

DRAFT

Ward 10 Council Meeting
Minutes
Monday, January 25, 2010
Harbord CI

In attendance:

Truman Jong (Ogden), Becky McMurray (King Edward), Liz Crawford (Kensington), Zaireen Myles (OOOPS/King Edward/Harbord), Sally Potter (Central Commerce), Christine Watt (Central Commerce), Sabrina Zuniga (Harbord), Jean Rajotte (Hawthorne), Mary Bredin (Clinton), Domenic Bellissimo (OOOPS), Abullais Chowdhury (Ryerson), Patti Parashos (Essex), Briony Glassco (Orde), Chris Tabbitt (Huron), Christine Peterson (Horizon/Clinton), Johanna Wong (Orde), David Wong (Orde), Katherine Childs (King Edward), Joann Sochor (Palmerston), Nancy Freeman (Palmerston), Susan Hart (Heydon Park), Marie Foley (Dovercourt), Kathleen Foley (Dovercourt), Gabrielle Langlois (Rosedale), Jennifer Webster (ALPHA), Sherry Biscope (Montrose), Jutta Schaaf (Howard), Peter Emmenegger (da Vinci), Jerako Biaje (Dewson), Maritza Guzman (Central Tech), Rodrigo Fuentes (Principal, Harbord Collegiate), Sheryl Freeman (Principal, Central Tech), Wendy Hughes (Principal, Clinton), Karen Falconer (Superintendent of Education, SW6), Chris Bolton (Trustee, Ward 10, Trinity-Spadina), Tyler Johnson (Administrative Assistant to Trustee Bolton), Esther Levin (Constituency Assistant to Trustee Bolton)

Guest: Karen Grose, System Superintendent, Programs, TDSB
(apologies for any errors or omissions)

MOTIONS

**1. That the draft Agenda be approved with the following change:
Item # 3, Video Screens, be moved to follow Item # 4, Programs in the TDSB.**

Moved: Sherry Biscope; **Seconded:** Jean Rajotte; **Approved.**

2. That the draft Minutes from December 7, 2009 be approved.

Moved: Jean Rajotte; **Seconded:** Briony Glassco; **Approved.**

3. That the meeting be adjourned.

Moved: Sabrina Zuniga; **Seconded:** Sally Potter; **Passed.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm.

ACTIONS

1. Principal Freeman will send information to Esther Levin about the Media Open House at Central Tech. to distribute to the Ward 10 mailing list and post on www.myward10.ca

2. Esther Levin will post information about the pool parties to www.myward10.ca and distribute it to the Ward mailing list.

MINUTES

1. Welcome and Introductions

Katherine Childs chaired and welcomed everyone. Introductions were made around the table.

Overview of Host School, Harbord CI:

Principal Rodrigo Fuentes welcomed everyone and provided a brief overview of Harbord CI:

- Harbord has been in existence since 1892;
- it has a strong alumni base, with many well known Canadians among them, which helps to improve learning for Harbord students:
- variety of language programs: International Languages (Portuguese, Mandarin, Cantonese, Spanish), Latin, both French immersion and extended French and ESL;
- vibrant arts program;
- piloting video screen as a way to improve student engagement;
- raised \$8,000 for Haiti relief in 5 days and are discussing Harbord plans for the next phase of 3-5 years as Haiti rebuilds;
- for more information, go to <http://www.tdsb.on.ca/profiles/5510.pdf> .

2. Approval of Agenda and Minutes

a.) Agenda

Motion: That the draft Agenda be approved with the following change: Item # 3, Video Screens, be moved to follow Item # 4, Programs in the TDSB.

Moved: Sherry Biscope; **Seconded:** Jean Rajotte; **Approved.**

b.) Minutes

Motion: That the draft Minutes from December 7, 2009 be approved.

Moved: Jean Rajotte; **Seconded:** Briony Glassco; **Approved.**

3. Programs in the TDSB – Karen Grose

Karen Grose, System Superintendent, Programs, TDSB:

- the program department serves schools and works very closely with them;
- there are a number of “demonstration classrooms” in the TDSB (280 across the system), which are used for professional development and Leadership Development Strategies:
 - these provide an opportunity for staff to develop talents via mentoring, demonstrations, observation and participation in demonstration classrooms in other schools;

- changes to homework and report card comments have come out of this program and parental lobbying;
- the program department supports schools in whatever way they can (for example, supporting schools with special programs, students through specialized instruction or personalized instruction) to assist in student success;
- this department is a link to the Ministry of Education, for instance in curriculum review which occurs every 7 years; most recently in a review of the elementary curriculum;
- student achievement is combined with the arts, sports, outdoor education among other programs.

Q. Are there particular areas where the 280 demonstration classrooms are located?

A. The classrooms are located across the TDSB and consist of a wide range of classrooms and grades and type of program, for instance, applied, ESL, Special Education among others. It was pilot tested in a grade 9 applied English class with a master teacher.

The process that was used to develop the TDSB model consisted of:

- researching learning models on demonstration classrooms around the world, for instance in Sweden and also closer to home in York Region and the Thames Valley;
- using research, developing TDSB model based on best practices and our own input;
- during pilot, interviewing students and teachers in the pilot classroom regarding what they learned and the strategies used;
- identification of teachers for demonstration classrooms with help from principals; were looking for teachers who used particular strategies in their classrooms (such as having varied levels of students in their classes);
- demo classroom teachers were asked to open up their classrooms three times per year and received a day of related professional development; were 290 demonstration teachers;
- the model teacher and the students were brought together with the demonstration teachers to talk about their experiences in the pilot;
- the model teachers identified their special/particular strengths and demonstrated them to the others;
- for the first month, teachers signed up to visit demonstration classrooms; surveys indicated that they loved it and how it impacted on their own teaching;
- a guiding teacher visits each of the six teachers in her/his 'group' in their classrooms;
- teachers said it was the most meaningful training they'd received;
- support staff and other TDSB staff can also visit demonstration classrooms.

Q. This sounds like a mentoring model – how much contact do the visiting teachers have with the ‘mentor’, and is this being extended to new teachers?

A. The guide follows up with the visiting teachers within six weeks. Already, some of the groups of six have developed their own group after the demonstration visit and share lesson plans, information, strategies, etc. with each other and act as a support group for each other. The teachers in each group are from different schools. The program is open to all staff from long-term occasional teachers to long-time teachers.

Q. Is the model also for international languages teachers, who are not CUPE members?

A. If they were invited to attend, they would be able to attend. The department provides professional development for the Continuing Education managers and they provide it for their teams.

Q. What are some of your largest challenges?

A. The elementary curriculum: there are documents from the Ministry of Education that are subject based – there are very many documents and they are wonderful documents. You have to take into account the students – their development, their knowledge, their experience and their interests. In the feedback on the review of the curriculum, the TDSB made clear to the Ministry that they are teaching children, that is, you have to have heart and art in the teaching. This involves integration of the curriculum and the presentation of the curriculum: for instance, when writing a book report, why does it have to all be on the same book and presented in the same way/format? The TDSB is moving dry curriculum documents into more exciting presentations.

Q. What role do parents have in influencing the curriculum, with their ideas and desires? For example using multi-sensory education for children with learning disabilities? This parent has been trying to see if her child’s special education teacher can get the appropriate training.

A. Karen Forbes is responsible for Special Education and she would be able to give a better answer this question. In general, it starts at the local level with the principal and they would contact Special Education or Programs. Her department (Karen Grose’s) would be contacted by the teachers and/or principals about specific concerning specific information and/or resources.

Q. How many demonstration classes are in Ward 10 schools?

A. Karen could get a list to Trustee Bolton and he could count them up. She cannot distribute a list widely because it has teacher information on it.

Q. What about learning and boys and individualized learning? We lose a lot of boys. Are there any programs designed that are keeping boys interested? And what about parent engagement in this?

A. Tomorrow is the Boys Education Strategy Meeting. The concern is not with all boys. The question is determining which boys are losing interest and why,

and how is the education system going to serve these boys? This disaffection of boys is happening around the world and there is an explosion in concern about boys' learning and learning styles.

The program department has identified a high yield strategy for boys and are working on instruction strategies for boys. The strategy will work for girls as well. They will augment some of these strategies for children/boys with different learning styles. Mentoring is also huge for kids and boys, for example, Boys to Men and mentoring clubs. Trustees have requested staff to provide information on programs for boys – they are just at the beginning stages with this. We cannot do this without parents.

Q. One of the principals asked about changes in the curriculum.

A. We will see fewer expectations. Now there are 3,756 expectations in the elementary curriculum. Karen thinks we will see more groupings under big ideas/themes, for example, the environment, which might include social justice, art and other subject areas. The province has heard that the current number of expectations is way too many and that they have to be pulled together in a child centered way.

Q. It sounds as if the curriculum is interfering with individualized-based learning. Does the TDSB work with other boards to encourage them to back off from a curriculum centred approach?

A. Over the past four years, the TDSB has backed off from a curriculum centred approach and have had teachers group themes. The Board has a sense of what will happen and teachers are already pulling items together under themes and larger ideas/concepts.

Q. There are many alternative schools in the TDSB, and especially in Ward 10. Each has its own way of teaching – does the program department learn and change and utilize these approaches?

A. When a new alternative school is being proposed, the superintendent involved shares the proposals with the program department, such as in the case of da Vinci. The program staff reads the proposals and so have a good sense of what goes on and how these schools individualize teaching and learning. They totally look for and use what they read – the unique, different approaches.

Q. 1.) Is there any program to deal with those students who lack the ability to write well? 2.) How quickly will the boys learning program be brought on stream, especially to high schools?

Another parent commented that as someone who teaches children to read and write, this teaching starts at the bottom. Teachers don't get the proper language training. She agreed that the rate of illiteracy in high school is bad.

A. Karen G. has heard this comment many times. However, more and more students are graduating from high school and the Ontario students do well on international tests, so this does not apply to all kids.

Not any one method is 'the' answer. Now teachers use what is called a "balanced literary" approach. This approach uses phonics, whole language, spelling tests and more.

Q. 1.) How would parents have input? 2.) What about student assessment?

A. 1.) Parental input would be through contact with the teacher and maybe the principal. Parents provided input on broader themes that impact families, such as the homework policy and making report card comments more meaningful, both of which the Ministry requested.

2.) Assessment: Karen's department helps teachers understand how to assess in general and individually and how to teach to the individual child. Classroom assessment of students is ongoing.

A. One of the principals responded to the question about teens not being able to write. There is a whole range for situating the writing task – what is it for and why is the student doing it? The new curriculum provides some changes and more latitude.

Q. A question was raised concerning the implementation of non-competitive activities in gym class, where some parents didn't want their children to participate due to religious reasons. Is this something that should be taken to the program department to resolve?

A. If a group of parents want to withdraw their children from a program, an alternate can be offered. More information would be needed to provide a better response.

The Chair thanked Karen Grose for coming to the Ward 10 Council meeting.

4. Video Screens

Trustee Bolton commented that the council was fortunate to be meeting at Harbord where they had the opportunity to see the video screens. On January 27, Principal Fuentes will host a press conference to discuss/present the video project with staff and students. It is a pilot program being carried out only in the Ward 10 secondary schools. An assessment of the pilot program has to be carried out and presented to the Board before the end of the spring term. The purpose of installing the screens was to enhance/encourage student and community engagement.

Video Screen Committee: A Ward 10 committee has to be established to develop Ward 10's view on the screens. The report has to be written by the end of April to be in time for budget considerations. The committee should include parents of elementary and secondary students who live across the ward.

Volunteers for the committee: Jean Rajotte, Sally Potter, Zareen Myles, Sabrina Zuniga (chair), Sherry Biscope, Becky McMurray and a principal.

Sheryl Freeman, Principal, Central Tech.: At Central Tech., the types of notices that have been posted to their video screen are: Central Tech students building

space for Dovercourt Boys' and Girls' Club, and Central Tech culinary students serving the homeless at St. Peter's Church once per month.

ACTION: Principal Freeman will send information to Esther Levin about the Media Open House at Central Tech. to distribute to the Ward 10 mailing list and post on myward10.ca

Karen Falconer added that the screen content is absolutely reflective of the students at each school.

Rod Fuentes commented that at Harbord a student's work is already up on their screen. It is serving as another tool to increase student engagement. A grade 10 student requested that he be allowed to post a final project on social justice on the screen, which has been agreed to. Two other students asked to post their project about HIV/AIDS.

5. Pools

Chris Bolton: two Ward 10 pools are reopening – Kensington and Central Tech. Central Commerce and Bickford will take a bit longer.

We have to keep the message in people's awareness: **these are not school pools, they are community pools.**

Q. How does one find out about the procedure for getting a permit?

A. Chris: You have to contact the permits department at the TDSB. He has recommended to the TLC that a 'one-stop' location be set up for the permits department so that everyone can see which groups have gotten permits and where. Permits are still not online but they are working on it.

To celebrate the reopening of the pools, there will be a pool party on Sat., Feb 6 at Kensington PS from 12 noon until 2 pm. One of the charities will support a pool party at Central Tech. that day from 2:00-5:00 pm. There won't be a charge but there will be a collection for Haiti.

Chris has met with Feed the Children about the earthquake and what can be done. Chris is setting up a website on fundraising for Haiti – about focussed fundraising. He is concerned about what will happen in Haiti once it disappears from the front pages. It is important to keep up efforts. We can encourage our schools to partner with Haitian schools. All of our schools have French so that communication with the Haitian schools is possible.

ACTION: Esther Levin will post information about the pool parties to www.myward10.ca and distribute it to the Ward mailing list.

6. Election of PIAC Representatives

Briony Glassco, the current representative, provided an overview of PIAC:

1. it disseminates Board information to parents;
2. it supports parental engagement, for example, through school councils;

3. it helps develop and support parent working groups, for example, the bussing committee that developed in Ward 10.

Sally Potter commended both Briony and Maritza Guzman, the alternate, for their good job as the PIAC representatives and nominated them to continue. The result was the acclamation of three representatives: Briony Glassco, PIAC representative, Maritza Guzman and Jerako Biaje, Alternates.

7. Committee Reports

PIAC: Briony Glassco reported:

1. ARCs: Rich Daigle is taking over the ARC process and made a presentation on the process at PIAC. The committee members were concerned that the ARC process focuses on the process and not on the end result, that is, on involving parents but not on keeping schools in communities. The PIAC meeting stated that there shouldn't be a surcharge for permits – that the communities want more permits, therefore, more people in the schools. There is a concern about damage in the schools from the use by permitted groups. A solution would be for the permitted groups to pay a damage deposit, which would be returned at the end of the permit minus any costs for damages.
2. Parents will have some input in the selection of principals. Chris Bolton added that this will be the case just for principals and not for other school staff. The Board staff are in the process of developing a procedure for parental involvement. It will begin with a one year pilot project.

International Languages: Johanna Wong reported on the IL meeting at Orde that was concerned with the reinstatement of the Orde IL program. The present instructors were introduced, and parents who had been instrumental in getting the program started in the 1970's spoke at the meeting the positive impact the program had on their families.

Parents requested more professional development for the instructors and more communication between instructors and parents regarding course content.

8. Superintendent's Report

Karen Falconer told the meeting that Central Commerce and Central Tech. together have received a Urban Priority High School Grant (UPHS) for a total of \$474,000. Karen said that they were told to choose one school but refused to do so and ended up receiving twice the amount of money expected. Susan Arnott from Central Commerce was the co-ordinating Vice Principal.

The funds will go towards a prioritized summer program for young men and women. The former hall monitor at Central Commerce was hired last summer to work on the boys program. This summer the program will be extended to other students. They want to obtain more money so that the program can be extended to Harbord, Bloor CI and Heydon Park. The program is fluid and recognizes that teens sleep in so it has a later start time than school does.

Principal Freeman added that this is one of many initiatives and is a way to invest in the school communities and to build sustainable networks in the community.

Karen Falconer congratulated the students at Dewson, Orde and King Edward on their use of French. She had recently visited the schools where she talked in French with them.

9. Information Sharing

Paul Dixon, who has a child at Brock St. PS, read a letter from Chris Glover to the meeting. The letter dealt with the ARC's that are occurring in nearby wards and the possible effects the outcomes could have on schools and students in Ward 10.

Chris Bolton added that the ARC meetings are listed on the TDSB website. There will be an ARC meeting on Feb. 4 in Ward 9.

10. Adjournment

Motion: That the meeting be adjourned.

Moved: Sabrina Zuniga; **Seconded:** Sally Potter; **Passed.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm.