

**Lisgar School Council Meeting
October 7, 2008
Minutes**

Council Members Present: Jeremy Chitpin, Pam Coculuzzi, Feng (Wendy) Ding, Beth Doubt, Rachel Eugster, Doug Griffin, Lynn Honsberger, Phil Italiano, Li Hui, Liz Melanson, David Paull, Sanjay Srivastava, Stephen Wang, Bruce Warnock, Lawrence Wolofsky.
Ex-officio: Karen Gledhill, Anne McKillop-Ostrom.

Council Member Regrets: Edward Chen, Bob Irvine, Gertrud Jeewanjee, Sue Nishi, Kate Preston-Thomas, Ruweida Shire.

Parents and Guardians: Debbie Brisebois, Jennifer Liu.

Meeting Chair: Rachel Eugster
Meeting Secretary: Liz Melanson

1. Welcoming Remarks (Rachel Eugster)

--Rachel welcomed all attendees and invited those present to introduce themselves.

2. Approval of Meeting Agenda

--There were no changes to the agenda and it was approved by consensus.

3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

It was

MOVED BY: David Paull

SECONDED BY: Pam Coculuzzi

THAT the minutes of the September 17 meeting be accepted with the following changes:

- page 2 (Lisgar Council tradition of room votes) "contagious" be changed to "contentious"
- item #13: replace Chair: R. Eugster and Co-Chair D. Paull with Co-Chairs: Rachel Eugster and David Paull.

CARRIED

4. Student Council Co-President's Report (Jeremy Chitpin)

Jeremy noted that the welcoming events for the new grade 9 students had been very successful. The games organized by the Students' Council had helped to break the ice and many new friendships formed quickly. Clubs Day had also been very successful with a high number of clubs out seeking participants and lots of grade 9 students showing interest in joining in. The Terry Fox Run had a good level of participation but Student Council felt that senior student participation was not as high as they would have liked. To date the total amount in pledges is not known but the tally is over \$1500 and there are more envelopes to be opened. The co-presidents did the run in pink tutus, which met with widespread approval among their fellow students.

Upcoming events include Oktoberfest (root beer chug and sausage barbecue included) and the Student Council Grade representative elections.

Jeremy responded to a question from Dave P. regarding the current make-up of the Student Council. There are 8 directors and assistant directors and a current total of 39 members on the Student Council.

Re: the Terry Fox Run, Bruce W. asked if the on-line donations had been included in the total. Karen said she did not know and would check with the staff member who is coordinating the pledge count.

5. Staff Representative's Report (Phil Italiano)

Nothing to report.

6. Principal's Report (Karen Gledhill)

a) Revised Enrolment numbers – we are 3 students over our projected enrolment – 1068. Two additional classes will be added by the end of the week; most likely, two math classes will be split. One is an applied math class and one is a combined gifted/academic class. The split will be effective October 10th.

b) Over 30 clubs are up and running! The list of clubs will be up on the website shortly. Most clubs meet at noon.

c) Mock Timetable Night (September 18) was successful – excellent feedback from many parents.

d) Terry Fox Event, Friday, September 26th was enjoyed by all who participated. The pledges are still being collected – over \$1500 collected so far.

e) Letters of Concern – to be mailed out this week. In response to a question Karen explained that these letters go out to let parents know if students are having difficulty in a class.

f) Activities coming up in October and November

- Post-Secondary Information Night for parents of Grade 11 and 12 students – Wednesday, October 15th, 6:15-7:00PM. Sanjay Srivastava, father of Anand (June 2008 grad) will be making a presentation, from a parent's perspective. The grade 12's attended an assembly this morning and received information re: scholarships, important dates and the college and university application process.
- Undergrad Awards Ceremony – Thursday, October 16th, 7PM.
- LEAF Coffeehouse – Friday, October 17th.
- Senior Music Night – Wednesday, October 22, 7:30PM.
- Reach for the Top Spaghetti Dinner and Trivia Night – Friday, November 7th. Cost will be approximately \$10.00 – proceeds go to CAYFO (Child and Youth Friendly Ottawa) and the Reach Team. Sponsorship/donation of prizes greatly appreciated – looking for individuals/teams (of 4) to participate.
- United Way Pancake Breakfast – November 21st (Pyjama Day)

g) The play the senior class will be putting on is called "Jabberwock," by Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee (December 4-6). It is a coming of age story about James Thurber and has a connection to the poem about a "jabberwock" by Lewis Carroll. It is a fun play about a very interesting family.

- h) Lyall Thomson, Director of Education, OCDSB, will be visiting Lisgar on December 15th.
- i) Parent Workshops/Information Sessions – are there any suggestions? Possible topics could be Special Education; Habits of Effective Teens; Mental Health; Stress Management; Internet Safety (Facebook, online social networking, cyber bullying). With respect to stress management, Karen noted that there will be a special assembly for the grade 12 students in December to help them relax, talk about stress management and post-secondary choices.
- j) Adopt-A School Program – Carmello’s on Cooper, a restaurant on the corner of Cartier and Cooper, has “adopted” Lisgar. The owners have purchased 10 seasons’ tickets for all home games (67’s hockey team) to distribute to deserving students. James Conoy (the owner) has been invited to our School Council meetings. The school will give the tickets away to deserving students, e.g. for demonstrating the character attributes that are encouraged through character education. Information about this will be posted on the website.
- k) Thanks to the parents for the lovely brownies and chocolate treats for the teachers – they enjoyed them on the PD Day, Friday October 3 (celebrating World Teacher Day).
- l) Karen reminded parents to visit the school website, lisgar.ca, for up-to-date information, including the “Athletics” section – all games for all teams are listed.
- m) Parent-Teacher Interviews, Semester 2 – date has been changed from April 8th to April 16th (conflict with Passover).
- n) “Take Our Kids To Work” – all grade 9 students will attend an assembly on October 8th and will receive information and a permission form for the national “Take Our Kids To Work” day on Wednesday, November 5th. Grade 9 students spend the day at the workplace of a parent, guardian, relative, neighbour, family friend.

7. Assessment and Evaluation Policy (Anne McKillop-Ostrom)

V-P McKillop-Ostrom circulated *The Educator’s Resource Guide for Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting of Student Achievement* for council attendees to look over. She explained that this document is what the teachers had been receiving training in using on the October PD day. This document has been created by the Board to bring OCDSB practice more in line with Ministry of Education policy. Attendees also received a copy of a two-sided handout which was developed as a summary of the policy for teachers, students and parents. The PD Day activities focused primarily on assessment and evaluation and character education. Key points included: the need for differences in assessing academics and key learning skills to accommodate differentiated instruction; teachers are encouraged to use “backwards design” to emphasize key points in the curriculum at the beginning of the year; final grades are not determined by averaging all marks for the year but by weighting the data according to achievement levels. Ms. McKillop-Ostrom also explained that when students don’t hand work in or hand it in late they are not directly penalized in terms of marks. If necessary, the Student Success Team becomes involved and credit intervention strategies are employed to support the student in completing their work. For instance, if required, a student can be pulled out of the regular class to get them to focus on and work on the assignments that they need to complete to get course credit. It was also made clear that character development is part of the assessment policy—teachers are encouraged to emphasize the traits of honesty, responsibility, perseverance, etc. It was noted that the November 13 PD Day will also focus on the new Assessment and Evaluation practices.

It was

MOVED BY: David Paull

SECONDED BY: Pam Coculuzzi

THAT the Council extend our deep appreciation to staff for the work they have been doing with the Assessment and Evaluation policy to keep students engaged and parents informed and involved.

CARRIED

Discussion on this issue continued. Doug G noted that his daughter had come to Lisgar in grade 11 from another school and has found the school very welcoming and the learning environment here much more supportive. Some parents raised the concern that some students might interpret the policy as permission to let their assignments slide because they are not penalized when things are late or not handed in. Karen responded that the emphasis now is on the work itself rather than the deadline, and on achieving overall curriculum expectations. The goal is that students demonstrate knowledge of the main ideas in a course so that they have the necessary knowledge to move on to the next level/course. She emphasized that teachers must clearly communicate expectations to students so that assignments are manageable. Rachel E asked if it were possible for a student to do work for extra credit if they were interested in doing so. Ms. McKillop-Ostrom responded that this is against Ministry policy because it is seen as giving that student an unfair advantage. Phil Italiano noted that providing extra work for credit would also create a much greater workload for teachers. It was asked whether teachers get together to discuss assessment and evaluation issues for at-risk students. Ms. McKillop-Ostrom noted that this often happens, especially regarding students with special needs.

8. Lisgar 2008-09 Budget (Karen Gledhill)

BOARD ALLOCATIONS:

Operating Budget	\$127,170
Special Education Allocation	\$1,398
Team Transportation	\$7,256
Guidance & Career Education	\$2,600
Dual Support Class	\$750
Student Success	\$11,000

Departments: Fine Arts, Business & Law; Math, Computer Science & Technology; Healthy Lifestyles/Athletics; Student Services; Social Sciences & Library; English & Languages; Science; as well as: Computer Labs; Dual Support Class (additional allocation) – allocated \$76,000

OTHER BOARD ALLOCATIONS:

Office & Technician Assistance Funds	\$2,902
Educational Assistance Funds	\$1,693
Occasional Teacher Funds	\$63,586

Notes relevant to the budget numbers above: The budget is up this year from just over \$124,000 last year. Parents should be aware that the Departmental Allocation comes out of the \$127,170 Operating Budget. It is quite likely that Team Transportation costs could go up significantly as the year goes on. The Student Success funds are locked in, but they may be used

to support some staff training and they support the Breakfast Program. Last year the photocopying budget was \$34,000. The school is targeting this expenditure in the hope that it can be substantially reduced. Course outlines are no longer printed for most students, very few copies of the school newsletter will be printed—parents will be asked to download it from the website, etc. Another significant over-expenditure in the last two years was in the area of the Occasional Teacher funds, where Lisgar overspent by \$23,000. At this point department monies are being held up to cover this deficit. Karen hopes that we will have a balanced budget after this year but emphasized that it can never be a sure thing as there is always a possibility that teachers will fall ill or other circumstances will arise that demand their extended absence from the classroom. The OT budget provides for only 4.35 missed days per year per staff member.

One of Karen's main concerns at this point is that Lisgar will need new textbooks in order to keep up with curriculum changes over the next couple of years and there is no extra money to purchase these books. She noted that grants from the Ministry of Education that used to be available for technology upgrades, etc. have dried up.

Other sources of monies coming into Lisgar: the school fee of \$15—about 85% of our students pay this fee and it covers the cost of the student planners, plus \$1 goes to athletics and \$1 goes to Student Council. The Board is now looking at possibly moving away from use of these planners for most students except grade 9 students and special needs students. Lisgar gets a small income from the school cafeteria—about \$3-5000 annually. These funds are generally put into student activities, e.g. drinks for the kids participating in the Terry Fox Run, etc. There is also an anonymous donor who provides bursaries and \$4000 to help students in need.

9. Committee Reports

OCASC Report (Stephen Wang)

Key points of discussion at the last OCASC meeting were 1) whether parent volunteers helping out in Board schools should be required to have Criminal Record Checks and 2) discussion as to what the main purpose of OCASC should be going forward, i.e. should its main focus be 1) the sharing of information 2) to act as the united voice of school councils and parents 3) facilitating council to council communication as well as communication between councils and the school board. Beth Doubt added that the November OCASC meeting will be held at the Board's central offices and that the new Director of Education will be OCASC's special guest. Beth also mentioned with reference to Karen's comment about the impending need to purchase new textbooks, that Glebe Collegiate had raised similar concerns at OCASC last Spring and that perhaps Lisgar could look into collaborating with Glebe to move forward on finding additional monies for purchasing textbooks.

SEAC Report (Beth Doubt)

a) On-going summer work for Learning Support Services included:

- an alternative dispute resolution workshop
- processing of 150 special equipment claims
- participation in ministry-hosted IEP writing workshops
- preparation for greater community involvement in bullying and students mental health issues.

b) Fall & winter work will include:

- input from SEAC on a proposed diversity and equity framework;
- release of Education for All –K-12 in Jan.2009. This is an extension of the original document which dealt only with Grades 1-6).
- c) Information on Exceptionalities: In September & October, presentations were made by the respective associations on Developmentally Disabled and Down’s Syndrome Children, and on the Autism Spectrum. Staff working with each exceptionality also answered questions about program.
- d) Motion to Request that SEAC be entry point for Spec.Ed. Issues: At the October meeting, a motion was passed requesting that SEAC be the point of entry to board processes involving Special Education issues, that decisions not be made by the Board until SEAC had made recommendations, and that insomuch as possible, public presentations and questions be directed to SEAC as well as to the person’s chosen committee. SEAC also requested that money be allocated for a SEAC training session.
- e) Post 21 Transitioning: A draft information sheet on transitioning was presented, with input to be forwarded to Lorraine Whitby. (Note: The OCDSB is required to develop transition plans for all exceptional students, except solely gifted, who are transitioning from the OCDSB.)
http://www.ocdsb.ca/Documents/Board_Meetings/Meetings/2008/October_2008/SEAC_oct1_2008/SEAC_oct1_2008.asp agenda item 9
- f) Balanced School Year: Information on the Balanced School Year and Year Round Schooling with reference to its potential for improving information retention for exceptional students was presented by Dawn Paxton. It was reported that no research had been found that supported using these schooling calendars methodologies to address needs of exceptional students.
- g) Framework for Special Education: This was presented last June, and is a valuable tool in defining Special Education within the board. Questions continue to be asked about its impact. There is still work to be done on several related issues.
- h) Governance of SEAC: The Board has put forward a paper to serve as a focus to discuss the governance of SEAC within the OCDSB. Schedule and format for the discussion has not yet been defined.

Secondary School Committee (Pam Coculuzzi)

The next SSC meeting will be on October 9th. At the September SSC meeting one of the topics discussed was the matter of transition planning for graduating students. It was noted that some schools are not as active in providing this kind of support as others, and the SSC discussed the possibility of collaborating with the Board to prepare resources for secondary schools so that they can better assist parents in helping their children explore their options. Karen suggested that she knows of some generic Board resources that could easily be made available through the Board’s website. Pam noted that the SSC also discussed the concern that information regarding the new Focus Programs is not getting out to students and parents. The SSC would like to see these programs better promoted and greater participation encouraged. Karen commented that it generally takes a while for these kinds of programs to get up and running. She suggested that at Lisgar we can act to make sure that our kids who participate in these programs have opportunities to speak to their peers and incoming students about their experiences. She stressed

that these programs require a big commitment from students because they often involve leaving the home school environment for a semester at a time. She explained that information about the program is in the annual Secondary Program guide that all students receive and is on the Board website. There is an additional Options sheet that must be filled out for this program. On the matter of transition, Sanjay S. suggested that previous year grads be invited to talk about their transition experiences. Karen noted that this does normally occur in the week before Christmas/Winter holidays. It is possible that an information session of this type could also be offered at the time of the University Reading weeks, when former students would be home and able to return to Lisgar to talk to students.

10. School Board Matters

a) **PRO Grants:** Rachel explained that PRO Grants are available from the province for school councils to use to encourage and enhance parent and community involvement in the school. The deadline for grant applications this year is October 24th. Rachel has all the materials and would be happy to hand them off to anyone at council who has an idea and would like to move forward with it. Beth D. asked if Karen had any priorities she feels a PRO grant might help with, but Karen said there is nothing that comes to mind at this time.

b) **Secondary Gifted Review:** Both Karen and Liz M spoke to the issue of the Secondary Gifted Review. The terms of the Review were approved at the Board's June 23rd meeting. The review is being conducted to rationalize the number and location of the secondary gifted sites. It is expected that the number of secondary gifted sites will be reduced from the current 5 to 3. There will be two consultation/information sessions for stakeholders: one at 7:00PM on October 28 at Hillcrest High School and one at 7:00PM on October 30 at Woodroffe High School. All parents of identified gifted secondary and elementary students should receive a survey on this issue. Liz encouraged parents who feel the gifted program is well-placed at Lisgar and want to see it remain here to attend one of the consultation sessions and make their views known. Karen commented that this Review needs to be viewed alongside a number of other Board reviews and potential policy changes that are currently under discussion, i.e. the work on the Cross-Boundary Transfer Policy and the on-going Beacon Hill-Ottawa East Secondary Accommodation Study, because taken together they could have a significant impact on enrolment at Lisgar.

c) **OCDSB Special Education Framework:** Liz M. noted that the Special Education Framework, which outlines a complex multi-year plan of changes to Special Education programs and services in the OCDSB, will be brought before the Board at Education Committee on October 22nd. The changes that flow from this framework may have an impact on Lisgar because they could affect the location of the intermediate gifted programs that currently feed into Lisgar's gifted program. She hopes to address this issue further at future council meetings. She asked Karen if it would be feasible to ask Learning Support Services staff to give a presentation on the Framework so that we might better understand how it could impact Lisgar. Karen responded that it would be better to request this a bit further down the road as central Learning Support staff are very busy at this time.

d) **OCDSB "Motion to Rescind...":** Liz M spoke to the issue of Trustee Getty's motion to rescind a previous Board motion regarding the authority to approve the nature and location of special education system classes. Liz explained that this issue has been before LSC since April of last year, when council chose to support making a presentation to trustees to encourage them to defeat Trustee Getty's motion as it stands so as to allow the Board to continue to have final

approval over changes to Special Education Programs and their locations. Due to the fact that Trustee Getty's motion had been deferred a number of times, along with Lisgar's delegation to the Board, Liz is in the process of revising and updating the Lisgar Council presentation to incorporate new information, particularly now that the Special Education Framework has been released to the public. The Getty Rescind motion is scheduled to go before the Board at Chair's Committee on October 29th. Prior to this date the revised delegation text will be shared with council for input.

e) **Zone 10 Meeting:** Rachel mentioned that the Zone 10 meeting with our Trustee Jennifer McKenzie and other school councils in our zone will be coming up on October 23rd. Jennifer has sent out an agenda and detailed outline of current issues relevant to our zone. Dave P. will attend this meeting on Lisgar's behalf. The possibility of Lisgar hosting a zone meeting in the future was raised. It was agreed that we should discuss this at a council meeting in the near future.

11. Discussion: Council's Interest and Direction for 08/09

Due to the lateness of the hour it was decided that this discussion would be deferred to the next meeting. With respect to the possibility of arranging a presentation for the next LSC meeting however, Karen's suggestion of inviting Space Sim to present was greeted enthusiastically.

Action Item: Karen will look into having the Space Sim Club give a presentation at the next LSC meeting on November 3rd.

12. Other Business

There was no other business.

13. Round Table

Due to the lateness of the hour no round table was held.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm.