

September 27, 2011

This news brief is meant to provide the highlights of the decisions made at today's Board meeting for the benefit of our community; the notes do not serve as the official record of the meeting (Board or Committee minutes).

Director's Report

Congratulations to Amanda Schiemann, Chief Custodian at Sir Robert Borden High School, who was celebrated at the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF) Equality Day event held in June. This event highlights women working in non-traditional areas of work whose courage and trailblazing efforts have helped to open the door to a wide range of non-traditional occupations. Amanda is the only female Chief Custodian in an OCDSB high school.

I am pleased to report that today, at 4 p.m. we opened an accessible playground at the **Crystal Bay Centre for Special Education**.

On Monday, October 3, Sir Ken Robinson will be speaking at Longfields-Davidson Heights Secondary School. This event will feature over a dozen student projects which exemplify the creativity and leadership in our District. The evening is hosted in conjunction with the Parental Involvement Committee. We have had an incredible response and this event is fully booked.

Tickets are still available for our next event with Daniel Pink on October 13. Please contact Lori Huppert in Superintendent Gamwell's office. For more information on these Leadership events, please visit our website.

Igniting the Spark is a program that pairs physical activity with learning in all subjects, giving participating students the forum to improve their achievement. Neurological and health research reveals that exercise increases learning on several levels. Students at Earl of March S.S. and Nepean H.S. participated in this initiative, each school pairing one physical education fitness class with one English class. The initiative was an enormous success at both schools. In a "joint" class of 19 grade 9 students at Earl of March S.S. and 18 grade 10 students at Nepean H.S., all students successfully met the overall expectations in both courses, improved their learning readiness, acquisition, understanding and use of information to apply to all learning opportunities. Quantifiable increase occurred in student test scores in fitness and literacy skills.

Consultation Plan – Extended Day

There has been a lot of interest in the upcoming consultation on the Extended Day program. We have arranged three consultation meetings:

A meeting with union presidents is scheduled for Friday, October 7.

Meetings with stakeholders are scheduled for **October 17 and October 27**. There will be an opportunity for questions and input at both meetings.

Dr. Charles Pascal will be one of the guest speakers at the October 17, 2011 meeting. He will provide some important context for everybody about early learning.

An invitation to parents was sent to school principals asking principals to distribute the letter to parents. Invitations to the child care community will be sent out before the end of the week; the process (registration, etc.) for the second night is being finalized.

Chair's Report

Family Day at Bill Mason Outdoor Education Centre

The Bill Mason Outdoor Education Centre in West Carleton will open its doors for the annual Family Day on Sunday, October 2nd from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Instructors will be along the trails to show the diversity of life at the Centre. The public is invited to attend this annual event and enjoy the walk through nature. Admission is free.

Official Opening Ceremony for Westwind Public School

A date for the Official Opening Ceremony for Westwind Public School has been set. The ceremony will be held on Thursday, November 24th beginning at 7 p.m. All trustees and interested members of the public are invited to attend this happy event. The school is located at 111 Hartsmere Drive in Stittsville.

Public Question Period

Several members of the public attended the Board Meeting to ask questions relating to the Extended Day program. Director of Education, Jennifer Adams encouraged interested individuals to submit, their questions, concerns, and suggestions regarding Extended Day program to board officials. She also asked all those interested in the program to attend the consultation meetings to be held on October 17 and October 27.

Staff Report 11-173, Fall Staffing – Full-day Kindergarten

STATUS:

As of September 19, 2011, the total enrolment in the full-day kindergarten program was 2005, as compared with the projected enrolment as of the March staffing approval of 1846.

Staff has been monitoring the class sizes in each of the sites with full-day kindergarten and, in particular large classes with enrolment over 30 students, or where there are multiple classes in a school, where the average enrolment is more than 30. In addition to the enrolment, staff has considered other factors that will impact on the learning experience of the students, including the nature of the students and the level of need.

Based on this review, staff has identified several sites with large class sizes where, in staff's opinion, an additional class should be added:

- (a) Robert Hopkins Public School: The school currently has three full-day classes, one SK Early French Immersion (EFI) class of 26 students and two English classes of 35 and 36 students, respectively. Adding an English class would allow the class size average to be reduced from its current 35.5 to 23.67.
- (b) North Gower Public School: The school currently has two full-day kindergarten classes of 34 and 33 respectively. Adding a third class would allow the class size average to be reduced from its current 33.5 to 22.33.
- (c) General Vanier Public School: The school currently has 2 full-day kindergarten classes of 29 and 34, respectively. Adding a third class (JK/SK) would allow the class size average to be reduced from its current 31.5 to 21.

(d) Featherston Public School: The school currently has 2 English full-day kindergarten classes of 31 students each. Adding a third class would allow the class size average in the English program to be reduced from its current to 20.67.

(e) Pinecrest Public School: The school currently has 2 full-day kindergarten classes of 31 and 32, respectively. Adding a third class would allow the class size average to be reduced from its current 31.5 to 21.

(f) Blossom Park Public School: The school currently has a junior kindergarten of 30 and senior kindergarten class of 33.

(g) Manordale Public School: The school currently has a junior kindergarten class of 35 and senior kindergarten of 28.

All full-day kindergarten classes are staffed with one full-time ECE and one classroom teacher.

CONSULTATION:

The decision to recommend the seven additional classes was based on consultation with, and input from, school principals, Superintendents of Instruction, and central staff in Human Resources, Planning, and Finance. The principals and Superintendents of Instruction have received multiple calls from parents concerned about the large class sizes at these schools.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The additional cost of adding seven full-day kindergarten classes will be one million, fifty thousand dollars. It is unlikely that there will be additional funding available from the Ministry to fund these classes.

Senior staff will be reviewing current operating budgets to find opportunities to fund these additional classrooms from within the 2011-2012 operating budget, or, one year end for 2010-11 is finalized, seek Board approval to use surplus funds.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff was authorized to establish **up to seven** additional full-day kindergarten classes to address large class size situations.

The meeting ended at 11:00 p.m.