

# Cornell Village School Advisory Council

## Meeting #4

Date: February 18, 2004

Time: 7pm-9pm

**Parent Attendees:** Michelle O'Sullivan, Kathryn Ellis, Monica Tanana, Shara Carr, Vivien Page, Jennifer Muller, Laura Buckley, Ramsey Emara, Jan Jang, Deb Larsen, Sandra Linton, Sue Firkser, Kelly Errington, Lisa Dunning, Cathy Grozdanovski

**Regrets:** Josephine Sickander, Mary Carpenter

### 1 Acceptance of previous meeting's Minutes

- Laura motioned to accept
- Shara 2<sup>nd</sup>
- passed

### 2 Elections

#### 2.1 CVSAC Parent Reps

- 16 positions to fill
- 17 nominations on January 29
- 1 withdrawal (Jan Jang) → 16
- request from Mary Carpenter to be nominated → 17
- motion to acclaim existing 16 nominations – Monica
  - Deb – 2<sup>nd</sup>
  - Accepted
- Motion to amend 5.1 on constitution to change number of parent reps to 17 – Kathryn
  - Sandra – 2<sup>nd</sup>
  - **Accepted with 2/3 on the constitution change**
- Motion to accept Mary Carpenter as CVSAC parent rep - Jennifer
  - Shara – 2<sup>nd</sup>
  - Passed
- Nomination for 1<sup>st</sup> Co-Chair
  - Kathryn Ellis (motioned by Shara)
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> by Laura
  - Nomination closed for 1<sup>st</sup> co-chair – Ramsey
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> by Michelle
  - **passed**
- Nomination for 2<sup>nd</sup> Co-Chair:
  - Michele O'Sullivan (motioned by Kathryn)
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> by Lisa
  - motion to close nominations - Jennifer
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> by Deb

- Nomination for Secretary
  - Vivien Page (motioned by Lisa)
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ramsey
  - motion to close nominations - Laura
  - Shara 2<sup>nd</sup>
  - **Passed**
- Nominations for Treasurer
  - Deb Larsen (by Kathryn)
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kelly
  - motion to close nominations - Michele
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> by Monica
  - Passed
- **CVSAC Parent reps for 2003/2004 school year:**
  - Laura Buckley, Shara Carr, Lisa Dunning, Kathryn Ellis, Kelly Errington, Cathy Grozdanovski, Jennifer Guest, Mary Carpenter, Deb Larsen, Jennifer Muller, Michele O'Sullivan, Vivien Page, Emara Ramsey, Josephine Sickander, Monica Tanana, Renee Torrington, Gayani Weerasinghe
- Executive
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Co-Chair – Kathryn Ellis
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Co-Chair – Michele O'Sullivan
  - Secretary – Vivien Page
  - Treasurer – Deb Larsen

## **2.2 Staff and Community Reps**

### **2.2.1 Staff**

- rotating

### **2.2.2 Community**

- Norbert Fatoussi (from Maison de Café)
  - (Kathryn confirmed on 02/19/04)

## **3 Parent Input to School Plan Discussion**

We split up into 4 separate small groups to discuss the below 2 questions.

Strengths/needs that were mentioned across multiple groups are mentioned here.

Looking at the lists from the students (Grade 5-8) and staff, there were many matches.

- **Academically, where do you have a sense of the strengths of our children?**
  - Creativity
  - Reading
  - Problem solving
- **Where academically, do you think we should concentrate on to improve?**
  - Math
  - Reading comprehension

- Writing
- Organization/work habits

#### **4 Quest for Literacy Conference (held Nov 2003, report by Kathryn Ellis)**

The York Board identified its priorities as follows

- Maximize literacy support for our youngest learners
  - Expand expertise in literacy instruction and change process
  - Extend teacher capacity to address a broad range of needs
  - Share leadership and create learning communities
  - Virtuous circle – long term strategies require short term results
  - Be deliberate and don't leave anything to chance
- 
- Many Canadian and world leaders in education presented their views on promoting literacy
  - Creating learning communities and partnership with parents was a recurring topic, my concern is that the Board needs to address how it is doing this and communicate more with parent partners in a meaningful way e.g. as far as I know I was the only parent rep at the Quest Conference
  - Given the Boards priorities I think we as a council need to examine how we can influence the school plan to best reflect the priorities. An emphasis on how the parents in our community can become involved in assisting the students of Cornell to meet/exceed identified learning

#### **5 Area East School Council Forum Report (report by Michele)**

Shara and I attended the East Area School Council Forum on February 11, 2004. There was a trustee dialogue (answering the top three questions asked by school councils) and a speaker (Helen Fox - Superintendent of Schools - topic "Safe and Supportive Schools"). Below, you will find a summary of my notes.

##### **What is your role as a trustee with the York Region District School Board?**

- There is no specified role in the Education Act but they have a corporate responsibility (one member of a 12 member board) and an individual responsibility (role in individual constituencies);
- Create a climate for staff to be able to do their jobs;
- Leave day to day operations to staff;
- Oversee policies; be a communicator;
- Middleman between community and school (to explain policy and procedures); get community involved within the school;

Corporate responsibilities include:

- Approve policies/budget;
- Hiring of Superintendents;
- Location of school sites/school building;
- Holding staff accountable for performance of students.

### **How do they support student learning?**

- Budget approval process;
- Supporting and encouraging staff to develop initiatives to make their students grow (after school programs, mentoring programs, craft programs);
- Accessibility of trustees (attending forums, school council meetings, phone calls);
- With every decision made ask "Is it best for the student?";
- Communication - helping parents understand decisions made.

### **What is a critical issue in education today and what action are you taking?**

- Adequate resources (the funding formula is good but resources are based on costs which are 7-8 years old);
- Responsibility and commitment to all students in the Board (not necessarily all students go to university/college; some go directly to work);
- Initiatives -e.g. -reading recovery -provide resources to those who are "at risk";
- Rapid growth -keep up with the demand for schools/classrooms/staff
- Quality of education - ensure students are being taught to keep up with the global economy;
- Class size/overcrowding - house students into those schools that are not overcrowded.

### **"Safe and Supportive Schools" (some of the highlights from Helen Fox's presentation/hand-out)**

- shift from safe schools to "safe and supportive schools";
- "Safe and supportive school ensures a learning environment where students: -feel safe and secure;-are accountable for their behaviour; -assume a sense of ownership for safety in the school; -are valued as diverse individuals; -are supported as they learn new skills and behaviours; -understand that mistakes can become opportunities" ;
- "Zero Tolerance" = "A demonstrated consequence to a behaviour that has been deemed to be inappropriate. The consequence will involve a continuum of responses that are appropriate and/or sequential. It may be as specific as counseling or a short time out and as significant as student suspension and/or expulsion";
- Restorative justice looks at: "the harm caused rather than the offense committed; encourages collaboration and reintegration rather than coercion and isolation; punitive responses may interfere with the ability of children to learn from their mistakes; shame and fear of punishment produce defensiveness and act as blocks to resolution";
- Peer Mediation as an alternative to suspension; we saw a video about Peer Mediation being used in Unionville High

## **6 Principal's Report**

### **6.1 Hot lunch volunteers**

- currently only have Sam, Sue, need more!
- 11:15-12:00, Wed and Fridays
- everybody call somebody to ask if they can volunteer

- volunteered: Jennifer, Lisa

## **6.2 Winter electives**

- skiing trips very successful
- thoughts of expanding next year to include skating, swimming, snowshoes, cross-country skiing

## **6.3 School Official Opening – April 22, 2004**

- Need parent volunteers – interested? Call John
- Theme: convey nucleus of school plan through different means (drama production, music production)
- Challenge: seating
  - Half hour opening ceremony in gym (or outside?)
  - Different carousels throughout school

# **7 Fund Raising Proposals**

## **7.1 Treat Days (cupcakes)**

- Parents supply, kids sell at recess
- Concern about not being healthy eating
- Take under advisement for fall

## **7.2 Cornell Art-in-the-park calendars**

- At least 1000 sold: cost to print would be \$6-7 (+ production/shipping costs)
- if sell < 1000, profit would be less, but may still be worth doing
- Sell at \$15: we would get 100% profit
- Pre-sell in spring – deliver in Fall for school year calendar (include PA days, etc)
- Another Art-in-the-Park is scheduled around 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> weekend in July; have a station designated for the calendar
- Can take orders for calendar at event, school opening, Cornell Picnic, ...
- Need commitment now to allow time to get sponsors/page
- Have order forms and can deliver for community members who do not have children at the school
- Sub-committee to work out logistics (Shara, Laura, Sue, Michele)

# **8 Other Discussions**

- Junior Kindergarten students
  - specification of preference (AM/PM, M/W, Tu/Th) for next school year in next Kindergarten newsletter
  - default is to stay in same class
  - preference of teachers is to stay in same class for consistency

## **9 Next meetings**

**Thursday April 8, 7-9pm**

**Tuesday May 18, 7-9pm**

**Wednesday June 10, 7-9pm**

**Motion to adjourn (9:15pm)**

**Michele  
2<sup>nd</sup> Shara**

If any discrepancies in these minutes, please let me know,

Vivien Page  
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