



Advisory Committee on the Arts (ACA)

April 27, 2015

A meeting of the ADVISORY COMMITTEE on the ARTS was held at Summit/Fisher Park Public School, Ottawa, Ontario, commencing at 7:10 p.m. with the following in attendance:

Members: Trustee Erica Braunovan, Cheryl Carman*, Ingrid Dabringer, David Jones*, Judy Kirsh*, Evelyn Michaud*, Jacquie Pinard (AIC), Sheila White*, Margreet Verheuevel *

Regrets: Ariadni Athanassiadis*, Eric Ding*, Susanna Donato (AIC), Debbie Holzman*, Superintendent Peter Gamwell, Trustee Lynn Scott, Michael Wilson*.

Guests: System Principal Denise Poirier

Note: The symbol * denotes a Voting member.

1. Welcoming Remarks:

ACA Co-Chair Sheila White welcomed the group and invited everyone to introduce themselves. She noted that there were several new people present as a result of the outreach program.

2. Approval of Agenda:

Moved by Evelyn Michaud to approve the agenda. CARRIED

Information Items:

3. Co-Chair's Report:

Co-Chair David Jones stated that one of the goals from last year's planning session was to reach out and invite more parents to attend ACA. Reaching everyone is often challenging, but the executive circle sent out information letters to all Elementary Principals and to the Chairs of the Elementary School Councils. The response was not as good as we would have liked, but we do have 2 new parents in attendance as a result. Letters will be resent in the future.

Another priority from last year was the Time Allocation Model, and that will be discussed later.

The Teacher Recognition Awards Process is going on, forms have been sent out by the Arts Instructional Coaches, and David is waiting to hear back from the Chair of the OCDSB, Shirley Seward, about the plans for the Fall ceremony. No date has been fixed, but David will keep trying to connect.

Co-Chair Sheila White noted that on Monday June 8, ACA will hold its June celebration for members. The event will be held at the Mill Street brew Pub, and will start at 5:30 so that trustees may attend before their budget meeting.

Sheila noted that the results of every School/Every Voice survey were quite interesting, and that the arts made it into the top 5 questions/concerns: How can the OCDSB improve arts programming. It was also noted that the arts helped everyone, so perhaps it can enter into the strategic plan as well.

ACA received a lovely thank you letter from award recipient Kathy Goodsell.

N.B. One item from the Co-Chair's report was delivered under New Business, but will be reported here since it was an omission, and not intentional.

At the last meeting, Trustee Scott had stated that the trustees would be looking at the allocation of Instructional Coaches, and that it might be helpful for ACA to present on that topic. Co-Chairs David and Sheila made a presentation to the Committee of the Whole and spoke about the importance of the Arts Instructional Coaches to the teachers, and noted that a reduction in AICs would be detrimental to the whole system. The trustees responded favorably and there were 3 excellent questions. Trustee Scott sent a note back to ACA and suggested that their presentation had been helpful to the decision making process.

4. Approval of the March Minutes:

There were two corrections to the minutes:

The spelling of Sophie Reussner-Pazur was corrected

The venue of the OSO was corrected from the NAC to 440 Albert Street

Moved by Cheryl Carman to adopt the amended minutes: CARRIED

5. Business arising from the March minutes:

Re: letters to School Councils: Principal Denise Poirier made some excellent suggestions for future letters to the schools. Asking them to respond to a specific question, perhaps about their school's arts contact, and a request for confirmation might increase the response rate, and help the Executive Circle know who really did receive the letter. She also suggested a follow-up letter in early October, not September, since September was a very busy month and the request might get lost.

6. Superintendent's Report:

Principal Denise Poirier, reporting for Curriculum Services, brought the group up to date on what has been happening since 2013, and how Curriculum Services is trying to meet the needs of the teachers. The teacher induction program is designed to work with new teachers; she noted that the AICs are there to support all teachers in teaching the Arts.

Although the focus of the Arts Instructional Coaches is on the Arts, within the CS department, there is a lot of emphasis on working with the other areas: AIC Jacquie Pinard will detail more about this in her report. They are particularly working on differentiated learning for students and creating more outside partnerships to bring in the expertise needed.

Principal Poirier explained that the ICs spend 2 days a week directly in the schools, 2 days running workshops and 1 day (usually Friday) in the central location, and that day is used as a collaborative day and PD for all ICs.

There was some discussion about the number of ICs in the system, the trustees having been told at budget discussions that there are currently 48, and the number would be reduced for next year. The breakdown of the number of coaches, and the varying names and job description, was clarified.

There was a short discussion about media literacy (not one of the 4 official arts within the curriculum) within schools, particularly elementary schools, and how useful an analysis of the media announcements help the students. An example was cited about a school which did deconstruct a Public Service announcement, and how they benefitted from the experience.

7. Arts Coaches Report:

AIC Jacquie Pinard elaborated on what Denise Poirier spoke about, particularly the role of the AICs.

They are there to support teachers in their understanding of the curriculum, particularly as it relates to the arts; they are there to run/ facilitate arts workshops/ networks for teachers; they start initiatives that will further the integration of the arts within the curriculum; and they collaborate with other curriculum areas (see Appendix A)

The VALL and DALL sessions are continuing and next year the emphasis will be on Dance. It is hoped that it will be possible to focus on 2 areas in the next few years.

There was a little more discussion about the roles and importance of the Instructional Coaches.

BREAK:

Thank you to the bakers for the treats. They were all excellent.

8. Trustees' Report:

Trustee Erika Braunovan brought regrets from Trustee Scott, and then reported on what was going.

Budget deliberations are on-going, and the staff have presented the general picture of their ideas. Funding from the Ministry of Education is down, so cuts need to be made. There had been a question by trustees to staff about the \$300,000 funding for the arts, and apparently it is still intact.

The Strategic Plan should be finished by the end of June. Trustees have seen the compilation from the public, have presented their views, and then staff were to formulate the new Strategic Plan for the next four years.

There was a general discussion around the budget issues and the upcoming strategic plan.

Trustee Braunovan also spoke about attending a Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) meeting and raising the issue of the Time Allocation Model (TAM). She was told (by admin staff) that it was administrative in nature, not for discussion by the trustees.

9. ACA Awards:

Co-Chair David Jones stated that he is still trying to clarify which dates are available for the ceremony, but he has not had clear confirmation on anything yet. The goal is to have a firm date set for the presentation at a trustee's meeting before the end of this school year.

Everyone is encouraged to nominate people before the deadline of June 12.

10. Echoes of Ottawa:

Unfortunately, Eric Ding was not able to attend this meeting, so Sheila briefly explained the intent of the project.

11. New Business: Time Allocation Model (TAM)

There was a very spirited discussion about the TAM, how it came into being, how many minutes are allotted to the arts per week (150 for all 4 arts) and what could be done about it, if anything.

There is a category of flex time which is allowed in the TAM, and sometimes that is used for the arts (Instrumental Music most often), but most often in grades 7/8.

The issue is a complex one, and may be partially based on the emphasis for testing and the resultant scores. As an example, a certain number of English minutes for the French Immersion program, in 7 and 8, which used to be used for the arts, now must be taught in French, and the arts may now be taught by people less comfortable teaching the arts, just because they are French teachers.

Many questions were raised: should the TAM be eliminated; should ACA suggest a different time allocation for the arts; who would we speak to about this (given that Trustee Braunovan was told it was not a trustee issue); what is the real policy underpinning the TAM, since that policy could be a trustee issue; what would be the best process of deciding what to do?

There was a suggestion that a group discussion be started via google docs, which could be circulated to all who attend ACA, but at the end, it was clear that if there were to be any suggestions about the TAM, they would have to be made by the Voting members only.

12. Adjournment:

Sheila adjourned the meeting at 9:05 pm
Moved by David Jones: CARRIED

Next meeting: May 25, 2015, in the staffroom at Fisher Park / Summit, 7:00 -9:00 PM

For information: ACA Co-Chairs David Jones & Sheila White: chair@ACAottawa.ca