

# OCASC Assembly Meeting Minutes

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**Date:** December 12, 2013  
**Location:** Fisher Park School, 250 Holland Avenue  
**Time:** 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

## **Attendance:**

Member School (Total member schools in attendance 25/53 =47%)

Adrienne Clarkson ES (ACES)-Marti Falcone (Co-Chair)  
Barrhaven PS-Amy Lajoie  
Berrigan ES-Susan Klimchuk (Co-Chair)  
Briargreen PS-Jennifer Melnikoff  
Broadview PS-Claire Todd, Bobby Chawla (Liaison Officer)  
D Roy Kennedy-Helen Quaresma  
Dunlop PS-Craig Tiberi  
Farley Mowat PS-Mostafizur Khan  
First Avenue Public School-Gerry Nera  
Glebe CI-Carol Malatesta  
Hawthorne PS-Louise Crawford  
Hilson Avenue PS-Barbara Bekooy  
Huntley Centennial PS-Mark Tymowski  
Jockvale ES-Cindy Frazer  
John Young ES- Mike Hickey, Susanne Bowen  
Katimavik ES-Teri MacDonald  
Longfields-Davidson Heights SS-Susan Klimchuk  
Manordale PS-Cathy Babyak (Membership)  
Maple Ridge ES- Cynthia Allen  
Mutchmor PS-Milana Karaganis  
Pleasant Park PS-Cecilia Lee, Sabrah Talib  
Riverview AS-Jocelyne Koepke, Amelia Usher  
Roch Carrier ES-Shannon Walker  
South March PS-Chris Bridgen (Communications)  
Stephen Leacock PS-Donna Garnons-Williams

Non-Member schools (3)  
Connaught PS-Carlo Difelice  
Earl of March SS-Donna Garnons-Williams  
WO Mitchell ES-Simon Akinsulie

Guests (2)  
Paula Marble (OCDSB policy analyst), Secondary School Committee (SSC)-Nadine Clarke

## **1. Welcome**

## **2. Approval of Agenda**

Item number four to be canceled. Mark Fisher was not able to attend the meeting; he had commitments at the School Board. His motion to the Board will go forward in January, which will affect the information he can provide. The chairs will look into booking Mark Fisher for a meeting in February. Action item: Marti to advise Mark that the membership was disappointed that we didn't get to hear his presentation, and ask Mark for a summary of the motion that he will be presenting to the Board. Feedback/comments can be



# OCASC Assembly Meeting Minutes

Sharing Information • Facilitating Communication • Representing Our Membership

directed to [Mark.Fisher@OCDSB.ca](mailto:Mark.Fisher@OCDSB.ca). Dan Fournier from the planning department was also unable to attend. Motion to approve the Agenda as amended, by Stephen Leacock, seconded by First Avenue.

### 3. Chalk It Up

a) Tribute to Nelson Mandela - W.O. Mitchell, Simon ([simonha@hotmail.com](mailto:simonha@hotmail.com)) The students at W.O.M. decided to honor Nelson Mandela's 67 years of activism by completing 67 nice tasks. They were featured on CTV news.

b) Internet access/ WIFI – Pleasant Park, Sabrah ([taliman@rogers.com](mailto:taliman@rogers.com)) There is a concern from some parents that students have access to the school board Wi-Fi during recess breaks, and are accessing questionable sites. The students are using their own hand held devices. Connaught school responded with information regarding the school board's policy on technology standards and indicated that you should not have outside access to the Board website. There was also mention that the IT department's opinion is that you should only be able to access the Board Wi-Fi through board equipment. South March had comments regarding the information that Dave Miller presented at the Secondary Schools Meeting. He said that the OCDSB wireless network is more secure than the wired network. Hawthorne asked why a student would bring their own hand held device if they cannot access the internet. Huntley Centennial mentioned that there are apps that you can use to access the internet, and also made reference to the contract that students and parents signed at the beginning of the year that had to do with "Acceptable use of Technology". Parents should be monitoring what their kids are doing with their devices. Sabrah mentioned that the Principal has access to a report that would list all of the websites that a student accessed.

c) Teachers on Council – John Young, Mike ([mikeh9704@rogers.com](mailto:mikeh9704@rogers.com)) John Young wanted to know if the teachers on other school councils have a right to a vote. They are experiencing some issues at their school where the teacher is receiving pressure from the Teacher's Union not to exercise their voting right. South March indicated that most school Council constitutions allow for the teachers to have one vote. The principal does not get a vote. There must be more parents voting than staff members. There are limitations if the child of the teacher attends the same school, or if they are also a board member. It was decided that unless the constitution indicates otherwise, the teacher rep gets one vote on the Council. First Avenue advised that at their meetings the Principal, the Vice Principal and the teacher rep all attend, but it is understood that none of them get a vote. They will now review their official constitution. Dunlop school indicated that a teacher was the Chair of their Council and then stepped down when they realized that a teacher cannot hold an executive position on the Council. Paula Marble referred to the Board website and reported that according to the Board's policy, the Principal does not get a vote. There can be one teacher that acts as the Teacher rep, but they cannot hold an executive position. John Young has decided to respect the teacher's decision, but would have like to see the teacher use their right to vote because the interest of the students is at the center of the issue.

d) School Vans – Bobby, Broadview ([bobby@amun.ca](mailto:bobby@amun.ca)) The concern was the lack of regulations for mini vans (5 or less passengers) as compared to school busses, regarding snow tires. This issue was discussed at the SEAC committee meeting. There exists a policy where school buses are required to maintain certain standards, but because mini vans carry 5 or less passengers, they are not subject to the same regulations. He wanted us to know that parents have a right to inspect the minivans and contact OSTA should you feel that there is an issue. Pleasant Park wanted to clarify that this was referring to not the small yellow buses, but the mini vans that sometimes transport small numbers of students. Connaught school advised to contact the Ministry of Transportation and request at CVOR (Commercial Vehicle Operators Registration). Every



# OCASC Assembly Meeting Minutes

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commercial van must carry one of these, and it contains a list of maintenance. There was some confusion if this applied to vehicles that carry 5 or less or 6 or less passengers.

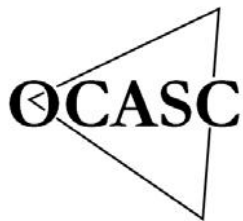
## 4. PRO Grant

OCASC has money to spend that it was given approximately 5 years ago. A discussion took place regarding the merits of redesigning the webpage, and hiring a professional company to update it on a regular basis. Marti offered some prices that she received from one source. They varied from \$1100-\$2200 dollars initial cost, plus a monthly fee ranging from \$30-\$60. Broadview wanted to know how OCASC got the money originally. It was mentioned that it was received more than 5 years ago, we cannot give it back, it has to be spent, but we are not required to report back on the way we spent the money. First Avenue would like to see training on how to use "online money transfers" effectively and training on how to better manage the flow of money. Connaught would like to see a workshop on how to grow the council membership and how to bring in new people, and a financial best practices workshop. Pleasant Park would like to see the website updated so that parents can go to an interactive site and share ideas. They think we need a more effective way of sharing ideas. Claire, from Broadview, agrees. She has received many requests on how to use hotlunch.org and is interested in knowing if the Board could purchase a group license so that not each school is paying \$400 every year. Connaught's concern is that websites tend to become static unless they are constantly maintained. He suggested that we use Google Docs as a way to share information. KES asked who is currently in charge of our website – Chris Ellis who does it on a volunteer basis. Jockvale suggested a Facebook page. Roch Carrier mentioned that they use Edmodo as a way to have a closed site with more controls. Pleasant Park mentioned that in 5 years society has come a long way, and maybe we are ready to try something more interactive again. Barrhaven would like to see a forum for communication that would allow us to add hot topics or agenda items. W.O. Mitchel likes the use of Edmodo because the group can be closed. Broadview thinks that would be a good workshop topic. Maple Ridge mentioned the possibility that creating a sharing forum might lead to a complaint/venting session and that people might be disrespectful. There is the chain of thought that as a group of volunteers, we can self-regulate opinions and balance the comments amongst the group of volunteers. Pleasant Park feels we need a strong information sharing forum. Barrhaven would like to see some information on recruitment, succession planning, and how to better market us as council members. Marti will consider these as possible OCASC agenda topics. Maple Ridge wants to know the time line. There will be a vote that takes place once all of the options have been determined. Jockvale would like to see something that sends an instant message when there is an update. Roch Carrier wants to know if there is a presentation or topic that the board has access to that would otherwise be too expensive for a council to hire. If anyone has any ideas, they can forward them to the OCASC chairs at [chair@ocasc.ca](mailto:chair@ocasc.ca) or Paula Marble at [Paula.Marble@ocdsb.ca](mailto:Paula.Marble@ocdsb.ca). Maple Ridge wants to know if we can maintain the monthly fees if we choose to have the website redone. We currently pay \$300 a year for our website. Hawthorne suggested that we contact People for Education to see if they can arrange a speaker. Action item: Marti to look into contacting People for Education. There was mention that we could partner with the Catholic School Board Assembly and combine resources. Action item: Marti to see if this is possible.

## 6. From Your Executive

Craig from Dunlop attended the SEAC meeting and mentioned the item regarding the safety of mini vans that are used by OSTA to transport students. He mentioned that 60% of the minivans are compliant and have winter tires. The other 40% cannot be forced to put them on. There needs to be clarification on the interpretation and the MOT will be contacted.

Suzanne from Bridle wood school attended the first Calendar Committee meeting. They are in the process of determining all of the school holiday, pad days and breaks for the 2014-2015 school years. The committee is looking for feedback by Mon the 16<sup>th</sup> of Dec regarding the placement of spring break 2015. The teachers group put forth a proposal to change spring break to one week earlier, so that there is a bigger



# OCASC Assembly Meeting Minutes

Sharing Information • Facilitating Communication • Representing Our Membership

break between Easter and Spring Break. Currently, it would be Mar 16-20 2015 with Easter falling on Friday April 3<sup>rd</sup>. The proposal would move spring break to Mar 9-13 2015. The Secondary Schools Committee is concerned because this would be disproportionate for the secondary school year. There is a cost associated to the decision if the other school boards maintain the same break, because the bus costs are shared. This would result in the OCDSB paying \$250 000 more in bus costs. First Avenue likes the current schedule and the convenience of not having the same week as Quebec. Roch Carrier mentioned that Family Day is also in and around these dates. John Young mentioned that changing the March Break week would affect the semester system at the secondary school level. It was decided that the support amongst members is to keep the March Break week where it normally is, March 16-20 2015. A vote was taken. All were in favour, none were opposed, and there were no abstentions. The motion was carried that OCASC prefers the March Break week to be Mar 16-20 2015. If you have any additional feedback contact [Suzanne.bowen@icloud.com](mailto:Suzanne.bowen@icloud.com). Feedback is always welcome, but Monday is the deadline because the Board will decide by December 20. John Young added one more consideration, Spring Break camps. Maple Ridge was concerned with the \$250 000 price tag. Suzanne advised that our Board is the first to decide and the other boards involved usually follow suit. The Board would have to justify spending an additional \$65 000 a day on bussing if the week did not line up with the other boards and it is suspected that the Board would not be able to justify that cost.

## 7. Chair's Report

An interim Secretary is required. It is not known if April will be able to continue as secretary, so the chairs are seeking to appoint an interim secretary. If you are interested, please contact [chair@ocasc.ca](mailto:chair@ocasc.ca). A researcher from Ottawa U (Mona Pare, a former OCASC rep for Hilson Ave.) is looking for a parent to be a part of her research project having to do with anti-bullying. The first meeting will be Mon Dec 16<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 at the university. Action item: Chair of OCASC to forward information to Council Chairs via email. Marti wants the membership to realize that the minutes to the meetings are not always available before a school's council meeting. She encourages the membership to take their own notes and report back to their own school whatever items they feel are applicable. The minutes are posted in draft format as soon as possible. Stephen Leacock would like to see an OCASC meeting that has a culture that allows for members to interrupt and ask for something to be repeated for clarification purposes so that we can be as accurate as possible. Huntley Centennial clarified that the minutes are available on the website and that they can be printed. They are marked as 'draft' until they are approved by the membership. Stephen Leacock made the suggestion that we ask if a printed copy is required in the Newsflash and proceed accordingly.

## 8. New Business

Paula Marble informed the membership that the Board agreed to sign a contract with Synervoice to expand some of the options available. There will be a text/email option in addition to the phone message. There will be the capability to advise the school of weekly or monthly appointments without the need of calling the school each time. Messages will be able to be translated into many different languages. The roll out date will be Feb 2014. Susanne from Bridlewood asked if there are restrictions for elementary schools. Paula advised that she was not the technical expert, but that the Board continues to focus on how to improve school to home communication. Glebe informed that elementary schools are restricted from using Synervoice during the week because of the Safe School Arrival Policy. Secondary schools have preference because they are not part of this policy.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45pm.