

CHELSEA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
7th Governing Board Meeting for 2006-07
April 5, 2007, 6:00 pm

Present:

Sandra Burgess, Principal
Michele Cusson
Cynthia Cyr
Carmen Griffith
Joanne Joliffe
Louise Larose
Marie Sief
Lori Garbutt

Tammy Martin (Chair)
Matthew Cahoon
Andrea Rowe (Secretary)
Kelly Plourde
Lori Pink

Regrets: John MacIntyre

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1. Motion to Pass Agenda and March Minutes – passed

2. Actions arising from the Minutes - deferred

3. Presentation on school taxes – Paul Lamoureux and Colin O’Shea

Mr. Lamoureux of the Western Quebec School Board gave an hour-long presentation explaining the issues surrounding the funding of Chelsea Elementary School. He noted that the student population is declining every year; that decline directly affects the school’s revenues and the number of teachers allocated to the school. In 2002-2003 there were 305 students, in 2006-2007 there are 222, a dramatic and very significant reduction. The number of students is expected to rise slightly by 2011-2012 to 230 students, but will still remain much lower than earlier in the school’s history. The School has basically two sources of funding: a grant from the Quebec Ministry of Education (based on the number of students and roughly 73% of the school’s budget) and school tax revenues based on real estate values in the area (24%). Daycare and parents’ fees account for the rest. The GB asked questions about the way the Quebec government allocates the funding. Members expressed frustration that the school taxes have risen significantly in the last year but that the increase has not translated into more funding for Chelsea Elementary.

4. Presentation on the ‘Ponds For Kids’ Project – Nicholas Bott

Nicholas Bott, father of Averil and manager of The Pond Clinic, gave a presentation on building a pond for the School, which he is proposing to do in September. He showed a couple of videos of past projects, said he would supply up to \$3,000 of time and equipment on the day, and five years of maintenance free of charge thereafter. Fundraising of \$2,000 to \$3,000 would need to be done by the school. There was enthusiasm for the project, but also notes of caution. One teacher commented that the School already has a wetland close by that is a teaching tool for the students. Sandra Burgess said she now realized the project was much more than a fundraising event: it was

an educational tool and needed to be considered as such. She said she would compile a list of the pros and cons, discuss it with the teachers, and look into insurance and liability issues. Lori Garbutt said she would look explore the idea with the School Board. It was suggested that schools that have already participated in a project like this be contacted for first-hand information about the process and how successful it was. Home and School would need to be consulted. Reports on all these areas were to be investigated for the next meeting in May.

5. Special Needs Plan 2007-2008 – Sandra Burgess

Sandra asked the Board to approve a request she is preparing to the WQSB for additional funds to cover the education of children with special needs.

Matthew Cahoon moved to accept the proposal of Sandra Burgess requesting that the WQSB provide more funds for the education of children with special needs at Chelsea Elementary. Motion carried.

6. Criteria for School Principal – Tammy Martin

The Governing Board reviewed the criteria for school principal.

Marie Seif moved that the Board approve the criteria. Motion carried.

7. Environmental Report – Sandra Burgess

An air quality test was conducted following the removal of the asbestos and the report was fine. Water readings have been stabilized and the students and staff are once again drinking tap water.

8. Teachers' Report

Cycle 1:

- Michele Cusson reported that the children have had special activities for Easter
- Children continue to write in their journals, practice from the word wall, read lots of stories, fairy tales
- They are going to hatch chicks again

Cycle 2:

- Cindy Cyr talked about a holocaust unit in one of the classes
- A unit on flight involving physics and language arts
- Classes are studying the novel, early Canadian history
- Outdoor education: building shelters north of the wetlands for a day, then writing about their experience

Cycle 3:

- The principal from Hadley Junior High School visited the Cycle 3 year 2 students, in preparation for their transition to junior high next year.

French:

- Marie Seif reported that the sponsored dictation had taken place (some of the money raised was donated to a charity)
- Students have been involved in producing their own plays
- Marie attended a workshop to prepare for implementing an examination process for next year, a prototype exam will be administered this year to see how well prepared Chelsea's kids are

9. After Four Report – Carmen

Carmen circulated the newsletter of the After Four program, recently distributed to all families via e-mail. She reported that Jump Rope for Heart was coming up, and that last year the school collected the most money in the Outaouais region.

10. Committee Reports

i) Parents Committee – Matthew Cahoon

Matthew reported on the issues discussed at the last meeting of the Parents Committee. Some of the highlights:

- Education Committee reported that it is considering a four-year-old kindergarten program for Wakefield School and Pierre Elliott Trudeau School
- Finance Committee discussed a marketing and outreach plan similar to Chelsea's for the English School in Buckingham

ii) SEAC – Kelly Plourde

- Kelly reviewed the last three events of SEAC:
 - o Talk on Autism Spectrum Disorder
 - o Discussion of different pathways (?)
 - o Special Education Policy Review (reviewed annually)

11. Varia

i) Letter from parents re: After Four concerns

The Governing Board briefly discussed a letter recently sent to all members. The authors – parents whose daughter graduated from Chelsea Elementary last year -- expressed concern in their letter for the way they said the After Four program divides the school into “haves” and “have-nots.” Carmen emphasized that After Four programs are available to all students, not just those registered for daycare, and that there are no After Four programs conducted during lunch hour as the letter suggested. The letter is to be discussed in more detail at the next meeting.

ii) Letter from vandals – Sandra Burgess

A letter apologizing for the damage done was circulated from one of the youths who vandalized the school around Christmas time. Sandra said that she had met the two boys and they would be going into a community service program.

The meeting adjourned at 9 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for May 3, 2007 at 6 p.m.