

Earl of March School Council Meeting

Monday, April 17, 2023

7:00 pm

Library, Second Floor

Attendees: Melissa Adams, Anthony Anderson, Sheila Ball, Steve Collins, Josephine Davidson, Melanie Gavan, Joanne Greenwood, Daniel Lau, Subo Leenasrajah, Ram Manikavasagar, Maria Short, K. Smith, Krista Taggart

Regrets: Louise Foley, Thomas Holloway, Monte Molepo

Call to order: 7:05 pm

Welcome - Ram Manikavasagar, Co-Chair

Approval of Previous Minutes

No changes to the draft minutes. Joanne Greenwood moved a motion to approve the minutes from March meeting. Seconded by Maria Short. Motion carried.

Student Council Report - Daniel Lau

- Battle of the Grades is taking place with events like a lip sync, capture the flag, hallway decorating and daily dress-up themes.
- *The Addams Family*, this year's school musical, is being presented April 27-30. Tickets are available online.

Secondary Admin Report - Steve Collins, Principal

Staffing

- Two retirements: Will Kelly (English and Business) and Karen Walker (Biology)
- Three Department Head Appointments effective as of September 2023:
 - Head of Fine Arts: Frances D'Alessandro - photography and visual arts teacher
 - Head of English, Languages, Library: Naomi Watson-Laird - from Merivale HS
 - Head of Mathematics and Computer Science: Stacie Torres - computer science and math teacher
- Two office assistants hired: Darlene Wagner and Amy Gress
- Two transfers - one is a promotion and one is a lateral move:
 - Adam Lecuyer - Woodroffe HS, Head of Student Services
 - Trish Clark - Woodroffe HS, Head of Mathematics
- New secondary vice principal will be announced by the end of April. Megan Port, who has been acting vice principal, is going on maternity leave.

Programs

- Enrolment projections are carried out from March to end of September.
- Projected enrolment for September 2023 is 1600 students at the secondary level. This breaks down to approximately 400 students per grade. Projection for intermediate is 686 students.

- Estimating that will be hiring 6 full-time teachers. This includes teachers for English (ideally with ESL), science, business, computer science, music.
- Future changes to staffing allocation, school vacancies and staff assignments due to a variety of factors like summer school, staff transfers, new registrations. There are five enrolment projections until staffing is finalized in September 2023.

Question about summer school

Response from Steve: Grade 9 Geography, Civics and Careers, English are common choices. However, most students don't take summer classes.

- Requested 5 additional portables for 2023/24 (by asking for 5, hope to get 4). Currently have 26 portables on site.
- Currently, EOM has a Grade 7-12 enrolment of 2195 which is 148% building capacity. The school has a building capacity of 1484 students.
- For the 2023/24 school year, Gr. 7-12 enrolment will (based on a conservative projection) grow to 2252 students (152% capacity). Between now and 2026, predicted to grow by another 100 students. Intermediate is projected to go down by approximately 45 students.
- A.Y. Jackson and West Carleton are full too (meaning that boundary changes would not be a solution to capacity issues at EOM).
- Six fire drills are held every year.
- Practice lockdown dates for the entire school (Grades 7-12) are scheduled for April 19 and May 18. Mandatory two lockdown drills per year. These are announced in advance to staff, students and parents.

Upcoming Events

Important Dates:

- June 2 Grad Breakfast (opportunity to go over details about commencement)
- June 27 Commencement

Two commencement ceremonies will be held due to: size of graduating class, the school venue limitations, preference to host our ceremony at our school, and our ability to offer extra tickets for some families.

Commencement Ceremony #1

Tuesday, June 27, 2023 @ 10:00 AM

Student Last Names A - K ONLY

Commencement Ceremony #2

Tuesday, June 27, 2023 @ 1:00 PM

Student Last Names L - Z ONLY

The two ceremonies have been scheduled close enough together to allow for our graduates to take pictures with each other between the celebrations.

Senior Staff Report - Anthony Anderson

Kathy Scheepers

- The HSE4M (Equity and Social Justice) class welcomed retired RCMP Officer, Joanne Fraser, to class via Google Meet from Edmonton on Monday, April 17. Joanne took her RCMP pension buy back and job sharing case all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada (and won), but it was a long and arduous journey. We are looking at gender equality in the workplace and Joanne's case is a great example in Canada.
- A brief background: <https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/supreme-court-of-canada-sides-with-women-in-rcmp-pension-dispute-over-job-sharing-1.5148171>

Rana Ibrahim - Muslim Students Association (MSA)

- MSA Ramadan Iftar event took place on Friday, March 31, from 5:30-9pm. There were approximately 150 attendees. It was a great mix of students, staff, families and friends. The food was exceptionally delicious and the variety was stunning! MSA raised over \$300 that will go to help struggling Muslim families in Ottawa put food on the table and buy Eid gifts for children.

Library Learning Commons

- The Canadian War Museum First World War Discovery Box was a huge hit and a wonderful, interactive experiential-learning experience for Grade 10 History students.
- The acting teacher-librarian has been working with all the classes to help them understand more about the importance of mindfulness and calming strategies and has been using them with each lesson being taught in the library learning commons. Check out the 5-4-3-2-1 Strategy!
- Exploring challenged books with the Social Justice class and why it is important to hear all sides of a story. Learning to use non-violent communication when we do not agree with a certain perspective or view.
- Holding research and bibliography workshops with all Grade 9 History and Geography students, teaching them how to use the pathfinder and cite their work.
- Beginning book talks with the Grade 9 English classes. They are finishing their books and then they will discuss their book with B and make connections to their own life experiences. As well as helping us understand ourselves better, reading books might also help us understand and empathize with other people, by guiding us to see things from their points of view.
- New members are always welcome at Book Club – meetings are posted on Instagram and in the Library Google Classroom (code **gjvc2ug**).
- Library displays featuring Poetry Month. We have short poems for students to take with them. We call it a poem in your pocket!
- RenRan Sun was a quarter-finalist in the *Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies* Speaker's Idol Competition. She is now a semi-finalist and will compete again on April 16! Please congratulate her and wish her luck!
- And *how* did RenRan learn about these competitions? Through the Library Google Classroom, of course! Students are encouraged to join the Library Google Classroom with code **gjvc2ug** to stay informed about resources, library events, book clubs,

opportunities, volunteering, and more. Students and parents are invited to check out our Library website at https://earlofmarchss.ocdsb.ca/academics/library_learning_commons and to follow us on Instagram [@eom_library](#).

Technology - Anthony Anderson

- This year our Robotics Club has competed in three different competitions and done very well. EOM entered two teams, up from one in previous years. These robots are built from the ground up and include metal fabrication and computer engineering. This week we got an Alienware laptop to run the CAD software that the students use. The software is SolidWorks which is industry standard software. The Robotics Club is an example of student engagement at its finest. It engages a diverse array of students.

Intermediate Staff Report - Melanie Gavan

- Grade 8 Science Expo at EOM on June 22-23. All Grade 8 students will be invited to either: 1) conduct an experiment or 2) design and build a scientific model/technique. The kickoff to the Science Expo will take place on May 16 with a virtual presentation by a museum curator from Ingenium Canada.
- Talent show - June 28, 2023 in the auditorium. Tryout dates TBD.
- Arrowhead Camp forms are coming in ahead of the due dates. First trip is end of May. Tie-dye activity for Arrowhead scheduled for mid-May.
- Olympia Camp (Grade 8) deadlines have passed.
- Results from the Math League Contest:
 - Our top 5 scores in each grade level are used to determine our total score and standings.
 - For Grade 7 - EOM placed 3rd out of 140 schools and had 3 students who placed in the top 40 for the entire country - with one being first overall. In Ontario, EOM was 2nd overall.
 - For Grade 8 - EOM placed 1st out of 135 schools and had 3 students who placed in the top 40 for the entire country - with one student being tied for 1st. In Ontario, EOM was 1st overall.
- April 24 we are having an antiracism presentation and the students will be doing or have already done some work in language arts to complement the presentation.
- Badminton is continuing for both grades.

OCASC - Thomas Holloway sent his regrets, along with information about Ottawa Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC) and the meeting held on Thursday, March 23. The information is annexed to these minutes.

Brief discussion about an item discussed at the February OCASC meeting (refer to EOM School Council March meeting minutes for more information). The issue discussed was the Board's decision to remove Grade 9 and Grade 10 students from exams. This effectively results in Grade 9 and 10 having two weeks off from school during the exam periods at the end of each semester which is a significant loss of learning time. Suggestion to contact Trustee Alysha Aziz

with concerns either as individual parents/caregivers or as a school council. Also, to find out if the intention is to continue this practice of no exams for Grades 9 and 10 in the 2023-24 school year. Maria Short offered to post on EOM Parents Facebook page about the issue and ask for feedback from parents.

Presentation/Open Discussion - Krista Taggart

- Grade 7 teacher and also mom of four boys.
- Ms. Taggart showed *The Social Dilemma* to her Grade 7 students. It is a docudrama that explores the addictive nature of social media and how it is used for profit.
- The goal of viewing it with students was to encourage critical thinking about social media and dependence on technology. Asked students to critically unpack how mass media "indoctrinates" them. Students held a debate and argued both sides.
- Melanie Gavan noted that Caitlin McIlveen, the intermediate VP, is starting a new initiative whereby students are being asked to leave their phones in their lockers during class time.
- Discussion followed about technology use. Points raised included:
 - Want kids to be comfortable with the technology/know how to use it.
 - Technological etiquette has not been taught.
 - Need to process this with our kids.

Motion to adjourn the meeting moved by Maria Short. Seconded by Joanne Greenwood.
Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:24 pm.

Next Council meeting is Monday, May 15, 2023 at 7:00 pm, in person in the EOM Library. This will be the final meeting for the 2022-23 school year.

OCASC Update - Submitted in writing by Thomas Holloway

EOM School Council April OCASC Update

Ottawa Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC) met Thursday, March 23 (with 29 councils represented) and will meet again Thursday, April 20. Given the timing of this month's OCASC meeting, I'll provide an interim update if anything relevant and time-sensitive comes up.

Some information from my last update that's still relevant if council members or other parents are interested in participating or looking for direct updates:

- You can sign up for the Supporting School Councils newsletter, including the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) and other targeted emails at:

[Ottawa-Carleton District School Board : Sign Up to Stay in Touch \(constantcontact.com\)](https://www.constantcontact.com/sign-up)

Committee of the Whole (COW) – The Committee of the Whole of the OCDSB (COW) met on 2/28 for the limited purpose of approving the Facilities Renewal Program and an update on the Strategic Plan. The COW met on 3/7, covering revisions to the Field Trip Policy, implementation of district wide recycling program, revisions to the policy governing the Special Education Advisory Committee of the OCDSB (SEAC) to add indigenous representation, and a report on OSTA and OC Transpo. This meeting also included a delegation on transgender use of school restrooms which resulted in controversy. The COW met again on 4/4, the agenda of which can be found at [Committee of the Whole - April 04, 2023 \(escribemeetings.com\)](https://pub-ocdsb.escribemeetings.com/Players/ISIStandAlonePlayer.aspx?Id=e5c9fcf4-d3ff-4ebc-a5b5-bd02066aadbd) and video at <https://pub-ocdsb.escribemeetings.com/Players/ISIStandAlonePlayer.aspx?Id=e5c9fcf4-d3ff-4ebc-a5b5-bd02066aadbd>, with the next meeting on 4/25; both of which will be included as part of my next update.

Arts Advisory Committee – The committee did not meet this past month, but the upcoming meeting is expected to focus on experiences coming back after the pandemic.

Parent Involvement Committee (PIC)/ PRO Grants – A large part of the presentation and discussion focused on the PRO Grant, including experiences by the different councils with the application process and suggestions for improvement. The expectation is that continuity and timeliness will be improved next year. As of the deadline, only 46 schools applied for the PRO Grant, which is down from 100 schools that received the grant last year. It is expected that number will increase slightly since the OCDSB has generally accepted late applications within reason.

WIFI/Technical issues delegation – There was more discussion of schools having WIFI issues. OCASC would like to know if other schools, such as ours, are experiencing the same problems, and then to have participants, whether councils or parents, participate at an upcoming COW meeting to bring the problems to the Trustees' attention. This would seem relevant for Earl of

March, particularly with the connectivity issues experienced by our Grade 10 students on the recent OSSLT.

In-person v. virtual v. hybrid school council meetings discussion – Participating members were polled, and most school councils are continuing to meet virtually or hybrid, alternating between the two formats every other meeting or offering both formats for each meeting. Councils have found it's increased participation and helps to accommodate members who cannot attend in-person, whether for health reasons or where members have conflicts. Some councils noted that the virtual component was a great way for audio/visual-interested students to be engaged. One media recommendation is "Media Owl".

As a reminder, all **meetings** of OCASC are open to the public and anyone can participate. Please make sure to follow along on OCASC's webpage and Facebook page. Meetings will be held monthly and will alternate between virtual and in-person. Below is a list of upcoming meetings, starting at 7pm.

Upcoming OCASC meetings:

04/20/2023 – virtual

05/18/2023 – in-person, TBD

No June meeting

Please contact me (Thomas Holloway) at 857-251-7975 or at thomasholloway@hotmail.com if you have any questions or would like me to bring something up at the next OCASC meeting. Likewise, as OCASC's rep to the OCDSB Committee of the Whole (COW), please let me know if you have any items that you would like me to be aware of or speak to in that capacity. OCDSB provides their agenda packages in advance of their monthly meetings.