

Ward 16 Council Meeting – January 13, 2014

Meeting Notes

Present (as per Sign-In sheets): Adam Beck: Rita Gallippi (P); Adam Beck: Alison Hall (VP); Adam Beck: Sharon Gomes; Adam Beck: Greg Synowicki; Balmy Beach: Susan Morgan; Duke of Connaught: John Kyriazis (VP); Duke of Connaught: David Darling; Duke of Connaught: Sara Tropea; Earl Beatty: Gillian Gunn; Earl Haig: Olga Ellis (P); Earl Haig: Scott McPhee; George Webster: Kim Pividor (P); George Webster: Terry Doyle (VP); Gledhill: Joel Krentz; GA Brown: Noureen Abbasi; Kew Beach: Sarah Crymble; Norway: Carina van Heyst (P); Norway: Kim Mercer; Norway: Samantha Risdale; Norway: Kari Svenneby; Selwyn: Lenore Brooks; Williamson Road: Robert Gordon; TDSB: Sheila Cary-Meagher; Vicky Branco (S)

(P) Principal; (VP) Vice Principal; (S) Superintendent

Meeting called to order at 7:05 p.m.

1. Welcome and Introductions – Sharon Gomes and Greg Synowicki, Adam Beck School Council Co-Chairs
 - Co-Chairs have been active at Adam Beck Jr PS for 15+ years
 - proactive school council executive addresses parent *concerns* before they become *issues*
 - school council goal > how best to improve/support student education
 - school and parent representatives, together with Adam Beck Community Centre staff, developed anaphylactic policy that is applied consistently by all

2. Overview of Host School – Rita Gallippi, Principal – Adam Beck Jr PS
 - 80+ year old school located in the “Upper Beach”
 - currently home to 475 students in Grades JK-6
 - as a dual track school Adam Beck offers an English stream (Grades JK-6) and a French Immersion stream (Grades SK-6)
 - 96% of students’ first language is English; 14 other languages spoken at home
 - Full Day Kindergarten will commence in September 2014; new construction at north end of school site is now underway (1 classroom to be retrofitted; 2 classrooms to be added)
 - Kindergarten teaching team employs Reggio Philosophy and Inquiry Based Learning strategies to drive student learning through inquiry, observation and experience
 - certified Gold EcoSchool
 - in 2013, school community created/maintained a kindergarten outdoor learning garden; hope to create a similar space for primary/junior students in 2014
 - iPads, Smartboards, Mobi, Mimio, laptops, etc. are used in all classrooms
 - Integrated Arts (dance & music) program teaches students to express themselves through creative means ; program provides opportunity for students to: (1) develop a curiosity/interest in the performing arts; (2) create, perform and experience the performing arts in a safe/comfortable environment; (3) appreciate a variety of art forms, both historically and geographically; and, (4) acquire a vocabulary of arts terminology and concepts so that they may think critically and speak fluently about art performances encountered in their daily lives; visiting artists and itinerant music instructors complement daily arts curriculum
 - Integrated Arts program offerings also include: Primary and Junior Choirs; Strings, Band and Orff Itinerant music programs, Music Club, Drama Club, Folkdance; NB* Adam Beck choir recently performed at Toronto Marlies game at Ricoh Coliseum
 - extra-curricular sports, clubs, intramurals include: cross country, volleyball, basketball, badminton, soccer, slo-pitch, track and field, hockey, swim teams
 - school community regularly participates in Scotiabank Marathon, Terry Fox Run, Jump Rope for Heart events and works with Community Centre 55 to support the less fortunate
 - dedicated, active School Council works with staff to support student success; classroom volunteers; “fun” and “fund”-raisers > monies raised support school initiatives, i.e. visiting artists programs (including yoga and Bollywood dancers), math/science presentations, additional computer hardware/software, etc.
 - a number of Adam Beck parents were recognized by Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Culture for their volunteer efforts in 2013
 - also located on site, Adam Beck Community Centre; programs available for all ages including: sports, arts, crafts, dance, drama, cooking, fitness, yoga, etc.; for more info, visit <http://www1.toronto.ca/parks/prd/facilities/complex/13/>

3. Questions/Discussion re **Full Day Kindergarten (FDK)** – Vicky
 - 10 Ward 16 schools will implement Full Day Kindergarten in September 2014 (i.e. Adam Beck, Bowmore, Duke of Connaught, George Webster, Kimberley/Beaches Alternative, Norway, Secord, Selwyn, William McCordic, Williamson Road)

- all sites will require significant renovations/construction to meet provincially mandated program requirements (i.e. all FDK classrooms must have washrooms, sinks, etc.)
- Kindergarten registration begins in February 2014
- re full-day vs half-day program > children may be enrolled in half-day program; interested parents are advised to speak with school Principal ASAP; NB* most children participate in full day program after few months
- re gap between English and French Immersion programs > currently being addressed; aiming for 50-55% split
- re French Immersion FDK placements > placements will be offered; NB* no guarantee French Immersion FDK placement will be in home school
- re FDK Optional Attendance > FDK Optional Attendance is “closed” at all schools for September 2014; new rule also applies to siblings attending same school; admission will be based on availability of space
- re Before/After School Care > 20+ students must request before/after school care in order for program to be offered; contact school Principal and/or register online ASAP

4. Ward 16 Parent Conference Brainstorming – Vicky

GROUP 1

- Board Improvement Plan > how does it influence our School Improvement Plan; how to read and interpret their expectations, i.e. how to understand/translate curriculum expectations/report cards; consistency in marking (between teachers)
- Special Education > how to navigate Special Education system; how to access resources; how to advocate for our kids; timelines - how long do you wait to get help
- advocacy > better education system; best practice of School Council

GROUP 2

- food/nutrition and impact on learning
- physical activity and learning
- transitioning curriculum from school to home > how do we bridge learning to home
- provincial test (EQAO) and debunking testing myths; anxiety; understanding the test
- social media > cyber bullying; cyber harassment; sex-ting; legal implications; explaining to students
- how do we get full-time working parents involved and engaged in school past email; what are strategies

GROUP 3

- role of parent council/roles on council
- bylaws > how to create; what should be included
- strategies for paperless communication
- IEP > how do these work
- School Support Team (SST) meetings
- strategies to attract parents to council; ensure diversity (i.e. grade, socio-economic, etc.)
- council succession planning
- fundraising > what can/cannot be paid for; grants available; requests from Board, etc.; resources other than \$\$; pairing with other schools
- address inequity between schools/councils
- how to use council to enrich/integrate with classroom

GROUP 4

- education research > we keep asking parents what they think without telling them what we already know
- inter-council communication (like Model Schools) > rather than top down, grass roots
- building/creating partnerships
- communication within schools > well thought out; communication process for parents
- French Special Education
- helping/supporting your child with French Immersion when you don't speak French
- budget process

GROUP 5

- getting grants > where; how to apply; for what
- anxiety in the classroom > how to deal with it at home; in the class, in the school as a whole
- lunchroom programs > JK/SK; intramurals; how do we as parents support these programs
- JK/SK Full Day > ECE, how does this integrate in; outside time; quiet time

- how do you blend home and school
- fun vs fundraising > how do you strike the balance
- supporting student achievement > ideas on how to do this effectively
- outdoor learning/classrooms > fundraising - what can we as parents do/not do; how do we promote use of alternate spaces (outside of school)
- sharing information from other schools outside of Ward meetings
- musical learning > how do we incent our kids (i.e. Adam Beck and Raptors); more diversity in instruments, song and movement
- how is TDSB planning to improve math literacy across the Board

NB* As Sheila let FDK presentation/discussion continue to 8:50 p.m., all remaining agenda items were carried forward.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

February 27, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

Secord ES, 101 Barrington Avenue