

Ward 16 Council Meeting – February 27, 2014

Meeting Notes

Present (as per Sign-In sheets): Adam Beck: Rita Gallippi (P); Duke of Connaught: David Darling; Earl Beatty: Gillian Gunn; George Webster: Kim Pividor (P); Secord: Lisa Moser (P); Secord: Heather Tormey; Secord: Peter Saros; TDSB: Sheila Cary-Meagher; Vicky Branco (S); TDSB: Catherine Dorton; TDSB: Cathy MacKenzie

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

Meeting called to order at 7:04 p.m.

1. Welcome and Introductions – Heather Tormey and Peter Saros, Secord School Council Co-Chairs
2. Overview of Host School – Lisa Moser, Principal – Secord ES
 - school first opened in 1915; current facility built 35 years ago
 - enrolment > 660 students in Grades JK-5; 200 of which are Kindergarten students
 - plans to become JK-8 school > on hold
 - culturally diverse school community; 50% of students speak English as a second language
 - Full Day Kindergarten to be implemented September 2014; construction now underway
 - as TDSB Model School for Inner Cities, Secord is committed to (1) employing innovative teaching and learning; (2) offering support services to meet social, emotional and physical well-being of students; (3) recognizing school as the heart of the community; (4) conducting ongoing research, review and evaluation of students and programs; and, (5) sharing successful practice
 - working towards EcoSchool certification; school-wide waste audit conducted Dec/Jan
 - programs offered: special education (Mild Intellectual Disability, Autism, Home School Program); English as a Second Language; International Language Programs (Romanian, Spanish, Bengali, Urdu, Bulgarian, Mandarin); Grade 4/5 Aboriginal demonstration classroom
 - extra-curricular clubs, sports, intramurals include: choir, computer, games, Lego, musical theatre, violin, football, basketball, volleyball, folkfest, etc.
 - parent volunteers run nutrition programs including daily breakfast, healthy snack, and full vegetarian lunch program
 - strong, dedicated, active School Council works hard to increase/support parent engagement; plans to expand community garden > in the works
 - also located on site > parenting centre; Secord Community Centre; YMCA (school-aged childcare program); Annie's Place (preschool/kindergarten childcare centre)
3. Ward 16 Parent Conference Brainstorming – Vicky
 - goal > complete plans by June 2014; hold event sometime end of September/beginning of October 2014
 - audience > parents of all Ward 16 students

SPECIAL EDUCATION

- how to navigate Special Education system; both English and French Immersion students
- how to access resources
- how to advocate for our kids
- timelines – how long do you wait to get help
- process – how long should it take to get kids support they need
- Individual Education Plan (IEP); Independent Placement and Review Committee (IPRC), School Support Team (SST) > what are they and how do they work

PHYSICAL/MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

- food/nutrition and impact on learning
- physical activity and learning
- bullying
- anxiety in the classroom > how to deal with it at home; in the class, in the school as a whole
- social media > cyber bullying; cyber harassment; sex-ting; legal implications; explaining to students

PARENT COUNCILS

- advocacy > better education system
- sharing best practices of School Council; inter-council communication (like Model Schools) > grass root rather than top down
- role of parent council/roles on council
- mandate; bylaws > how to create; what should be included
- structure of council (i.e. committees, etc.)
- strategies to attract parents to council; ensuring diversity (i.e. grade, socio-economic, etc.)
- succession planning
- volunteer appreciation/recognition
- fundraising > what can/cannot be paid for; how to use resources other than \$\$
- “fun” vs “fund”-raising > how do you strike the balance
- address inequity between schools/councils; teaming up with other schools; sharing resources
- building/creating different partnerships
- grants > what is available; where do you find out more; how do you apply
- how to use council to enrich/integrate with classroom
- outdoor learning/classrooms; how do we promote use of alternate spaces (outside of school)

CURRICULUM/EDUCATION

- school budgets
- School Improvement Plan; how to read and interpret
- how to understand/translate curriculum expectations/report cards; consistency in marking (between teachers)
- provincial test (EQAO) and debunking testing myths; anxiety; understanding the test
- education research > we keep asking parents what they think without telling them what we already know i.e. why are we doing what we are doing
- classroom management/curriculum delivery > methodologies, strategies
- JK/SK Full Day > ECE, how does this integrate in; outside time; quiet time
- musical learning > how do we incent our kids (i.e. Adam Beck and Raptors); more diversity in instruments, song and movement
- math/literacy programming > how TDSB is planning to improve Board-wide
- transitioning curriculum from school to home > how do we bridge learning to home
- supporting student achievement > ideas on how parents might do this effectively
- extra-curriculars > inconsistencies between school offerings

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

- helping/supporting your child with French Immersion when you don't speak French
- lunchroom programs, JK/SK
- extra-curriculars, intramurals > how can parents support these programs; requirements of volunteers, permitting process, etc.
- how do you blend “home” and “school”
- communication within schools > well thought out; communication process for parents; strategies for paperless communication
- how do we get full-time working parents involved and engaged in school past email > what are strategies

TDSB/THE BOARD

- budget/budget process
- Board Improvement Plan > how it affects School Improvement Plan
- communication between Board and schools; Board and parents > how does it work
- poverty reduction strategies > creating equity between schools Board-wide
- *NEW* - TDSB Advisory Committees > mandate, membership, etc.
- *NEW* - Model Schools for Inner Cities > program overview, how best practices can be applied in all schools
- next steps > develop specifics, i.e. list of (1) possible dates; (2) possible locations; (3) possible presenters
- coordinator needed !!?

4. Environmental Coordinator Report – Catherine

- TDSB green bin program began Fall 2013; about 200 TDSB schools are currently participating this compostable waste collection program including Earl Haig, Kew Beach and Secord ; 6 more Ward 16 schools have signed up and hope to be up and running Spring 2014; to be eligible, schools must first complete online survey at <http://tdsbweb/survey/surveyAD.asp?id=1559> (*survey must be accessed from TDSB-networked computer*); for more info re green bin program and/or waste audits, contact Catherine; NB* this is City of Toronto waste reduction program, TDSB/schools do not receive any incentive for participation

- pilot project with (LEAF), a non-profit tree advocacy group, will begin in Spring/Fall 2014; looking to work with 3 Ward 16 schools; project specifics > (1) LEAF will donate/plant 2 trees per school site; and, (2) Catherine will provide one 30-60 minute tree care workshop for senior students/teacher reps/parent volunteers, in exchange for school distributing pamphlets re LEAF backyard tree planting program to school community; NB* project successfully delivered at Williamson Road in Fall 2013
 - *suggestion* > link LEAF pilot project with existing Roots of Empathy program (i.e. all “babies” need special care)
 - Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) update > while TDSB had planned to inoculate 1500 trees, only 800-900 trees were healthy enough to receive injections; diseased trees will be removed before year end; diseased ash tree trunks can be repurposed; for more info, contact Catherine
 - for more info re any of the above, and/or to share your green/eco ideas, contact Catherine at catherine.dorton@tdsb.on.ca
5. French as a Second Language Advisory Committee (FSLAC) Report – Cathy
- none
 - Ward 16 Alternate FSLAC Rep needed; responsibilities > attend monthly meeting (at 5050 Yonge Street); attend/report at monthly Ward 16 Council meeting; for more info, contact Cathy
 - next FSLAC meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. on April 10th at 5050 Yonge Street, Boardroom
 - as Ward 16 FSLAC Rep, Rita Kamacho represents your interests on this committee; for more info, contact Rita through Cathy at cathy.mackenzie@tdsb.on.ca
6. Parent Involvement Advisory Committee (PIAC) Report – Cathy
- none
 - Ward 16 Alternate PIAC Rep needed; responsibilities > attend monthly meeting (at 5050 Yonge Street); become a member of 1 working group committee; attend/report at monthly Ward 16 Council meeting; for more info, contact Kate
 - next PIAC meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. on April 8th at 5050 Yonge Street, Boardroom
 - as Ward 16 PIAC Rep, Kate represents your interests on this committee; for more info, contact Kate at katewallisPIAC@gmail.com
7. Superintendent Report - Vicky
- Directives/Verdict of Coroner’s Inquest re Jeffrey Baldwin; Jeffrey Baldwin, a TDSB student, died at age 5 after years of mistreatment by his grandparents; Coroner’s Inquest (February 2014) resulted in 103 recommendations aimed at several institutions; 12 of these recommendation are specifically directed to the TDSB (see attached)
 - all Ward 16 school administrators have reviewed court recommendations with their respective staffs
 - Police Reference Check (PRC) application has changed; ALL volunteers in TDSB schools must submit PRC application including Vulnerable Sector Check and \$15 fee to Toronto Police Service before commencing volunteer service (if cost is an issue, parent is encouraged to speak with school Principal); Annual Offence Declaration (AOD) to be submitted in subsequent years; understand that some schools have allowed volunteers into schools/classrooms on 1-2 occasions, but this is no longer acceptable; policy is to be consistently enforced in all schools across the Board to ensure student safety; reminders/applications to go home with students in Spring 2014 and again in June 2014; NB* TDSB will accept proof of Police Reference Check/Vulnerability Sector Check completed for one’s employer
 - Board-wide PA Day > March 7; March Break > March 10-14
 - Model Schools for Inner Cities > all MSIC schools to become WIFI enabled; MSIC Parent to Parent Conference to be held between 9:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on April 5, 2014 at Cedarbrae CI (East) and Thistletown CI (West) - parents from MSIC schools to be registered first, other parents welcome pending space availability; 9-week MSIC CPAC Entrepreneur Program being developed with George Brown College, program will teach adults how to set up and run their own business (soup), NB* product to be sold to TDSB schools for lunch programs
 - *suggestion* > entrepreneur program would probably be better received if offered in local school
8. Trustee Report – Sheila
- TDSB 2014-2015 budget to be passed by Board on March 5th
 - background: TDSB budget process begins in September/October; Board determines its annual budget based on Ministry of Education (MOE) formula used in previous year and adjusted to reflect current enrolment; in March/April, MOE then advises TDSB how much \$\$ it will actually receive; NB* due to formula changes initiated by MOE each year, March/April \$\$ figure is historically very different (usually lower) than that calculated in September/October and, as a result, TDSB is traditionally faced with a considerable deficit
 - this year, TDSB has decided to demonstrate that it has successfully balanced its books in advance of MOE March/April announcement; in this way, TDSB hopes to be able to show the public how MOE keeps changing the rules of the game (i.e. its formula) and how this directly impacts TDSB annual budget
 - thrilled to report that TDSB has approved funding for additional MSIC coaches for 2014-2015 school year

- new contract currently “in the works” for caretakers; hopefully this will address facilities concerns, not the least of which is exorbitant charges for basic maintenance services (i.e. pencil sharpener installations, etc.)
- Sheila/Vicky are exploring possibility of reestablishing woodworking shops in Ward 16 schools (DA Morrison, Duke of Connaught); proposal would see gradual implementation of “maker labs” (students design/create items using cardboard instead of wood); shop facilities to be shared with neighbouring schools (like pool/swim programs); if proposal is approved, programs will be phased in gradually to accommodate teacher training

Meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

April 7, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

Crescent Town ES, 4 Massey Square