

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

BOARD MEETING

October 12, 2010

Director's Report

One of the many ways we express our support in the community is through our United Way Campaign. I was honoured to represent our District at the United Way Centraide Ottawa 2010 Campaign Kick Off Breakfast. The United Way announced their goal of 33.1 million dollars for this year's campaign. Our United Way Campaign began October 1st with a car wash at 133 Greenbank. On October 6th we held a District-wide launch with all principals at Confederation High School. Our campaign will run until November 12th and will include many great opportunities for participation. As always, our campaign is linked to our own Education Foundation, which plays such an important role providing support to students in need.

Building will soon be underway on our new elementary school in Stittsville. A sod-turning ceremony to celebrate the construction of our new elementary school will be held on Friday, October 22nd at 11 a.m. Please join us on site at 111 Hartsmere Drive in the village of Stittsville, for this special event. Staff is currently reviewing public feedback regarding the program, grade structure, and attendance boundary area for the new school. Recommendations will be presented to the Business Services Committee meeting on October 13th. A special Committee of the Whole meeting will be scheduled in November to hear public delegations.

Devonshire Community Public School has the distinction of being the first EcoSchool in our District. Ontario EcoSchools is an environmental education program developed to encourage ecological literacy, waste minimization, energy conservation and school ground greening province-wide. Last fall Devonshire assembled a Green Team of students, teachers and parents with an interest in promoting ecological sensibilities in the school community. By the end of the year, the school had halved the amount of garbage produced, built and planted an organic garden, and developed a sound plan to green its playground. For these and other efforts it was rewarded with a Silver designation by Ontario EcoSchools.

Chair's Report

On October 23rd, a symposium entitled Building Relationships . . . Imagine the Possibilities Organized has been organized by the Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils in collaboration with the OCDSB and the Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization. This energizing and inspiring morning of conversation is for parents, educators, anyone and everyone who cares about education. To register for this event which will be held at the Travelodge on Carling Avenue, please register on the OCASC website at www.ocasc.ca

Parental engagement is something that is very important to our District. We are very fortunate and somewhat unique in the province because we have OCASC and a Parental Involvement Committee. Two weeks ago, the Ministry released a new regulation about parental engagement and more specifically Parental Involvement Committees. I know that our staff is reviewing the

regulation and will be reporting to us in more detail at an upcoming Committee meeting about the impact of the new regulation and I look forward to that report.

I would also like to highlight our Speakers' Series session on Thursday, November 4th at the Centurion Conference Centre at 7 p.m. Our speaker will be Dr. John Barell, Professor emeritus at Montclair State University who was a teacher in New York City. He is a fascinating critical thinker and author of several books including Teaching for Thoughtfulness, Developing More Curious Minds, Quest for Antarctica, and Why are School Buses Always Yellow? His presentation will be of particular interest to those of you who have been following our own Schools for the Future dialogue as his most recent book is entitled 21st Century Skills - Rethinking How Students Learn. John Barell's presentation will show us ways of encouraging all students to act on their real curiosities, leading to enhanced academic achievement and purposeful living.

OCDSB to request Ottawa Student Transportation Authority to review practices of district-wide bus cancellations

Trustees voted unanimously to request that the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority review its practice of district-wide school bus cancellations during inclement weather with a view to introducing a more localized approach for the 2010-2011 year.

EFI at D. Roy Kennedy Public School

Trustees directed staff to develop a plan and a time line to determine feasibility including a consultation plan if required regarding the concept of Early French Immersion at D. Roy Kennedy Public School.

Direct staff to prepare a report on the feasibility of integrating swimming lessons for all students by Grade 3

Staff were directed to prepare a report to be provided to the Education Committee by March 2011, that will discuss the feasibility of integrating swimming lessons for all students by grade 3.

Approval to Refer to Business Services Committee Re the Notice of Motion directing the Chair to write a letter to the Ministry of Education Re Budget Financing

The following motion was referred to the Business Services Committee meeting, 9 November 2010:

A.THAT the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board write a letter to strongly request the provincial government fulfill its 2003 promise and conduct a full and comprehensive review of the funding formulae used to allocate funds to School Boards across Ontario, citing immediate needs in Ottawa-Carleton;

B.THAT the letter be copied to all local Members of Provincial Parliament, provincial education critics, Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA), Canadian School Boards' Association, local media, the Toronto Star, Toronto Sun, and Globe and Mail;

C.THAT the Chair of the Board and Budget Committee Chairman host a press conference prior to the commencement of the 2011-2012 budget cycle clearly articulating the chronic financial challenges faced by the School Board; and

D.THAT a postcard campaign, directed to the Minister of Education, be created and include the entire OCDSB community, highlighting the financial challenges of the School Board, which requests immediate action to address its long-standing promise to review the funding formulae.
Approval to Write a Letter to the Ministry of Education requesting a refund payment of the GST/HST

Trustees of the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board will write a letter to the federal Minister of Finance requesting that the Goods and Services Tax/Harmonized Sales Tax (GST/HST) paid by School Boards be fully refunded; and

The letter is to be copied to all local Members of Parliament, federal finance critics, the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA), the Canadian School Boards' Association, local media, the Toronto Star, the Toronto Sun, and the Globe and Mail.

Chief Financial Officer Clarke advised that the HST was designed to be as neutral as possible for municipalities, with all of the tax refunded, but school boards receive only a rebate of two-thirds of the tax paid. He noted that the cost to the OCDSB for the last fiscal year was \$2.3 million as only \$5.0 million, of the \$7.3 million paid, was refunded.

Meeting ended at 10:25 p.m