



OCASC December 2015 Meeting Minutes

chair@ocasc.ca

ocasc.ca

133 Greenback Road, Ottawa, ON K2H 6L3

Date: December 17, 2015
Location: Fisher Park School, 250 Holland Avenue, Library
Time: 7:00pm – 9:00pm

Total attendance (44); Total Schools represented (42)

Member School attending (18) based on SY 2015-2016

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|--|---|
| Bridlewood Community ES-Andrea Haas | Jockvale ES-Sofia Atiyat |
| Castlefrank ES-Megan Venner | John Young ES-Mike Hickey |
| Elgin Street PS-Jennifer Simms, Tijen Karatas | Katimavik ES-Megan Venner |
| Elizabeth Park PS-Dale Childs | Longfields-Davidson Heights SS Susan Klimchuk (Liaison Officer) |
| Elmdale PS-Megan Richardson and Geri Moss-Norbury | Manordale PS-Cathy Babyak (Membership) |
| Glashan PS-Gerry Nera | Manotick PS -Sophie Paluck |
| Greenbank MS-Helen Norman | Richmond PS-Fiona Sutherland |
| Hopewell Avenue PS-Mike Stewart | Sir Robert Borden HS-Paula Shaver (SSC) |
| Huntley Centennial PS-Mark Tymowski (Communications) | Steve MacLean PS-Matthew Buechler |

Non-member School attending (8)

| | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Adrienne Clarkson ES-Carrie McConnachie | Merivale HS-Lorrie Vidalin |
| Farley Mowat PS-Debby M | Roch Carrier ES-Renuka Daliny |
| Goulbourn MS-Susanne Bowen | Rockcliffe Park PS-Hacene Oukacine |
| Lakeview-Tracy Neufeld (Chair) | Woodroffe PS-Danna Campbell |

Guests (6)

Nadia Towaj, Superintendent of instruction, French Consultation
Susan MacDonald, Superintendent of Instruction and Early Learning, French Consultation
Chris Ellis, Zone 6 school trustee, Rideau and Rockcliffe
Donna Blackburn, Trustee Zone 3, Barrhaven/Knoxdale-Merivale
Amber Steeves, Elmdale, Parent
Stephanie Millius, Woodroffe Ave, Parent

1. Welcome and Call to Order (7:00 pm)

OCASC Chair Tracy Neufeld called the meeting to order and welcomed members and guests.

2. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.



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3. Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 19 November 2015 were not available for review. It was explained that volunteers from the Assembly have been taking hand-written notes on an ad-hoc basis since the resignation of the Recording Secretary earlier in the fall, however the November notes were not available in time for transcription and printing. The Chair shared details of challenges in recruiting and maintaining a Recording Secretary on the OCASC Executive (a challenge for over 6 years) and led a short session with members to problem-solve for the future.

Possible challenges identified were:

- Members are already committed to volunteering at their local school (many hold executive roles at their school council) and OCASC is an additional responsibility. Most are working parents and are busy juggling work, parenting and volunteering.
- Being recording secretary means a double commitment because the role of secretary is an executive position and includes certain formal tasks in addition to taking notes.
- It is hard for members to be fully engaged and participate in the meeting while taking notes.
- It is difficult to take (good) notes without a computer/table/proper set-up.
- Recording Secretary requires firm commitment to regular attendance which can be difficult because of work travel and family obligations.

Possible solutions included:

- Arranging for a student volunteer to take notes
- Video or audio recording the meetings
- Divide and conquer (i.e. have different people take notes at different meetings)
- Rotate minute-taking through the membership
- Separating the jobs of Notetaker and Secretary

Solution: Helen Norman (Greenbank Middle School) agreed to take notes each meeting provided the role of note-taker could be separated from the Executive and if she could have an appropriate setup (table/laptop, advance copy of the agenda and a template for minutes). The Chair and Assembly thanked Helen for stepping up to the task!

A motion was made to separate the roles of note-taker and secretary - Motion passed?

4. New developments - re: proposed changes to French, with S. MacDonald and N. Towaij

- S. MacDonald and N. Towaij returned to OCASC to provide a brief update and new developments re: proposed changes to French instruction in EFI and kindergarten.
- The discussion included the following questions/comments:
 - There was a concern expressed that the 50% English/50% French split in JK as well as SK would not give a strong foundation in both languages and may cause lags in children's first language.



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- It was asked if it would be possible to have a reverse phase-in - so that schools who don't have any issues with the way second languages are being taught could be the last to implement the changes.
- There was a comment that parents don't feel heard. There is a feeling amongst some that they didn't have a chance to digest the information before being asked to give an opinion. Efforts were made to consult with all parents, but the optics of the process seemed off.
- Presenters were questioned as to what is driving the need for these changes, if there is an adequate pool of bilingual ECEs and if they would provide a short (one page) description of the pedagogy related to the changes.

5. From Your Trustee

Trustee Ellis was in attendance and shared a two-page report and asked if there were any questions. Trustee Blackburn shared views related to the changes in French instruction.

6. Chalk It Up

Hopewell - Subject: yard fundraising

- Hopewell just finished a successful \$120,000 project to update their yard and playground and wanted to start a discussion about the current process for funding. They have reached out to their trustee with concerns and asked for experiences from the membership.
- Rep from Richmond mentioned that they recently built a new play structure for \$80,000. They had a couple of years notice and started a 2-year fundraising campaign. They raised half of the money and got the rest in grants. It was an arduous process. A number of other schools agreed with the Hopewell representative.

Elizabeth Park: School Closing

- Elizabeth Park is closing; they are looking for advice/guidance on navigating transitions for students. Some students will be going to Finley Creek (where a new school is being built); others, from Uplands, will be going to Blossom Park.
- Castlefrank/Katimavik went through similar transition recently - discussions between the schools could be useful.
- It was suggested that grants from other schools and fundraising would help with costs related to the closure.

Manotick: Ideas for 75th school anniversary?

- Elgin just had 125th anniversary - discussions between the schools could be useful
- Suggestions included: souvenirs, cake, inviting alumni, time capsule, combining celebration with Spring fair

Calendar committee: Christmas holidays - 2016-17: A survey will be sent to parents in January asking for preferred timing of holidays

Merivale: Survey on change.org about the International Baccalaureate program



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- Members asked to read the petition at <https://www.change.org/p/ottawa-carleton-district-school-board-international-baccalaureate-programme-in-ottawa-s-west-end-through-the-ocdsb>

7. Connecting the Dots: Elementary and Secondary, with P. Shaver, SSC Chair

Paula Shaver, OCASC Secondary School Committee Chair shared an update on secondary school developments. A copy of the [Secondary School Review](#) documentation was circulated. It was suggested that members with children in grades 7 and 8 attend SSC meetings as it will help with transitions from middle school to high school. Meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month (next two meetings: 14 January 2016 and 11 February 2016).

8. Tool to Support Councils: Idea for Online OCASC Toolbox, with D. Childs

The OCASC “Toolbox” Proposal was circulated and members were asked to take it home and read it, so it could be discussed and (if approved) implemented at a later meeting.

- ## **9. The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm and Chair Neufeld invited members to stay for the holiday social part of the evening.**