been for schools in similar situations.
 - Briargreen PS – Other than food, QSP(magazine subscription program). Very easy to run as well.
 - Glebe CI – Alta Vista PS also very diverse, found Spring Fair was wonderful, and great for the community as well, but very labour-intensive. Had games, bouncy castle, fire department, tickets for 50 cents.
 - Cedarview MS – Loblaws gift cards are popular – buyers get full value for their money, 5% goes back to school.
 - Fallingbrook Comm. ES – Hold an annual Run for Fun to raise money for the school. Brought in \$5500. Requires a lot of parent volunteers. Bonus – outdoors and involves physical activity.
 - North Gower/Marl. PS – Hold movie nights. Works well for primary grades, not so well for older kids. Sell popcorn, buy a movie, raffle off movie and poster afterwards, parents attend as well.
 - Bayview PS – Easiest food to make is popcorn. Least labour-intensive fundraiser for them is a walk-a-thon. Children get sponsored by family and close friends.
 - First Avenue PS – Annual book fair, but huge amount of work.
 - Pleasant Park PS – Pizza. Milk program is labour-intensive to start up but then runs easily, raises about \$2000/yr. Dance-a-thon raises about \$2000/yr. Book sale raises about \$3000/yr but is labour-intensive.
 - Vincent Massey PS – Run a “Do Nothing” fundraiser – just ask people to write a cheque. Works very well.
 - Adrienne Clarkson ES – Cake raffle – parents love to make the cakes. Neighbourhood school runs a dance-a-thon, which does very well.
 - Manor Park PS – Also hold a Scholastic Book Fair. Don’t get cash but get free books. Scheduled during Parent-Teacher interviews before Christmas. Parents are able to designate books as gifts for teachers.

Green Box Implementation

Mutchmor PS – Hetty Mannethu (hmannethu@rogers.com)

- Green bins are coming to schools. Have schools thought about how to implement program? Raises many questions, such as who will bring bins to the curb?
 - Sawmill Creek ES – Not into green bins yet, but school has a recycling club, and students are responsible for recycling done in the school.
 - First Avenue PS – Have litterless lunch program, so no garbage is left at school.
 - Sir Winston Churchill PS – What can go into the school green bins? Everything that can go into residential green bins? Is Board implementing the program? A: (Paula Hall) City of Ottawa is implementing program.
 - Sir Winston Churchill PS – Have read about rodent issues at schools with such programs. Anne – More research will need to be done into the issue.

- Cedarview MS – At the October OCASC meeting one school mentioned dealing with soiled pizza boxes. Has that worked out?
 - Briargreen PS – No, still working on it.

Council Elections

Rideau Valley MS – Sue Carswell (carswell6@xplornet.com)

- Having a problem with the timing of school council elections. Started electing key council positions such as (co-)chair(s) and treasurer in June so that some business could be done over the summer. Other concern about September election is that outgoing chair may no longer be a parent at the school, and maybe shouldn't be able to run a council meeting. But Board regulations insist elections are to be held in September. Is it possible to elect interim chair/treasurer for June-September? Is this issue something other schools/OCASC want to work on, to allow some flexibility?
 - SEAC – Woodroffe Ave. PS used to nominate in the spring and confirm positions in September.
 - Lady Evelyn Alt PS – We do the same thing – choose in June and elect in September.
 - Rideau Valley MS – Spring elections don't provide option for new parents to stand. Have tried to deal with this by notifying feeder schools.
 - Lady Evelyn Alt PS – Have asked new parents if this is an issue, and all are relieved to not be asked to chair a council in a school new to them.
 - Berrigan ES – Several issues. 1) Timing of council elections is set in Ministry of Education documents, not simply a Board requirement. 2) Can't assume parents new to a school don't have the expertise and experience to run for a council position. 3) The Principal chairs the first meeting until a new chair is elected, so the fact that the outgoing chair is no longer a parent at the school is not a problem.
 - Sir Winston Churchill PS – Agree with Berrigan ES. Could have students transferring in during the summer, so even emailing feeder schools doesn't cover everything.
 - Sawmill Creek ES – Haven't had problems with fall elections. Mentoring helps with succession. Good solution is to have co-chairs, one with a child in the older grades, one with a child in the younger grades. If the older child is graduating and that parent is not interested in school issues over the summer, the other co-chair can deal with anything that arises.
 - Glebe CI – One solution is to not choose a chair who will not have a student in the school the following year. But better solution is co-chairs.
 - Lisgar CI – Revamped constitution two years ago. Co-chairs a great option. Can have spring nominations and fall confirmations, but still need to open the floor to nominations in the fall, so that new parents can join. Also appoint a nomination person/committee to come up with a slate of officers.
 - Glen Ogilvie PS – Are there best practices for governance to keep everything open and prevent council from becoming a clique?
 - Anne – Show of hands – do people feel they want some flexibility in rules governing council elections? Quite a few.

- Dunlop PS – Very important to accept new people. Military families move constantly, and committed parents want to jump into school life at every school.

FROM YOUR EXECUTIVE

Budget Group – Gennifer Stainforth

- Small group meeting 30 minutes before OCASC meeting starts, discussing budget issues. Want to get message out to parents: These are the issues facing the funding of your child's education. Identifying issues specific to OCDSB. Hope to bring draft messages to next meeting.

Business Services Committee – Lillian Thomsen

- Met last Wednesday (January 12). Several items of interest.
- Procurement – Staff has been asked to look into bulk purchasing of student supplies which would then be sold to interested parents.
- School Improvement planning – Board submitted list of improvement projects to province, totalling over \$20 million for those schools deemed of highest priority for refurbishment.
- Beacon Hill Middle French Immersion site recommendation – No decision will be taken as consultations revealed a clear lack of urgency and parent desire for the introduction of MFI at the present.
- Letter from Board to provincial government asking for a review of the funding formula – Will be discussed at the next meeting on February 9.

Education Committee – Susan Klimchuk

- Met on Tuesday (January 18).
- Received report on Specialist High Skills Majors Program (SHSM).
- Allows students to be immersed in a particular program for a full semester at any school offering that program (not restricted by transfer caps). They emerge with marketable skills and certifications.
- In 5th year at OCDSB. Started with 3 programs; 21 will be offered next year, with 331 students registered.
- New SHSM programs being offered by Ministry next year: Mining, Non-Profit, Sports, Transportation.
- SHSM programs being offered next year in OCDSB, with locations:
 - Arts and Culture – Merivale HS, Rideau HS (new)
 - Business – Canterbury HS (new)
 - Community Safety and Emergency Services – Osgoode HS, Sir Robert Borden HS
 - Construction – Rideau HS, Sir Wilfrid Laurier SS, South Carleton HS, West Carleton SS
 - The Environment – Nepean HS
 - Health and Wellness – South Carleton HS
 - Hospitality and Tourism – Sir Guy Carleton SS
 - Information and Communication Technology – Sir Wilfrid Laurier SS, South Carleton HS (new)

- Manufacturing – Hillcrest HS, South Carleton HS
- Non-Profit – A.Y. Jackson SS (new)
- Sports (broadcasting) – Sir Wilfrid Laurier SS (new), Woodroffe HS (new)
- Transportation – Gloucester HS (new), Merivale HS (new)
- Construction program at Nepean HS and Osgoode HS is being discontinued.

School Year Calendar Committee – Nadine Clarke

- The OCASC survey received over 800 responses in 48 hours! Results were 37% in favour of last day being 23rd, 32% for 21st.
- Calendar Committee met today. Overwhelming consensus on committee is for a late Christmas break. Personally, she is surprised – going to be difficult for secondary school students to have such limited time back before exams.
- Will be discussed at the Strategic Planning Committee on February 2 and then go before the Board in late February.
- Going to start discussing calendar for year after (2012/13) on April 14.

Consultation on: Equity and Inclusive Education Policy / Religious Accommodations Policy

Guest Speaker: Jacqueline Lawrence, OCDSB Diversity and Equity Coordinator

- In 2009 The Ministry of Education released its *Realizing the Promise of Diversity: Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy* as well as Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) 119 “Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools.”
- PPM 119 specifically requires school districts in Ontario to establish policies in the areas of equity and inclusive education and religious accommodation.
- Currently the OCDSB has the following policies and procedures in place, which have also been considered in the development of the new policies:
 - Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity Policy (P. 098)
 - Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity Procedure (PR. 618)
 - Religious Holy Days Policy (P. 086)
 - Religious Holy Days Procedure (PR. 586)
- Need to think about how Board and schools serve students. Also need to consider how to make parents feel included and welcome.
- Discussions on diversity and equity link into character development and the OCDSB's “A Community of Character.”
- Copies of the new, draft policies (on Equity and Inclusive Education and on Religious Accommodations) were handed out at the meeting. People were given time to read the drafts and then were asked to comment on various aspects of them. The questions and some of the points raised follow.
- What are your first impressions of the Equity and Inclusive Education policy?
 - Objective reads more like a goal.
 - Nothing measurable – how do you plan to measure success? A: Items in Section 4 can be measured. Information gathered in the planned Student Survey will be very helpful in providing a baseline.

- Directives are not very direct or accessible. Any thought of a plain language rewrite? A: The procedure document written to accompany each policy will be much more detailed.
- Consider adding weight-bias under definition of diversity. A: Will be added in procedure doc.
- Seems to leave lots of loopholes and room for abuse of the policy. A: Procedure doc will fill in those gaps.
- Concerns about passing policy without seeing all the details promised in the procedure doc. A: How Board works. Policy doc is very overarching, procedure doc is very detailed and prescriptive. Pass policy first to make sure we're going in the right direction.
- Any clarification needed in either policy?
 - Why are the dates on the policies 2000 and 2001 if they are new draft policies? A: Those were the dates of the old policies – Board procedure is to leave date of old policy on new draft.
 - Item 3.6.h in the Religious Accommodation Policy seems to be a catch-all statement.
 - How many languages is this available in right now? A: English, but the Board's website has the ability to translate into over 60 languages.
 - Does item 3.4 in the Equity and Inclusive Education Policy refer only to staff? A: No, more than staff. For example, parents coaching a team at school would also be included.
 - Religious Accommodation (item 4.5) is new to the Equity and Inclusive Education Policy. Why is this singled out to have its own policy while others are not? A: Ministry looking at religious discrimination as one of the fastest growing issues. Trying to address needs that are present now and expected to become more and more significant.
 - Definitions are good.
 - Item 4.1f in the Religious Accommodation Policy is open to abuse, and doesn't say anything about undue hardship at home. A: Definition of undue hardship is quite strict; need to be able to differentiate between what's real and what's manufactured.
- What's missing from either policy?
 - Balance between privacy/confidentiality and transparency in Equity and Inclusive Education Policy will be key.
 - Education should be included in the Religious Accommodation Policy – education should not be put at risk. A: Agreed – accommodation should not impact education.
- What are ways to share final documents with parents?
 - Workshops aimed at specific groups.
 - Link to immigration policy / entitlement in our culture.
 - Town hall forums at schools, allowing for frank discussion.
 - Don't limit outreach to schools – meet with community groups, worship communities, etc., where people might be more comfortable talking about these issues.

- Q&A approach. Useful if staff brainstorm questions that community might ask.
- Needs to be ongoing. Board is full of policies and complicated procedures. Useful if each school had a staff member with knowledge of the procedures who would be proactive and reach out to students/parents who may have issues.
- Anyone with questions or comments can contact Jackie at jacqueline.lawrence@ocdsb.ca.

NEXT MEETING:

- Thursday, February 17, 2011 at 7:00 pm in the Fisher Park PS library.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

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