



ParentSpeak

(Council's monthly newsletter)

Hopewell Avenue Public School Council

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March 2010

The next Council meeting is: **Tuesday March 9th at 7 pm** in the school library.

Chair's Column:

As you may have seen in the local media, the Ottawa Carleton District School Board is working very hard to close a \$14 million operating budget deficit for the upcoming school year. And as we are also seeing at the Federal budget level, these budgetary decisions inevitably put pressure on program decisions: when dollars have to be squeezed, the programs they fund can quickly come into question, as well.

For us as Hopewell parents, this raises once again the question I've been asking (some might say, "harping on" ...) since the beginning of this school year: "What kind of a school do we want Hopewell to be?"

We happen to be a school that is approximately 130 students over our target population, while other schools not far away are having trouble filling their available seats. As budget pressures are dealt with by the Board, a very possible reaction might be to identify one of our core program tracks - such as Core English, Early French Immersion, or Middle French Immersion - to move to another school with extra room.

Do we want that to happen? And if not, what alternatives would we suggest to the Board to get our population down to the target, where we have enough space for all the classrooms we need to support our children's needs?

These are the kinds of discussions that School Council is a forum for, so please come out to our meetings and make your voice heard!

-Neal Hill

Principal and Teachers' Report:

Kindergarten registration is currently underway. There are approximately 60 children registered so far, but final numbers are expected to be around 80, making for another large incoming group.

Both Grade 7 and MFI program information nights were held in February and were extremely well attended. The official registration period is now closed, however, registrations for any program continue to be accepted.

A very successful Haiti fundraiser was held in January. Hopewell raised \$4,500, while the Board total was approximately \$191K. Principal Nicole Turpin extends her warm thanks to all parents in the Hopewell community for their contributions.

School Budget Report:

Nicole Turpin provided an overview of the annual operating budget and major expenditure categories. The school started the year with an operating budget of \$180K. The largest portion of the school's budget has been spent in overtime costs for absent teacher coverage. Higher than usual absenteeism is partly due to the more aggressive cold and flu season and while additional funding was provided by the Board, the extra costs have still consumed more budget than expected. Other major costs include supplies and photocopying. The school is taking measures to reduce costs in a number of areas. For instance, the school newsletter is posted online and no longer distributed on paper. The school is also

using more technology to make up for shortfalls in hard copy materials.

Sources of additional funds include the QSP fundraiser, the school levy and Council funding which is being directed towards technology upgrades. The voluntary school levy of \$25 requested at the beginning of the year is very important, as it goes to cover the cost of student agendas and other classroom supplies. Only about 1/3 of families actually sent in the levy this year, and this shortfall comes out of the overall school budget - thus squeezing other important areas.

Technology vision for the school:

Nicole Turpin's goal is to establish Hopewell as a technology leader among schools in the Board. The goal is to better align the technology at the school with the technology kids have access to at home. The school intends to submit a proposal to the Board to request wireless Internet access and funding to purchase high-end projectors for every classroom. These enhancements will open up new opportunities for multimedia presentations in-class. The technology plan is a long-term one, which will continue to be developed in consultation with the students.

School Smart Goal

By May 30, the school's goal is to have 85% of all students achieving Level 3 or higher in using information implicitly stated in the text. The school has a heightened focus on inferencing as a result of EQAO testing which showed a weakness in this area.

Messages from teachers:

- The Intermediate House League program kicked off in early January with approximately 160 students signing up to participate.
- A record number of 48 students attended the volleyball clinic and are busy officiating the volleyball games either as referee, scorekeeper or umpire. Games are played on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays during the second nutrition break. Play-offs will begin in March and the winning team will challenge the teachers to a game before March Break.
- Both male and female Intermediate volleyball teams are now in full swing and competing against other schools. The season ends in early March after which the baseball season will begin.

- The Grade 4 EFI class is organizing a contest for a Hopewell 100 Year Cheer. The contest will be open to all students. The cheer must be bilingual, 6-10 lines, mention Hopewell and the fact that it's the school's 100th anniversary. The winning cheer will be revealed during the 100th Anniversary ceremonies in May and will be used at various sporting events, assemblies, etc. The contest closes on March 5th.
- Lynn Major's class performed a puppet show to a delighted group of kinders in January. The class is also working on a second puppet show that will be inspired by author Roger Hargreaves.
- Volunteers are needed to assist with track and field in May and June. Assistance with training in long distance and short distance running, high jump, long jump and ball throw would be appreciated. If you are interested in helping, please contact Meredith Elton-McLelland at Meredith.Elton-McLelland@ocdsb.ca.

Committee Updates:

Budget: Council has approved \$600 for printing the Primary/Junior Creative Magazine, \$4K for technology support (2 projectors and 2 Elmos) and \$2K for Sciences Supplies for the Intermediates (servicing microscopes, replenishing supplies).

Communications: A Beach Party was held on March 4th for all Hopewell families at the school. The event drew a huge crowd who enjoyed hot food and donated treats, as well as a fish pond, bouncy castle, craft table, face painting and music. Thanks to all those who donated their time and made this fundraiser a huge success.

Hopewell 100: Celebrate Hopewell's 100th year by wearing your school colours, purple and yellow. Hopewell Commemorative School Clothing is on sale now. Forms will be sent home in your child's backpack on March 5th (also will be sent via email). Orders are due back no later than March 22nd. Don't miss your chance to get stylish purple and yellow t-shirts and American Apparel zip hoodies featuring our 100-year logo in full colour. T-shirts are priced at \$12 while hoodies are \$40. A

full week of celebratory activities is also planned for May 17 to 20, including the much anticipated Junior and Intermediate concert. Details will continue to be communicated through ParentSpeak as they become available.

Space Camp: Volunteers have been selected and final planning is underway for the April 7 trip. The committee thanked all parents for their diligence in providing timely payments.

Technology: Lunchtime workshops are underway. The Monday multimedia class has approximately 12 participants who are focusing on digital photography and creating videos with transitions. The group is also considering setting up microphones to have students stop by to record their Hopewell 100 cheers or simply share Hopewell memories. The Website design workshop is also underway on Wednesdays with approximately 5-6 regular attendees. The Friday workshop has been delayed as the volunteer teacher has been travelling.

Roll into Spring with the Hopewell Ave. Public School Bike Sale!

**April 16th and 17th
Hopewell Public School parking garage**



If it's got wheels, we'll sell it for you. Bring us your bikes, in-line skates, scooters, strollers and anything else that rolls with accompanying gear. Volunteers will help price it, tag it and prepare it for sale the following morning. Vendors may recoup 75% of the sale price. The remaining 25% will be used to help support local educational objectives.

Equipment Intake: 5:30-8:00pm, Friday, April 16th
Sale: 9-11am, Saturday, April 17th.

If you are interested in volunteering for the event, please email parentspeak@gmail.com.

Dates to Remember

Council Meeting: March 9 at 7pm

March Break: March 15 to 19