

DRAFT

Ward 10 Council Meeting
Minutes
Thursday, April 15, 2010
Dewson PS

In attendance:

Stephanie Strohmeier (Central Tech.), Jutta Schaaf (Howard/Bussing), Julie Lutete (Harbord), Liz Crawford (Kensington), Patti Parashos (Essex), Steph Carrier (Hawthorne), Jean Rajotte (Hawthorne), Abullais Chowdhury (Ryerson), Tori Smith (Dewson), Jane McGrath (Dewson), Katherine Childs (King Edward), Maritza Guzman (Central Tech.), Johanna Wong (Orde), Briony Glassco (Orde), Chris Tabbitt (Huron), Becky McMurray (King Edward), Susan Hart (Heydon Park), Jerako Biaje (Dewson), Joann Sochor (Palmerston), CherylAnn Samuel-Graham (Dewson), Truman Jong (Ogden), Beth Mills (Principal, Dewson), Sheryl Freeman (Principal, Central Tech.), Karen Falconer (Superintendent, SW6), Chris Bolton (Trustee, Trinity-Spadina, Ward 10), Esther Levin (Constituency Assistant to Trustee Bolton)

Guests: Marguerite Campbell, Central Coordinating Principal, Literacy/Numeracy/ESL

Fidelia Torres, Child Care Services Manager, Early Years Department, TDSB

MOTIONS

1. That the draft Agenda be approved.

Moved: Jean Rajotte; **Seconded:** Joann Sochor; **Approved.**

2. That the draft Minutes from March 2, 2010 be approved.

Seconded: Jean Rajotte; **Seconded:** Becky McMurray; **Approved.**

ACTIONS

1. Esther Levin will post the document on www.myward10.ca tonight and will notify the Ward 10 mailing list.

2. Briony Glassco will send out the recommendations for principal and vice-principal selection.

MINUTES

1. Welcome and Introductions

Briony Glassco chaired the meeting and welcomed everyone. Introductions were made.

Overview of Host School, Dewson PS:

Principal Beth Mills welcomed everyone and provided a brief overview of the school:

- the existing building was built in 1968; it was the first open-concept plan school in Canada;
- a school building has stood on this site since 1884; the first principal was a woman;
- the school celebrated its 125th anniversary last May;
- the junior choir sang at the Blue Jay's game last night;
- dual track school: this year, the student population is 530 and next year it will increase to 555;
- approximately three-quarters of the school is in French immersion and one-quarter is in English;
- seven daycares feed into the school;
- focus of the school is academic achievement;
- participating in Ministry of Education literacy project;
- emphasis on whole child: expressing themselves, thinking and being good citizens; big emphasis on the arts – school council provides support for artists in the classrooms for each classroom;
- Eco-school: won Gold a few years ago and Silver last year;
- native plants along Ossington;
- have a partnership with Pencils for Kids (started by Dewson parent) in a school in le commune rurale de Liboré, République du Niger; have started a school there and provision for scholarship for one girl each year; are honorary citizens of Liboré; (for more information on the program, see www.pencilsforkids.com/who.html?Section=Media);
- third floor is being converted to separate rooms with addition of soundproof walls, doors, lights;
- 'Stream of Dreams' on Ossington fence – from project on role of water in our lives; every child and parent plus politicians and other invited guests painted a fish for the stream.

2. Approval of Agenda and Minutes

a.) Agenda

Motion: That the draft Agenda be approved.

Moved: Jean Rajotte; **Seconded:** Joann Sochor; **Approved.**

b.) Minutes

Motion: That the draft Minutes from March 2, 2010 be approved.

Seconded: Jean Rajotte; **Seconded:** Becky McMurray; **Approved.**

3. Early Learning Program

Fidelia Torres, Child Care Services Manager, Early Years Department, TDSB and Marguerite Campbell, Central Coordinating Principal, Literacy/Numeracy/ESL, TDSB were introduced.

Marguerite stated that most children, when they start school, are ready to learn.

Fidelia provided background on the program (the document, [Overview of Early Learning Program \(ELP\) - April, 2010](#) can be found at www.myward10.ca).

Questions

Q. Will there be funds for capital changes for Year 1? And, how does the funding work?

A. Fidelia: No. There will be a small amount of money for Year 2. The lack of capital funding results in fewer classrooms being available.

A specific budget is set for this program. In Year 2, the 82 classrooms must be established within a specific budget.

Q. What happens with the cap for grades 1-3 because the cap for kindergarten will be larger? What happens with placement?

A. The average numbers for the JK and SK classes will be 26 because there will always be two staff in the classroom. The primary cap of 20 will remain for grades 1-3.

One day, full-day kindergartens will comprise the majority of kindergartens, with averages of 26 students. Once they move to grade 1, the cap will revert to 20 per classroom. In any school, movements with odd numbers of students occur all the time. The TDSB planning department is usually dead-on with numbers. Teaching staff has to adjust to changes in numbers from year to year.

Karen Falconer: Staffing is allocated based on the cap. Once the all day kindergarten is introduced, staffing will still be allocated according to the cap. Staffing to the cap is not to the actual numbers, for instance, there would be three staff for 52 students and the classes would be divided up accordingly.

Q. Are there sites for this year that do have daycares?

A. There are a couple of sites that do have daycares. The board does talk with the existing childcares.

Q. How will the salaries be determined for the ECEs who will be in the classrooms?

A. In the TDSB, ECEs are CUPE positions, so their salaries are on par with existing salaries. They are decent and competitive for the field.

The board has received 1700 applications for the 121 schools. The configuration will be one ECE for the early mornings until early afternoon, the teacher will come for the regular school day and the second ECE will come at lunchtime or the early afternoon. At this time, the early ECE will leave and the second ECE remains for the afternoon and the after-school period.

Q. What is happening with French immersion students?

A. The TDSB has selected one site for a pilot French immersion all day program. The TDSB is the only board trying this for French immersion.

Q. Will the ECEs become assistants to the teachers?

A. Marguerite: The parameters for the responsibilities for each position have to be laid out very carefully. Two days of planning for teachers and ECEs are

scheduled for early June. The legislation states that the teachers and ECEs will work in partnership. The Ministry is providing the training for the teachers and ECEs for the new program. Further information can be found on the Ward 10 website, www.myward10.ca (the documents are: [Early Learning Parent and Community Questions and Answers](#), [List of Ward 10 Schools with Daycare Centres](#) and [Ministry of Education Full-Day Learning and Child Care Frequently Asked Questions](#)).

The Chair added that PIAC has concerns regarding space, washrooms, safety and other issues related to the new program.

4. Follow-up on Assistive Technology

Chris Bolton: For one of the students who attended the last meeting (names cannot be given) – the paperwork had been completed for a computer but it had not arrived. It has now arrived. The situation for the other student is more complex: the paperwork has been completed and this student will get the computer for fall, 2010.

Trustee Bolton added that, at the Regular Board meeting the night before, two hours were spent attempting to resolve the funding situation because there is a shortfall of \$2 million for Special Education. The Ministry has stated that there won't be any more money for Special Education or anything else other than the Early Learning Program.

5. Committee Reports

PIAC: Briony Glassco: she took the issue of problems with Special Education and accessing technology to PIAC to put on the agenda. Only one parent at PIAC did NOT have a child with an IEP or IPRC. This issue should be kept on the Ward 10 agenda.

Q. Does PIAC work with SEAC?

A. There are only 3 community members on SEAC; it is mainly made up of representatives from organizations and associations.

Briony: tomorrow is a province-wide Parent Involvement Conference and she is attending. The Early Years Program is of great concern to PIAC. The conference will also look at Special Education.

Safe & Caring Schools: Briony reminded the meeting to ensure that there is a parent on each school Safe & Caring Schools committee.

Bussing: Jutta Schaaf thanked Ward 10 with special thanks reserved for Trustee Bolton. Chris responded with a special thank-you to Jutta and the Bussing working group. Jutta thanked Beth Mills for reviewing the brochure and providing feedback on it. She continued that parents, teachers, and principals provided feedback. The brochure will be piloted at Dewson and Joann Sochor from Palmerston also volunteered for Palmerston to do so.

Janice Barker took on this project and helped guide it through the appropriate TDSB processes. A special Thank You to Janice was extended. She will pilot the brochure in various sites around the city. If the funds are available, the brochure may be translated.

Jean Rajotte thanked Jutta for her perseverance in this matter. He suggested that an electronic copy be e-mailed to Esther so that it can be posted on the Ward 10 website. A survey will be done to determine the usefulness of the brochure.

Parent Satisfaction Survey: Talk of a survey raised questions about this survey. One parent discovered that there wasn't room for comments and the questions were not very open-ended.

Karen Falconer: the survey is to get an idea of what is offered in the school. It is not about judging but about getting a sense of what parents are looking at/for and feeling about things at their child's school. The main point is to find out if parents are happy/unhappy and to see what can be done to change things. In response to a question about the point of the survey, Karen said it is an attempt to reach parents whose voice is not normally heard, that is, those who don't attend school council meetings.

Sheryl Freeman met with the Central Tech school council regarding what they felt was good and what needed improvement. She knows from having seen other surveys, that parents are not unhappy with their child's school or teacher but with the resourcing of the school.

Chris Bolton: asked that everyone please look at it and complete it.

Kids Who Learn Differently Working Group: Katherine Childs: The recent information session on Understanding IEPs with Principal Marc Green, Essex/Hawthorne and Vice-Principal Matthew Reid, Palmerston, was well-attended. Participants want more sessions. Translators are needed for the sessions and translations for the information. Many parents in attendance acquired new information. Marc and Matthew have spearheaded in SW6 the use of the same language for IEPs in every school. This session was so well received that it will be repeated in the fall. Other suggested topics for information sessions are: Transition from Grade 6 to 7, and from Grade 8-9; Types of Testing Supports for EQAO for Kids with IEPs. Another session is planned for Tuesday, May 6 at Central Tech. Georgina Rainer will be presenting on the Role/Responsibility of Parents in Advocating for their Children.

Briony Glassco asked Katherine to send her the list of topics.

Jean Rajotte added that the list of dates belongs on the website under Kids Who Learn Differently.

6. Information Sharing

Karen Falconer: she was able to obtain more support for ESL in SW6 schools thanks to Chris Bolton. Chris added that Karen is working with the principals to ensure they get indications at the beginning of the school year for those who require ESL support.

Briony Glassco: Parent Reaching Out Grant – each school gets \$500 under this grant. It is in the school budget in the budget line: GL4500. Although it is included in the school budget, it is the school council that decides what to do with it. Orde is using the money for two literacy nights – one for the primary grades and one for the junior grades. They have authors who come in and read to the families.

Susan Hart: Heydon Park is using its money to send approximately 100 girls to Camp White Pine.

7. Trustee's Report

Trustee Bolton distributed a document on the TDSB budget (the document can be found at <http://myward10.ca/public-consultation-sessions-budget-document-april-2010>). Trustee Irene Atkinson compiled this document. Provincial grants have already been received and planning has begun at the board on the budget. Four public consultations have been scheduled with the first one next Monday, April 19 at Rosedale Heights School of the Arts. The distributed document is not the one that the board staff will be bringing to the consultations.

Trustee Bolton reviewed the document with the meeting. The Ministry of Education grants are down by \$4M from the previous year. The board has a projected shortfall of \$42.3M. Salaries for non-union staff have been frozen, but union staff salaries are included in their contract. Once this contract is up, the unionized staff salaries will be frozen.

At the end of August and after much discussion in the spring, the board always discovers a surplus (see document, p.2, top slide, second last line). In the past, this money has gone into the Contingency Fund. This year, the board has been more vigilant.

Slide 4, bottom page 2, illustrates the under-funding for the board. Due to regular under-funding, money for Special Education is taken from other sources. School offices are under-funded for principals, clerical support and supplies compared to the expected activities. In order to pay for utilities, money is taken from maintenance and technology.

A current discussion at the Board is whether to fund Special Education to the amount that is funded and see how the Ministry of Education responds. Listed on the bottom of page 3 are the areas that cannot be cut and on page 4, at the top, are possible areas to cut.

At the bottom of page 4, possible revenue generating options are presented. One example is Ryerson Community School, which will be able to generate revenue once its geo-thermal heating system is installed. Since the board is provincially funded, it doesn't qualify for federal funding.

Slides 13 and 14 (page 7) deal with questions regarding deferring maintenance to seeking sponsorships as ways of dealing with the shortfall. One major concern is that different discussions are taking place rather than one large discussion.

At least one school will be sold. The decision about Essex West has not yet been made. The potential to sell a number of schools exists.

A parent commented that the maintenance backlog is horrendous. Chris responded that \$40M has been set aside for maintenance but then has been transferred to other areas. If the \$37M is reinstated for maintenance, it creates a \$37M debt. The finance department is organizing these budget consultations, which will contain a slide presentation. Chris and Trustee Atkinson will attend the one at Rosedale Heights.

Q. What is the point of the consultations?

A. After much discussion, the Budget Committee decided to hold the consultations. Ward 10 can organize something as long as it is done by the second week in May.

Trustee Bolton asked if the council thought there would be a point to holding another consultation. The two issues are: to put the \$37M maintenance funding back in the budget for maintenance and make other cuts; and to devise a plan for the future. This is not the worst year – next year or the year after that will be worse.

A question was asked about conducting an energy audit of schools. The last time this was done was in 1998 and the largest items were found to be water and heat. Twelve years is a long time to go without a repeat audit. What effect will the HST have on costs? What about implementing other projects such as geothermal ones? Trustee Bolton stated that meetings have been occurring. Heating and cooling are one thing but electricity is another, more problematic issue because Toronto Hydro has a monopoly on electrical transmission.

Although the discussion was finished, it was ended due to time constraints. Further discussion, questions, suggestions can be forwarded directly to Trustee Bolton at chris@chrisbolton.ca or chris.bolton@tdsb.on.ca. Chris would like the document to reach all the schools.

ACTION: Esther Levin will post the document on www.myward10.ca tonight and will notify the Ward 10 mailing list.

ACTION: Briony Glassco will send out the recommendations for principal and vice-principal selection.

8. Superintendent's Report

Postponed.

9. Next Meeting Date

Monday, May 31. Huron PS was suggested as the location. Chris Tabbitt, Ward Rep for Huron, will check with Principal Stathopoulos and let Esther and Chris know.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 pm.