



Hopewell Avenue Public School Council

ParentSpeak

(Council's monthly newsletter)

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February 2011

Next Council Meeting: Tuesday, February 8th, in the Library of Hopewell School, from 7:00pm to 9:00 pm.

Chair's Report:

Update on public forum on Interim Accommodations Report:

A meeting was held in early January to discuss population issues at schools in our area - in particular, the overpopulation issues at First Avenue Public School and to a lesser extent at Hopewell, and under-population at Glashen and Mutchmor. Since a formal accommodations review is still a year or two away, the meeting was focused on discussing short-term solutions. Members of the community were invited to hear Board staff suggestions on the short-term solutions that would be most feasible to implement. A large audience was in attendance, including media.

The current favoured option is to redirect students who would be entering First Avenue JK in September 2011 to Mutchmor. This is seen as a one-year option. As expected, there was much discussion amongst parents who would be affected by this change, especially on the topics of transportation and daycare.

Another option discussed was moving the Grade 6 French Immersion program from First Avenue to Glashen. There was concern expressed about this new Grade 6 being the only French group in the school.

Overall it was a healthy exchange of opinions and responses to concerns. There will likely be no major impact for Hopewell in the short term.

Important dates for the rest of this process:

- February 4th: Board Staff report and final recommendations to be completed
- February 17th: A meeting to discuss recommendations on Interim Accommodation Measures for Glebe, Centretown and Old Ottawa South will be held on Thursday February 17th at 7p.m. in the OCDSB's Board Room. Interested members of the public are welcome to attend.
- February 22nd: The Board will render its final decision on which interim measures will be implemented.
- **ANYTIME**: Make sure your opinion on this issue is heard! Email your thoughts on how you see Hopewell long-term. Is it a community school that should retain all programs? Do you agree or disagree with any of the potential measures suggested to address longer term population issues? Email your thoughts to CentretownGlebeOttawaSouth@ocdsb.ca. The more members of our School community are clear about our needs and wants, the more these will be

considered in longer-term accommodations discussions.

Principal Report:

- *School Effectiveness Program* - The Principal will discuss this at length at the February 8th Council meeting.
- *Projectors* - Ten more projectors have now been received, bringing the school total to 22 projectors and 7 Elmos, with 10 more Elmos on the way. The school will also purchase two slates (mini smart boards) that will be used in the Intermediate program. Sound cards haven't been included in the projectors but will be added. All the technology improvements are being embraced by the teachers.
- Goodbye to Kim MacDonald! As most of you know, Kim MacDonald has moved on to a Principal's position at her own school. A warm thanks to Kim on behalf of all the kids and parents for the great work she has done.
- Richard Simpson is the new Vice Principal. He comes to us from D. A. Moodie Middle school. School Administration looks forward to benefitting from his expertise, especially at the Intermediate level.

Budget Committee:

The Cross-country ski lessons for Grade 5 students is on and will be paid for by Council. Approval was given for \$200 to purchase knitting supplies for a successful lunchtime knitting club.

Yard Update

A Board Consultant who has come to the School to review the grounds has prepared recommendations for enhancements. The Board has also expressed a willingness to work on the "grass yard" to address drainage issues and enhance the space as early as this summer. Some of the funding for the project will likely be provided by Council in a multi-year commitment, but details of the funding still need to be firmed up. Council will update on this topic as more information becomes available.

Notes from Council's Priority Setting Meeting Held Feb. 2, 2011:

Council members and the Hopewell parent community were invited to join a discussion regarding setting funding priorities for the remainder of the 2010 - 2011 school year.

The Chair of Parent Council, Neal, began the meeting with an update regarding funding possibilities for improvements to the grass yard. In the fall, the yard's drains were hooked up to sewers. Unfortunately, the clay soil that was in the yard was put back. Therefore we still expect limited success with drainage. It seems that the School Board is willing to consider making improvements to the yard if the school is able to come up with a substantial amount of the total costs. Draft plans have been drawn up. The project is in the price range of \$200 000.

Several ideas were discussed regarding funding such as; partnering with the City of Ottawa and have the City responsible for some of the up keep, reaching out to community businesses to help with money and fund raising, and having Parent Council approve a long-term goal for funding some of the improvements. It was felt discussions regarding funding ought to also include opening the schoolyards again for the public to use.

Given the possibility of progress being made with the grass year, the group felt strongly that setting aside funds for the project was a main priority. There was concern about committing future Councils to a set amount of funds. Upon reviewing our expenditures from last year we felt we had room in the budget to easily accommodate \$5 000 each year. However, setting aside such a large sum would mean less money being given to the school for items such as literacy, technology and science resources.

The Treasurer, Michelle, brought up a request from the library for \$3 000. It was decided to not donate the money at this time. The request will be reviewed by Council at the end of the year once we have sorted out how much will be set aside for the yard project.

It was decided at the meeting that Parent Council would run an after school family BBQ instead of an in school Fun Day. The family BBQ would have the potential to raise funds and foster a community spirit. (The Fun Day is an expenditure.)

Dates to Remember:

Council Meeting: Feb. 8 at 7:00pm

Pizza Lunch: Feb. 11 and 25

Subway Lunch: Feb. 25

Hopewell Beach Party: March 3 (5:30pm - 8pm)
see poster attached

Me to We Rummage Sale: March 31