

# UPPER GRAND DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

## PROGRAM COMMITTEE

### MINUTES

2013 05 07

The Program Committee of Upper Grand District School Board met on Tuesday, May 7, 2013, in the Boardroom at 500 Victoria Road North, Guelph, commencing at 7:00 p.m.

Trustee Cooper presided, and the following Trustees were present: Bailey, Borden, Busuttil, Fairbairn, Gohn, Moziar, Topping, Waterston and Student Trustees Brown and Sampson. Present from administration was Director of Education, Dr. M. Rogers, Executive Officer of Human Resources, Ms. J. Rose, Communications Officer, M. McFadzen, Administrative Officer, M. Weidmark, along with Superintendents Wright, Benallick, McDonald, and Assistant Superintendent Zen.

Trustee Cooper introduced Ms. Kelly Dong, a grade 11 student from Centennial CVI, who has been elected as Student Trustee to represent urban schools for the 2013-14 year.

### AGENDA

Trustee Borden asked that Bylaw Sub-Committee, be added under item 10 on the agenda.

Trustee Fairbairn moved that the Agenda be approved as amended.

The motion carried.

### DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There were no conflicts of interest.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Trustee Waterston moved that the Minutes of the Meeting held on April 2, 2013 be approved as printed.

The motion carried.

### DELEGATIONS

1. Current Study on the Feasibility of Expanding the Sir Isaac Brock Grade 7 and 8

Heather Staines, a parent of children attending Rickson Ridge PS, a member of the School Council and a teacher addressed Trustees on behalf of a group of Rickson

Ridge parents regarding the Sir Isaac Brock feasibility study. Ms. Staines acknowledged the Sir Isaac Brock parents would like their children to attend their local school for grades 7 and 8 and preferred not to put their children on a bus to Rickson Ridge. If the change is implemented, the Rickson Ridge parents are concerned that the current full rotary program will be in jeopardy at their school. The benefits of having the Sir Isaac Brock students remain at Rickson Ridge were highlighted, including the continuation of a Rotary program with specialist teachers, improved transition to high school, and individual excellence. The negative impacts were also presented including the effect on staffing at Rickson Ridge, waste of resources and enrolment concerns.

Ms. Staines presented the following three options for consideration by Trustees:

- status quo
  - undertake a full accommodation review of south end schools
  - wait to make any significant changes to either school for at least five years in order to fully analyze the effect of the new South Guelph FI Centre and FDK on overall enrolment.
2. Incorporating Food-bearing Plants into the Curricula

Mr. Brent Klassen, an entrepreneur and father of three children within the board, and Mr. Rob Cordy a landscape designer and consultant addressed Trustees regarding their desire to see fruit trees and other food-bearing plantings on school properties.

Mr. Klassen explained their motivation comes from the fact tree planting is woven into the fabric of how children are taught ecology, local food resilience, and the increasing interest in ecological education and the greening of school yards in order to engage students. It was noted that green spaces are good for mental wellbeing, social interaction and reduction of anxiety. Green space also provides many opportunities to tie into curriculum, e.g. geography, soil science, forest ecology, etc. The desire is to develop a modular and repeatable program that involves the children and staff in designing, planting and maintaining food-bearing plants that could ideally be implemented at all schools in the board.

Mr. Cordy explained he has worked through such a program in an inner city school in Toronto where it was tied into the cooking program as well as having economic, environmental and cultural components. He noted that buy-in from the school administration and staff is required. The program should start small with low maintenance and low cost plantings and then be allowed to grow. Mr. Cordy relayed stories of the successes in Toronto and the pending expansion to other schools in the district.

Because of the need for school buy-in to undertake such a pilot project, Trustee Waterston suggested that the presenters approach a school in their area and speak to the principal and school council to determine if there is interest. Trustee Moziar raised a concern regarding orchard plantings due to potential anaphylactic reaction to bee stings.

Student Trustee Sampson noted the importance of the community garden at GCVI and how it instills passion and engagement of students who use the produce in

the foods classroom and take it out to other schools and the community.

### **MENTAL HEALTH UPDATE**

Dr. Lynn Woodford, Manager of Mental Health, reported that this is child and youth mental health week. The youth committees of DCAFS and CMHA Waterloo Wellington Dufferin are working to raise awareness. Every high school student in the Board will be receiving a bracelet and students and staff are asked to wear green for mental health on Wednesday, May 8, 2013.

It was also reported that all social workers, psychological consultants and child and youth workers are being provided with ASSIST training and a half day Safe Talk session is also being provided on the topic of suicide awareness.

#### **Recommendation #1:**

Trustee Borden moved that this committee recommends to the Board that the verbal mental health update be received.

The motion carried.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL PORTFOLIO UPDATES**

Ms. Tracey Lindsay, Principal of Program, introduced Ms. Connie Bender, Elementary Curriculum leader, who provided a report on environmental activities at the elementary schools. Ms. Bender gave an overview of the Green Legacy, Green Up Your School Grants, ECO Schools initiatives, and relayed stories about collaboration and environmental classrooms.

In response to questions from Trustees, it was explained that some of the activities work into social justice issues. In addition, the trees being planted as part of the Green Legacy program are on both public and private land throughout Wellington County and home owners can make a request for trees. The project has commitment from the County of Wellington but there is not currently a similar project in Dufferin.

Ms. Meghan Mintz, the teacher in the environmental portable at Rockwood Centennial PS, along with two of her pupils reported to Trustees on activities that take place in the classroom. The steps taken in researching and creating a living wall and for their tomato growing experiment which yielded 200 tomatoes were also highlighted. Plans for the future include bringing students from other schools to experience their learning environment. Ms. Mintz is also considering the start up of a blog from the classroom.

Trustee Moziar asked if there is any concern about or issues with mould with the living wall. Ms. Mintz reported that this was well researched before building the wall. She explained there is a plastic barrier as well as flora felt and very little water is required. There is no anticipated concern with mould.

### ECO Schools and other environmental initiatives at Centennial CVI

Centennial CVI teachers Mr. Cory Lipovscheck and Mr. Matt Mulhern, along with a grade 11 student who is a member of the Global Outreach Club, provided an overview of environmental initiatives in place at the school. Their presentation helped explain how the initiatives fit into the ECO School program. Earth Week is recognized including a waste audit, Eco Fair, rain barrel sale and guest speaker. The six stages required to become an ECO School were also outlined.

Trustees acknowledged the transformation of how the school operates inside, and how it looks outside. Trustees also acknowledged the student culture has become inspirational and thanked the teachers and students for their hard work.

### Recommendation #2

Trustee Moziar moved that this committee recommend to the Board that the verbal Environmental Portfolio updates report be received.

The motion carried.

### SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE PROGRAM AT CENTRE WELLINGTON DHS

Superintendent of Finance, Ms. Janice Wright, explained that a location was identified by a teacher at Centre Wellington DHS on which to create a space where students could grow food to use in the cooking program. The desired property was owned by the Township of Wellington and discussions were undertaken to reach an agreement in order to use the property. An agreement was negotiated that included involvement by The Wellington Centre for Sustainable Agriculture.

Ms. Beth Burns, Principal of Centre Wellington DHS presented an overview of the school's interest in building such a program and introduced teachers Mr. Christopher Jess, and Michael Johnston who provided an overview of the development of a program to incorporate technology and academic courses. The curriculum package related to the program was also highlighted. It is a four credit, full day program that requires students to explore sustainable forms of agriculture through four separate courses highlighting how the food ties in to the various components.

In response to questions from Trustees, it was explained that the farmhouse on the property will be used as classroom and office space. In addition, the program is designed to prepare for fluctuations in timing in order to be responsive to the weather, e.g. theory is taught over the winter.

### Recommendation #3:

Trustee Busutil moved that this committee recommend to the Board that the report on the sustainable agriculture program at Centre Wellington DHS be received.

The motion carried.

**OPSBA REPORT**

Trustee Busuttill distributed copies of the report and related information at meeting. The information pertaining to Education Finance, the OPSBA Constitution Amendment and Member Board Policy Resolutions, OPSBA Priorities, the FDK update, and the French as a Second language Working Group were highlighted.

**Recommendation #4:**

Trustee Bailey moved that this committee recommend to the board that the report entitled, "April 26-27, 2013 OPSBA Board of Directors Meeting," dated May 7, 2013, be received.

The motion carried.

Trustee Bailey encouraged all Trustees to participate in the regional meetings when possible.

**REPORT FROM STUDENT TRUSTEES**

Student Trustees Brown and Sampson provided a summary of activities that took place in April at the Secondary Schools throughout the Board. In addition it was reported that World Environment Day is being held on June 5<sup>th</sup>, replacing the environmental conference held last year.

**Recommendation #5:**

Trustee Bailey moved that this Committee recommend to the Board that the Student Trustee Report be received.

The motion carried.

**OTHER BUSINESS****By-law Review Sub-Committee**

Trustee Borden reported that a list of suggestions for consideration as part of the By-law review has been developed. As a result, at the Policy Management Committee held earlier today, it was agreed that the policy on student safety would not be finalized until completion of the review as one of the proposed by-law changes might impact wording. The next meeting of the Sub-Committee will take place on Tuesday, May 28, 2013 at 5:30 p.m., prior to the regular board meeting.

**IN CAMERA**

**ADJOURNMENT**

Trustee Waterston moved that this Committee adjourn at 9:25 p.m. to report to the Board.

The motion carried.