

**Lisgar School Council Meeting
December 2, 2008
Minutes**

Council Members Present: Edward Chen, Rachel Eugster, Doug Griffin, Lianhua He, Tina Hogue, Lynn Honsberger, Bob Irvine, Gertrud Jeewanjee, Paul Kronberg, Hui Li, Liz Melanson, Sue Nishi, David Paull, Kate Preston-Thomas, Ruweida Shire, Sanjay Srivastava, Bruce Warnock, Lawrence Wolofsky.
Ex-officio: Karen Gledhill, Anne McKillop-Ostrom.

Council Member Regrets: Jeremy Chitpin, Beth Doubt, Jamie Gardiner, Pam Hopper-Coculuzzi, Stephen Wang.

Parents and Guardians: Jennifer Liu, Laura Lunn, Beth Cole

Guest Speakers: Janice Isaac, Mark Meng

Meeting Chair: Rachel Eugster

Meeting Secretary: Gertrud Jeewanjee

1. Welcoming Remarks (Rachel Eugster)

- Rachel welcomed all attendees; attendees introduced themselves.

2. Approval of Meeting Agenda

- Student council presidents sent their regrets.

It was

MOVED BY: David Paull

SECONDED BY: Ed Chen

THAT the agenda be accepted with the following change:

- OCASC report moved to an earlier time

CARRIED

3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

It was

MOVED BY: David Paull

SECONDED BY: Kate Preston-Thomas

THAT the minutes be accepted with the following changes:

- Bob 'Irvine' corrected to 'Irvine'
- Last name added to SpaceSim student presenter Maclean Rouble
- Student 'co-chairs' corrected to 'co-presidents'

CARRIED

4. Student Council Co-Presidents' Report (Jeremy Chitpin and Jamie Gardiner)

Student council co-presidents sent their regrets; Karen G. provided an update on their behalf.

- (a) Dance was very successful with about around 400 students, 10 teachers and 3 administrators.
- (b) United Way Breakfast raised \$1,760; it was very well organized.
- (c) Canned Food Drive started this week.
- (d) Battle of the Grades started today and will run for two weeks.

5. Presentation - AP Program

- This is an international program that awards university credit for high school courses; 105 participating countries; 600 high schools in Canada, 180 high schools in Ontario.
- Ms Henderson is coordinating this program.
- Lisgar offers 8 courses (3 for 11th grade : English language, extended French, Statistics,
- 4th year: English Literature, European History, Music History, Music Theory Strings, Calculus, Latin (not for credit, because there is no ministry code for a Latin course)
- 4th year extended French AP will be offered for the last time in next school year; it has been taken off the list by the organization.
- Fees are approximately \$125 per course to cover for the exam in May, teacher training and resources, refreshments and supervision during exams, and the annual fee to be part of this organization.
- The exams have to be written on a certain day; security is very high, all documents have to be signed off; each student receives a booklet with stickers that have to be attached to their exams.
- Students are excused from classes to prepare for the exam.
- Many teachers are very dedicated and go beyond their regular teaching responsibilities to prepare the students for the exam.
- Through to May 2008, Lisgar students achieved a grade average of 4.39; 13 Lisgar students earned AP Scholar Awards.
- The results are sent to the student, the high school and all universities the student has applied to.
- More information is available at www.ap.ca and www.collegeboard.com.

AP European History (Mark Meng)

- The teaching is geared towards gaining skills to acquire the knowledge and to express the knowledge in written responses.
- Part A of the test contains 80 multiple choice questions drawing on themes of social, cultural/intellectual, economic and political/diplomatic history
- Part B contains document based questions: analysis of 12 primary source documents; essay writing (thesis, organization of ideas, etc.), evaluation of bias and point of view.
- Part C is comprised of thematic essays: two essays have to be written on a specific subject where evidence and arguments are linked to a central thesis, which answers the essay prompt directly.
- In 2005, Lisgar students performed above average in multiple choice and well above average in the free response part.
- In 2008, Lisgar students sharply improved on the multiple choice and stayed well above average in the free response part.

English Language APs (Janice Isaac)

- Two options are available for English: (1) ENG4UR (English literature and composition; this AP fulfills requirement of grade 12 graduation); (2) EWC4UR (Writer's craft; this is an optional course at the senior level).
- Reading Expectations: students need to study literature (poetry, fiction, drama) from a variety of periods and genres, 16th to 21st century; students reflect on reading through discussion; students will need to know a few works well in order to respond to the 'open question' on the exam, which is similar to the essay prompt on the ENG4U Board-wide exam; students must develop skills in 'close reading' (i.e. critical analysis); students must read and analyze a great deal of poetry.
- Writing expectations: the students' writing must reflect a critical analysis of literature; students will do creative works to practice emulation of voice; students will write using secondary source material; students will use rich and accurate diction; students must use a variety of sentence structures; writing must show a balance between generalization and illustrative detail; students must use rhetorical strategies and literature terminology.
- Advantages of taking an AP in literature: enriched curriculum that prepares students for university; AP results are ready for university applications; AP can allow to obtain advanced standing or give

credit at a university; possibility of becoming an AP Scholar - an academic elite.

- Exam has three sections: (1) 55 multiple choice questions (3 passages of poetry or prose given for evaluation); (2) a short essay; (3) an open question.
- Lisgar students always do very well on these exams.

Q: How long is the exam?

A: Three hours.

Q: Do children with learning disabilities receive extra time to complete the exam?

A: An application has to be made to the organization through the guidance councilor; organization does not provide the same accommodations as the Board does.

Q: Are text books for exam preparation available as software for children with learning disabilities (like universities, who offer these text books for free if they have been published in Canada)?

A: Students can buy additional material like books on tapes; the process should be initiated early on in the school year.

Q: Is there a prep taking place before the exam if the course had been taken in first semester?

A: Yes; it usually takes place during the lunch hour.

Comments:

- Tips from Bob Irvine, whose Lisgar alumnus son is in year three at Mt. Allison: During the admissions process, universities sometimes change their policies on granting credit for AP courses that your student may have completed. Some universities are poor at communicating their policies about AP courses. Your student may need to do some sleuthing.
Policies on granting credits for completed AP courses typically vary from faculty to faculty within a university. University curricula in science and engineering are highly integrated, with higher-year courses typically building on courses taken by the student in earlier years. With this in mind, these faculties may be reluctant to grant credits for high school AP courses completed by your student. The university will certainly note the completed AP courses in deciding on admission of your student and the award of any scholarships. However, they may not give any credit for them.
Arriving at university, some students who have completed AP courses in high school do not know how to use to best advantage the credits they receive for them from the university. Student may be tempted to use the credits to lighten their course load in first or second year. The problem is that most students are required to choose a major very early in their time at university. If students choose a lighter course load in first year, then they are exposed to a smaller range of subjects in which they can possibly major. They may also run into problems meeting pre-requisites for advanced courses. It is better for your student to use their AP credits strategically in later years, for example if they wish to spend a semester studying abroad or completing an honours thesis.
- Students are not always aware on how to make best use on the credits.
- Taking AP courses makes a good impression on a university, even if no credits are given.

6. Staff Representative Report (Paul Kronberg)

- Summatives begin December 15.
- Some departments will have new curriculums next year; the changes aren't huge; topics are being shifted between grades.
- The PD Day in November went well; it provided important face-to-face time for teachers.
- The staff is working on input for the updated principal's profile.

Q: How are topics for PD days developed?

A: Some topics are directed by the Board, some by the PD committee, which is comprised by teachers.

7. Principal's Report (Karen Gledhill)

- (a) Remembrance Day Ceremony: students were well behaved; thanks to David and other parents for attending.
 - (b) Grad Photos have been taken; last retakes on January 12th.
 - (c) Report cards distributed November 18th. The newsletter is on the school's website, lisgar.ca; hard copies are available this evening.
 - (d) Drama Presentation "Jabberwock" - Thursday, December 4 and Friday, December 5 at 7:30PM in the Alumni Auditorium.
 - (e) Jazz and Choir Evening on December 10 at 7:30PM.
 - (f) Winter Music Night on December 11 at 7:30PM.
 - (g) December 19th, last day of classes before the holiday - modified schedule, assembly, early dismissal; admin. team serves hot chocolate to students from 8:15AM to 8:45AM.
 - (h) All June 2008 grads are invited back to speak with the grade 12 students during the noon hours on December 17 and 18.
 - (i) Ministry grant applications, "Speak Up You Are The Student Voice" - we have made two applications:
 - Student Council Transitions, Diversity and Inclusion Project - between \$300 and \$800 - our application was to support a one day leadership camp in the spring for our incoming grade 8 students;
 - Student Led Teacher-Facilitated Project - \$1500 - our application was to support our SpaceSim program.
 - (j) Feeder School Visits - began this week and will extend into the remaining December weeks.
 - (k) Thirty-seven girls taking Physical and Health Education are attending a one day workshop on Violence Against Women. They will share information with their peers later this semester.
 - (l) Character Education Posters - in the main stairway - 8 of our students depicting the character attributes we reinforce with the students.
 - (m) U.S. post-secondary applications - have begun! Counselors are busy!
 - (n) New curriculum coming in the Science, Computer Science and Grade 9 Geography courses for September 2009.
 - (o) Transfers - period is February 17 to 27; we do not know our transfer cap as yet; we will be using the online process again this year for the first two days.
 - (p) Grade 8 Parent Information Nights - January 12 - "Gifted" Program; January 14 - Academic and Applied Programs.
- Q: If PD workshops have to be attended due to curriculum changes, does this come out of the school's operating budget?
- A: No, this expense is covered by the Board if it is a Board-wide change.

OCASC Report (Kate)

- Last meeting was an informal gathering with an open house and a tour of the Board offices; the new director welcomed the participants; Lisgar was well represented.
- Chalk-it-up: please give any questions to Karen to be asked at the meetings.

- Smart boards are used very differently by different teachers; PD workshops might help teachers to maximize the use.
- Discussions on deadline for assignments took place; some teachers get large amounts of work for marking just before deadline, making it difficult for teachers to mark and return the work within a short time frame; currently, teachers are not allowed to deduct marks for students submitting their work after the deadline.
- Nominations of people to different committees at the board level took place; Karen P.T. resigned from all executive positions at OCASC because of disenchantment surrounding the Getty motion; two other people resigned from the OCASC Executive as well. Currently, the executive is not very effective.
- - Kate will continue as Lisgar rep to OCASC.

Comments:

- Teachers will start giving drop dead dates for handing in work; they will assess work, but won't provide any feedback if the material is handed in after the deadline;
- Letting students submit after the deadlines is discouraging for students who hand in their work on time.
- If students don't face consequences for handing in material late, they are not encouraged to meet the deadline. There need to be consequences for handing in late.

8. School Board Matters:

- (a) Rachel circulated all mail that had come in for Council.
- (b) Motion to severely restrict school transfers (Lynn Honsberger)
 - At the meeting, where the motion was voted on, Lisgar was represented by nine parents.
 - The motion was defeated and didn't move forward because there was no policy in place the motion could be based on.
 - Some trustees asked the Board to start doing things top-down.

Comments:

- Lynn played a very significant role in preparing the questions and assigning them to Lisgar parents.
- At the chairs meeting, they were asking for input regarding transfers; the OCASC chair reported back to OCASC that the fact that parents were asking many questions had a very positive impact and that this practice should be continued.

It was

MOVED BY: Ed Chen

SECONDED BY: Liz Melanson

THAT Council acknowledge Lynn's work to defeat this motion.

CARRIED

- (c) Secondary Gifted Review (Liz Melanson)
 - The motion will come before the Education Committee next week; it should appear on the board agenda next Friday together with the results of the consultations to determine how the locations of gifted centres are determined.
 - Final recommendations should come forward in June; the Board is still planning to implement the recommendations in September 2009.
 - The superintendent in charge of spec ed, Dawn Paxton, was apparently quoted in a recent community newspaper article as saying that it is very unlikely that Lisgar's gifted program will be moved.
- (d) Motion to rescind (Liz Melanson)
 - Going before SEAC tomorrow.
- (e) Lisgar is the host location for next Zone 10 meeting; no Zone 10 meeting was held in November.

9. Council Business:

- (a) The update of the Principal's Profile in the works.
- (b) EU ("Education Underground"): it was suggested to improve the network with feeder schools. Glashan, one of our feeder schools, has expressed interest in closer ties and a good communications link. Parents who have connections to other schools are encouraged to act as a link to these other schools.

Action Item: Karen to provide the number of students in the Extended French program who are coming from feeder schools.

--- Students attending the Extended French Program: 23 out of 29 students from Hopewell, 11 out of 80 students from Glashan. ---

It was

MOVED BY: Rachel Eugster

SECONDED BY: Sanjay Srivastava

THAT Council draft a letter to the OCDSB in support of siting a Middle French Immersion program at Centennial and Glashan. CARRIED

- (c) Board grant of \$500:
 - Lillian Yip sent last year's report: the \$330 left over was allocated to cover some of Lisgar's copying costs; the Council approved Lillian's financial report.
 - The decision on the allocation of this year's funds has been postponed to the January meeting.
- (d) Email distribution lists (Gertrud Jeewanjee):
 - Parent distribution list: currently around 800 subscribers; only co-chairs and secretary can send mails to this list; all other mail to the list is held in the spam filter for manual release; replies to these emails are routed to the secretary. If parents would like to distribute important information to the parent group, it is recommended that they send the material to the co-chairs to make sure the mail doesn't get held up in the filter.
 - Council member distribution list: all members can send mails to the whole group as long as they use the email address they initially subscribed with; email coming from any other email accounts will be held in the spam filter for manual approval. Replies to emails sent through the list distribution will automatically be sent to the whole group unless the address field is manually changed. Please always add your name at the bottom of your message so everybody knows who sent the message.
- (e) Holiday donations: about 10-12 donations have come in already; the treasurer will tally up the donations.
- (f) Community service opportunities: The question was presented to council as to whether we should provide space on the web site where parents can post volunteer opportunities.

Comments:

- A disclaimer should be added on the top of the web page that the content is not validated by Council.
- There is a set of criteria of what can be counted towards the community hours posted on the Board web site; a link to that page could be added.
- Many organizations call the school for volunteers; the onus is on the parents and students to verify if a particular volunteer service counts towards the community hours.

There was a consensus to post info on a trial basis if any comes forward.

- (g) The "holiday assemblies" discussion item was postponed to the January meeting

(h) Presentations for Parents (Laura Lunn):

Possible topics include:

- Internet cyber bullying (presented by police force)
- Drugs and alcohol in inner-city schools; undercover police officers patrol the downtown core
- Adolescent learning

Comments:

- A list of suggested topics should be sent to parents to vote on.
- Feeder schools should be invited.
- Another possible topic is “academic success”
- Timing: around March, but not on the same night as council meetings.

10. SSC Report (Beth Doubt)

Beth D. sent her regrets and submitted an update by email; please see the annex for details.

11. Other business

- Chess tournament: students want to attend the Ontario University Championships in Waterloo, May 8-10, 2009. The admission fee is \$40 per student; additional costs are estimated at \$65 per student for accommodation, plus food; the transportation issue needs to be resolved, i.e. parent volunteers are needed to drive to Waterloo.

12. Round Table

After 35 years of teaching, Karen will retire in January 2009; no replacement has been announced yet.

13. Adjournment of Formal Meeting

The council meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm.

ANNEX

Summary of SEAC Meeting of 5-Nov-2008

Dawn Paxton reported that Learning Support Services is working on the following issues:

1. A report on the summer learning program--to be presented to Education Committee this month
2. the Secondary Gifted Program consultation and report; consultations have been held; input is still being received via email at SGReview@OCDSB.CA
3. Special Incidence Portion (SIP) funding applications--these must be submitted every year, but can result in granting of several million dollars from the Ministry;
4. the Special Education Audit report from the Ministry has recently been received by Director Thomson;
5. Special Equipment Amount (SEA) applications-- An ongoing process of application submissions results in the ordering and distribution of the equipment and ministry-licensed software for children with learning difficulties. This is a labour intensive process, including organizing the hundreds of pieces of equipment, coordinating setup and scheduling training.

Presentation by Maria DePalma, Clinical Research Manager, and Meredith Temple, Psychometrist, Hospital for Sick Children re Learning Disabilities and Literacy

Maria DePalma and Meredith Temple presented an overview of the research and intervention programs that have been established at the Hospital for Sick Children to improve the reading abilities of children. The program began approximately 30 years ago, and has assisted more than 4,000 students. The interventions focus on the core aspects of reading disabilities.

Currently, the Empower Reading program, based on this research, is being used in Grades 2 to 5 classrooms in a number of school boards in Ontario. Students in the program, even those in the 1st or 2nd percentile of learning capacity, are experiencing success with learning the strategies and improving their reading. This is a for-cost program and there are no plans currently in the OCDSB to try it. Research is also being done on developing a related program addressed to the high school level.

More information can be found in the SEAC Minutes for 5-November-2008, currently available as agenda item #6a in the Education Committee agenda, 17-Nov-2008 at http://ocdsb.ca/au_bot_meeting-dates.asp.

Learning Disabilities Program Quality Program Indicators

Cathy Oakley and Rachelle Sintic presented an overview of the learning disabilities (LD) program at the elementary and secondary level and provided an overview of the LD quality program indicators (QPIs). They reviewed aspects of the QPIs, including information regarding teaching practices, commitment to student success through the physical layout of the classroom, classroom management strategies, and resources, as well as leadership and community.

These Indicators are accessible with the SEAC Agenda package for 5-November-2008. Access these by clicking on agenda item 6b at web-site

http://ocdsb.ca/Documents/Board_Meetings/Meetings/2008/November_2008/SEAC_Nov5_2008/SEAC_nov5_2008.asp

Report No. 08-195, Special Education Classes, Programs and Services for 2009-2010

The process for approving changes to Special Education Services has changed due to the passing of the Getty motion on Nov.3. Public consultation process will take place in December (Dec.9 and 11, details to be announced). A final report will be presented to SEAC, to Education Committee and to Board in February. At this time, trustees may make motions about specific recommendations. The reporting structure will also include two more reports, one in June to provide a status update, and one in October to report the final enrolment numbers for that school year.

Superintendent Paxton invited SEAC members to attend the 9 or 11 December 2008 public consultation session, provide input via the OCDSB web site, or contact their trustees regarding their input to the staff proposed changes. It would also be possible to schedule a discussion at the December 2008 or January 2009 meeting regarding any of the proposed changes.

SEAC has established a task force to review Report No. 08-195, and present a report to the 3 December 2008 meeting--coordinated by Beth Doubt. This will not be a final report on these proposed changes, but will give feedback to staff on what rationale and information would enable SEAC members to better understand the impact of the proposed changes. It is expected that SEAC will present its recommendations on each of the staff proposed changes to special education classes and programs in February 2009 to inform trustees about SEAC's position.

Governance and Training

A plan to address the need for a facilitated session on SEAC Governance in the OCDSB has been developed, and will likely take place after a training session which will be presented by Lynn Ziraldo in late January through early March. Lynn is a well known speaker on SEAC roles.

Alternative Dispute Resolution Parent Guide and Pamphlet

OCDSB is one of the six school boards participating in a pilot project on alternative dispute resolution (currently only implemented for disputes within the area of special education programs and services); the OCDSB will be assisting the Ministry in developing a policy statement on this issue. To deal with cases that come forth, 8 external facilitators are in place; some are retired civil servants, former trustees, etc. If mediation is required, the Board will hire a professional mediator to address the dispute. Mediation processes are less formal than appeal processes, and can take place more expeditiously. However, one does not give up one's right to appeal if the mediation does not work out. *A Parent Guide and pamphlet for Alternative Dispute Resolution* is being developed by staff and will be made available soon.