

DRAFT

Ward 10 Council Meeting
Minutes
November 15, 2011
Beverley Street School

In attendance:

Xiao Hong Yang (Charles G. Fraser), Paul Barker (Ogden), Judy Molnar (Harbord/Montrose), Ashwin Ranjit (Huron), David Wong (Orde), Johanna Wong (Orde), Brigitte Lavoie (Dewson), Deborah Williams (Dewson), Jerako Biaje-Wendt (Dewson), Maritza Guzman (Central Tech.), Rebecca McMurray (Clinton), Cheryl Ford (Beverley), Silvia Tarenta (Beverley), Chris Watt (Central Commerce), Marta Baziuk (Palmerston), Geneviève Appleton (King Edward), Kathryn Yung (Palmerston), Eric Mackey (Alpha/Delta), Barak Queija (Niagara), Susan Hart (Heydon Park), Beth Butcher (Superintendent of Education, SW5), Wendy Hughes (Principal, Clinton PS), Karen Falconer (Superintendent of Education, SW6), Sheryl Freeman (Principal, Central Tech), Alana Grossman (Principal, Beverley), Chris Bolton (Trustee, Ward 10 , Trinity-Spadina), Esther Levin (Constituency Assistant to Trustee Bolton)

MOTIONS

1. That the Draft Agenda be approved with the following change:

that "Principal Alana Goodman" be corrected to "Principal Alana Grossman".

Moved: Geneviève Appleton; **Seconded:** Chris Watt; **Approved.**

2. That the Minutes from Oct. 3, 2011 be approved with the following change:

P. 6, **5. Nominations/Elections for Committee Positions**, PIAC:"(roles decided by vote)" should be changed to "(roles decided by coin toss)".

Moved: Bri Lavoie; **Seconded:** Eric Mackey; **Approved.**

3. That Ward 10 have an Observer attend SEAC meetings and report back to the Ward 10 council.

Moved: Barak Queija; **Seconded:** Becky McMurray; **Passed.**

ACTIONS

1. Maria Valente deSa, Karen's assistant, will send the green package of transition information to Esther Levin, who will forward it to the school council chairs and post it on the Ward 10 website.

CARRY-FORWARD

1. Conflict resolution in the curriculum.

MINUTES

1. Welcome and Introductions

Jerako Biaje chaired the meeting and welcomed everyone. Introductions were made around the table.

Overview of Host School, Beverley Street School

Principal Alana Grossman welcomed everyone to Beverley Street School and provided a brief overview of the school:

- Beverley is a school for children with special needs;
- It used to be connected to George Brown as a CNIB training centre for the blind; in 1949 parents purchased the building for \$1.00 as a school for their children;
- 1985 – the architect who designed the Rogers Centre and ??? redesigned the ground floor to bring in more light and to open up the space to accommodate the needs of the children;
- 89 students attend the school and there is a waiting list;
- Recently the school was featured on 60 Minutes showcasing the use and benefits of new technology in the form of electronic tablets (for instance, iPads) with students who are non-verbal; this segment is on YouTube at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F_8b7PgnNQQ&feature=email
- The school was also featured on CBC's The National and Metro Morning, CBC Radio.

2. Approval of Agenda and Minutes

a.) Agenda

Motion: That the Draft Agenda be approved with the following change: that "Principal Alana Goodman" be corrected to "Principal Alana Grossman".

Moved: Geneviève Appleton; **Seconded:** Chris Watt; **Approved.**

b.) Minutes

Motion: That the Minutes from Oct. 3, 2011 be approved with the following change: P. 6, **5. Nominations/Elections for Committee Positions**, PIAC:"(roles decided by vote)" should be changed to "(roles decided by coin toss)".

Moved: Bri Lavoie; **Seconded:** Eric Mackey; **Approved.**

3. Transitions

Superintendents Falconer and Butcher presented information on the two transitions periods – from grade 6 – 7 and from grade 8 – 9.

Grade 6 – 7 Transition: last year Karen Falconer looked at holding a transitions evening for this group but it was felt that it was not needed because middle schools are not very open for out-of-district students in contrast to high schools which are more open.

The solution was to develop a flyer for the grade 6 – 7 transition. Sometimes, even if a child is in a feeder school for a middle school and they are from out of district, they may not be able to go to the feeder middle school. The flyers are posted on the Ward 10 website, www.myward10.ca. Lord Lansdowne has Extended French making its catchment area broader than that of some other schools. Dovercourt (in Ward 9) is new to having grade 7 and 8 and will replace Kent PS. There are already two full classes of grade 7's this year.

With the transition from grade 8 to 9, the choices are more complex.

Q. What should be done with the brochures?

A. Karen Falconer: take them back to the principals, who do already have copies and also the school councils. They can use them – hand them out.

Trustee Bolton: it is the responsibility of the ward representatives to take information and resources back to their school councils.

The Green package is for the grade 6 to 7 transition.

ACTION: Maria Valente deSa, Karen's assistant, will send the green package of transition information to Esther Levin who will forward it to the school council chairs and post it on the Ward 10 website.

The grade 8 to 9 transition evening is next Monday evening, Nov. 21. Karen added that most kids make decisions about high school in grade 6 so this night is very relevant.

Principal Sheryl Freeman, Central Tech.: Central Tech is reaching out to families of children in grades 5 to 8 for their information nights. They provide tours of the school – it is a good school for tours.

Folder: SW6 Family of Schools Evening on November 21st: In previous years only about 50-60% of the local kids attended the local high schools. Downtown kids are willing and able to take the subway wherever they need to for school. Through active promotion of the SW6 Family of Schools, we have increased the percentage by 15% of in-district students staying in this district. The evening will be hosted by Principal Freeman and Principal Rodrigo Fuentes, Harbord CI. Last year 450 people attended this event. There will be an introduction and then an opportunity to talk with students from the various schools. Translators and childcare will be available. This evening is not just for grade 8 students and features both alternative and traditional schools. The transition from grade 8 to 9 is one of the key times for parental involvement. The flyer about the grade 8 to 9 transition night should have gone home with all grade 5 students.

Superintendent Butcher: last week at Kent School elementary students came to meet staff and learn about three technical schools – Central Tech, Danforth Tech. and Western Tech. Her high schools, except for the alternative high schools, are not in Ward 10. Some of the alternative schools include the Skateboard Factory, located at Scadding Court although a TDSB program, where students learn about marketing, art, design and taking a project from concept to execution. The Bike Repair program at Central Commerce is based on the Skateboard Factory model.

A parent raised concern about the lottery system that is used to gain entry to the alternative middle schools and questioned whether it could be relaxed or removed.

4. Break-out into Elementary and Secondary Groupings

Elementary Group:

Barak Queija reported:

- Smart Board - workshop for parents;
- information on how to introduce kids to computers without getting them hooked; making computers a useful tool for education and not just a distraction;
- one parent mentioned a teacher's blog that provides parents with sites that support the curriculum;
- would like all teachers to keep a blog describing what kids are working on in class – could the Board or the Ward support teachers to make this happen, possibly by creating a website template that makes it quick and easy to do? Could this be incorporated into PD days?
- teachers don't communicate because they want your kid to be more independent in grade 7;
- Would also like more information on :
 - school improvement plans at the class, school, FOS and Board level;
 - achievement levels;

- learning skills;
- the impact of full day kindergarten on daycares and school enrollment;
- the lottery system for alternative schools;
- admission to French immersion (i.e., decision making process on which school is your French immersion school);
- funding available for parent engagement and school councils;
- curriculum development and standardized tests;
- homework policy;
- insurance for school councils (liability) including statistics on actual risk to council if don't have own insurance;
- who is in charge of what, that is, the ministry, board, school, etc.;
- how the school board is funded;

Community:

- building community beyond the classroom;
- after 4 programs, getting community members involved;
- look at other schools that have been successful in getting community members involved.

Secondary Group:

Chris Watt reported:

- liked the question guide for the discussion and chose two or three items to focus on;
- parent engagement – were lots of good ideas, particularly from Central Tech. (e.g., parent/caregiver book club);
- how parents find out about how the education/school system works; aren't aware of the available options, especially for children with special needs.

A parent summarized that both groups want to know who is responsible for what in the school/education system.

Social Justice was mentioned – it seems that only some of the alternative schools have social justice as part of their curriculum. Dewson has a social justice committee and they had a speaker come from the Professional Learning Communities. Wendy Hughes, Principal of Clinton PS, added that elementary schools have equity committees. Beth Butcher related that there are a lot of discussions about learning goals and a big idea is to add a social justice component to the curriculum. The Learning Communities are teams of teachers that work together to share and develop ideas, approaches, materials for use in classrooms. A parent added that it would be a good idea for the schools to do something around Social Justice that involves the parents.

Karen Falconer: Principal and Vice-Principal Selection was not brought up. Last year was the pilot year for having parents involved in the selection of principals. Karen questioned how this worked out – is this something that requires discussion? There is a lot of confidentiality in the process, about the individual(s) being considered, but the process and the school principal profile should be public. Chris Bolton commented that the time of greatest turn-over is at the end of the school year, with a few at the end of December/beginning of January.

5. Information Sharing

The Question: Does your school have a policy/process to ensure participation in school activities by children whose families might not be able to afford paid activities?

Geneviève Appleton, King Edward: a portion of the school council funds goes to a fund to assist families that can't afford to pay for extras.

Becky McMurray, Clinton PS: it is up to the parent or child to approach the teacher. If a teacher suspects that someone can't participate due to financial constraints, they may feel the situation out. At one point, the school let it be known that funds were available and there was a flood of requests.

Jerako Biaje, Dewson: doesn't think there is such a policy, however, people are asked if they can add something extra and the extra goes into a pot that can be accessed by those who need the assistance.

Marta Baziuk, Palmerston: the principal has a budget line for this type of situation. The school council also has a School Equity line in the budget so that everyone can participate in programs that are school related or sponsored, such as a Sports Evening. However, only those who can pay for them can attend After School programs and some paid courses at lunchtime.

Karen Falconer: there is a strong ethic in this part of the City, that if a family and/or a school cannot afford to pay for those students who can't afford the extra fees, they won't be left out or behind. Contact Karen directly for help. No one is turned down.

Sheryl Freeman: at the Secondary level, many kids travel long distances for special programs. Although there are no fees for the programs, there are for school trips. They have a 50/50 deal and the kids in need are known to the guidance counsellors. They have subsidized lunches and some breakfast programs. The TTC cost is high also. About 37% of the students at Central Tech. are over 18 and many don't live at home. Under the Urban Priority High School fund, a ministry program, they were able to use funds for extras. This year, the funds have been redirected. She wondered why the City doesn't help more with the transit fares.

Karen Falconer: if you know that a child is in crisis, go to the principal. The Toronto Foundation for Student Success provides cash to any family in need with a minimum of paperwork and with a very quick turn-around. They also have the Hope in Action Fund which can be found at: http://www.studentsuccess.ca/hope_in_action_new.html

Marta Baziuk stated that Palmerston is contributing to the Hope in Action Fund. Principal Alana Grossman added that they have accessed the fund and received funds in one and a half days.

6. Committee Reports

PIAC: Eric Mackey and Jerako Biaje reported.

Eric reported that the PIAC meeting he had attended held very formal elections. Maritza Guzman, a former PIAC ward rep., stated that the Parent Engagement Conference that PIAC held recently was very good. Jerako added that the workshops were mainly facilitated by parents and that the sessions were well received. This conference is very worthwhile, is free, childcare and lunch are provided.

FSLAC: Kathryn Yung reported. 1. John Tancredi, Central Coordinating Principal, gave the staff report with the French program enrolment numbers. 2. Palmerston PS has a strong French committee – do other schools have this? They would like to connect with other schools in a less formal way than through the FSLAC. Apparently the TDSB has wonderful French language resources and are looking at ways to encourage parents to support their children's access to them 3. All French curriculum is being revised with a hoped for implementation in 2012. The Euro Community Framework is being used as a resource in the curriculum rewrite and will help provide a benchmark for students' fluency and conversation skills.

SEAC: Jerako Biaje attended the last meeting. Wards do not elect/send representatives to this committee. The reps. are reps from organizations and there are a few community reps. The Special Education committee in the Ward is a ward based committee that was established a couple of years ago with a focus on Kids Who Learn Differently. Susan Hart was on this committee.

Although SEAC does not have ward reps., the chair of the committee was open to someone from the ward attending the meetings. Johanna Wong would be willing to attend these meetings.

Motion: That Ward 10 have an Observer attend SEAC meetings and report back to Ward 10.

Moved: Barak Queija; **Seconded:** Becky McMurray; **Passed.**

Space: Chris Bolton reported. This committee will likely become very important over this year due to discussions that are beginning about space in the schools, the programs at the schools and crowding in some parts of the ward and extra space in other parts. The next meeting of the Space Committee will be held on December 20th.

One of the transitions that is coming up will be from school to daycare and full day learning and its impact. The Board is trying to make this transition as easy as possible for families coming into the schools. There needs to be a group discussion about how it will be dealt with.

The newest trustees are being given information sessions to bring them up to speed about existing programs. The staff are starting to make recommendations but are not yet ready to bring the information to parents. This is due in part to a lack of clarity on the part of the Ministry of Education.

When you go back to your schools, acknowledge the importance of the space issue and inform your council that this issue will be discussed at a Ward meeting, perhaps in January.

ASAC: Eric Mackey reported. The committee is becoming more active with teachers, parents and high school students on it. The committee holds informal meetings once a month away from the TDSB offices and the next month an official meeting. Chris, who is the trustee on the committee, responded that the committee is open to everyone. Beth Butcher is on the committee.

7. Trustee's Report

Trustee Bolton reported that the Regular Board meeting was the next day, November 16th and informed the meeting that there were two trustee vacancies due to election of two trustees to the provincial legislature. The Ward is getting one of the specialized elementary programs, a Vocal Academy at Ryerson Community School. This, and other optional programs, will be voted on at the meeting tomorrow night.

Eric Mackey: the City held a Daycare Providers meeting to talk about the impact of Full Day Kindergarten on school based daycares. So far it has been minimal but in 2012, the impact is expected to be large, with an expected 96 centres not receiving money from the province. Twenty-five to forty percent of daycares could close because they have a large percentage of JK and SK kids. Once these children are in full day

kindergarten, the day cares will lose them during that time. Two issues for the daycares are staffing and changing the existing spaces to accommodate younger children.

Parents aren't aware of the potential impact on their childcare arrangements – there may be before and after school programs for JK and SK children but not for younger or school age kids. A meeting is coming up at the end of the week to inform supervisors about applying to run full-day programs at their schools. Everything comes down to funding – these are not-for-profit daycares and they don't have excess funds.

9. Next Meeting Dates

Thursday, Dec. 15, 2011

Tuesday, Jan. 17, 2012

10. Adjournment

Motion: That the meeting be adjourned.

Moved: Barak Queija; **Seconded:** Judy Molnar; **Approved.**