

**Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Limestone District School Board**

January 28, 2015

A meeting of the Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee was held in the Barry C. O'Connor Board Room at the Limestone Education Centre, 220 Portsmouth Avenue, Kingston, Ontario on Wednesday, January 28, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.

Present

Members: A. Mack, Co-chair of the School Council Liaison
S. Luxford Oddie, Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority
Z. MacEachren, Faculty of Education, Queen's University
K. Wall, Sustainable Kingston
T. Carpenter, SWITCH
R. Healey, KCAT

Officials: A. Ross, Co-Chair
D. Jackson, Trustee
P. Murray, Trustee
D. Hendry, Sustainable Initiatives Coordinator
J. Hendry, Energy/Environmental Technologist
D. Fowler, Manager of Facility Services
S. Lehman, Supervising Principal

Regrets: M. McCormac, Student Trustee
R. Hutcheon, Co-chair of the School Council Liaison
L. Malcolm, KFL&A Public Health
T. McKenzie, County of Lennox & Addington
M. Sewell, Program Leader, Skills Training & Technology
D. Hahn, National Farmers Union
K. Moulton, Hydro One
M. Shaw, Loving Spoonful
K. Pender, County of Frontenac

Guests: Jeremy DaCosta, Parent
Brenda Moore, Principal J. R. Henderson P.S.

Recorder: L. Strange, Records Management Coordinator

1. Welcome

Trustee Ross welcomed those in attendance to the meeting.

2. Approval of Agenda

MOVED BY: T. Carpenter, that the agenda as distributed, be approved. Carried.

3. Approval of the Minutes –October 14, 2014

MOVED BY: Trustee Murray, that the minutes of October 14, 2014, as distributed, be approved. Carried.

4. Business Arising From the Minutes

None at this time.

5. Introduction of Members

Members of the committee introduced themselves and identified the organization they are representing.

6. Community Presentation – Parent, Jeremy DaCosta on Active Transportation Planning at J.R. Henderson P.S.

Brenda Moore, Principal of J. R. Henderson P. S. introduced Jeremy DaCosta, a parent at the school, who had spearheaded the planning and introduction of the ‘Walking School Bus Program’. The premise for the program came from need to manage the congestion of traffic around the school as parents dropped off and picked up their children each day. A survey was sent to parents inquiring why children were being driven, with most citing safety concerns. Through an additional intercept survey, wherein every student was asked about their mode of transportation to and from school, it was discovered that though 46% should be walking, in reality only 22% were.

After an analysis of where students lived and how students were getting to and from school, the administrative team and school council worked together to develop the program. Support was sought from the City of Kingston and KFLA Public Health, namely in regards to prioritizing snow removal and sidewalk maintenance on identified walking/cycling routes for the program, and assistance in communication and promotion of the program. The City of Kingston was appreciative of the hard data provided by the school, and has been open to working in partnership with the program.

Though the program began in the 2013-14, updates were made for the current school year, which included:

- Routes redesigned based on student address information
- New promotional materials
- Defined routes, schedules, pick-up times
- Made it “personal” (including photos of parent volunteers, etc)

Considerations for future promotion and support include having routes posted in an accessible way for parents, perhaps in conjunction with bus routes, and to having a formalized policy and procedure for the program.

Trustee Murray queried the ages involved in the program, and J. DaCosta responded that it varied by route, though primarily grades 1-4 students. At present there are 20 students using the program on a regular basis.

There was discussion of the challenges around perceived safety issues of getting parent buy-in for the program, especially for younger students.

The program is replicable, and could be taken to other schools throughout the District. The planning and implementation steps taken by J. R. Henderson could be shared with School Councils. In conjunction with the Walking School Bus Program, J.R. Henderson P.S. also developed a 'how to park at the school' pamphlet that identified where all the legal spots were for use by parents. This is also something that could be replicated for individual school needs and safety issues.

Information about the program was shared through various means, including at the Kindergarten Open House, through the school newsletter, etc.

Trustee Ross thanked J. DaCosta and B. Moore for their presentation, and expressed his hopes that the program would be successful at other schools in the LDSB.

7. Presentation –NAEC Biomass Boiler Update

J. Hendry, Energy Environmental Technician with LDSB Facility Services, provided an update on the installation and utilization of the biomass boiler at the North Addington Education Centre. The project began in 2009 through the Ministry of Education's introduction of the Green Schools Pilot Initiative. LDSB received funding for a solar thermal installation and a biomass boiler.

The site was chosen because of the rural location and size of the property, due to the need to construct a building to house the boiler and a silo to store the wood pellets.

The project encountered several hurdles, including:

- Installing Contractors / Designers
- Lack of documentation (i.e. manuals)
- Ash disposal
- Pellet Supply
- Ministry of Environment Regulations

The benefits of using a biomass boiler are use of a renewable fuel, potential cost savings, support of Ontario's Forestry industry and better control over building space temperatures and occupant comfort.

Members inquired about the use of geothermal heating. J. Hendry replied that geothermal systems had been installed at two LDSB schools, supported through a separate funding program than the biomass boiler. The size of the North Addington Education Centre building influenced the choice to go for biomass boiler at that particular site.

There was discussion on the potential uses for the ash produced from the burning of wood pellets, including composting. At present the LDSB is disposing of the ash through its waste management contract.

S. Luxford-Oddie shared that Lafarge Manufacturing uses woodchips in its heating system, and suggested looking into a potential partnership for the acquisition of fuel.

Trustee Ross shared that Burt's Greenhouse uses a similar system, and controls the heat to produce a *biochar* instead of ash, which can be used as a fertilizer.

Trustee Ross thanked J. Hendry for his update.

8. Current Initiatives Presentation

D. Hendry provided an update on the LDSB's current initiatives: continued provision of bus passes for Grade 9, 10 & 11 students, to date 1,841 pounds (835 kgs) of batteries collected for recycling, computer hibernation software implementation (5674 Student and SEA computers turned off at 6pm or 11pm), Building Envelope Improvements (i.e. roofing, windows), Building Automation Systems upgraded to improve efficiency and new waste and recycling schedules created for individual schools. The LDSB currently has 15 schools registered with Ontario EcoSchools.

D. Hendry shared information and a video about the Slow Cookers for Kids program, recently run at First Avenue Public School. Students learned how to prepare various healthy dishes, and were introduced to food items they had not previously experienced. The program was a success through the support of Enactus, St. Lawrence College Culinary Arts Program and Canadian Tire for the provision of the slow cookers.

9. Flagship Project – School Yard Naturalization

Cam Collyer from Evergreen gave a presentation on School Ground Greening on November 26, 2014. The event was attended by approximately 30 schools/organizations within the city.

Evergreen provides support to schools who would like to implement outdoor learning spaces. They have supported various schools from other Boards in Ontario. The members discussed the possible use of this program in the School Yard Naturalization project, with concerns expressed about the focus of ESAC becoming too narrow. Trustee Murray provided background on the Committee's consideration and identification of a "flagship" project, clarifying that the project would be only one area that the committee would be involved in.

Z. McEachren clarified that the 'Forest Kindergarten' program referenced at the previous meeting is a separate initiative from the work of Evergreen, and further that the Ottawa Carlton District School Board had sent all of their Kindergarten teachers to attend the training.

It was suggested that one or two pilot areas/schools could be used as the flagship project, who could access the support of Evergreen, and that the concepts could then be adopted at other schools.

Z. McEachren shared that Teacher Candidates at the Faculty of Education at Queen's University will be required to complete an Environmental Studies course beginning in 2016. Delivery of the course would most likely occur in June, and would be ideal if the Candidates could be linked with schools undertaking projects like School Yard Naturalization.

A. Mack suggested that schools that don't have yards currently developed to be considered as a pilot site.

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MOTION: That School Yard Naturalization be adopted as the Flagship Project of ESAC.

MOVED BY: Trustee Jackson.

After further discussion the motion was tabled, and members agreed that further discussion was needed at the next ESAC meeting.

D. Fowler suggested having staff bring examples of school yard naturalization to the next meeting, and to provide further information about the time and resources involved in such a project.

ACTION: School Yard Naturalization to be discussed at the next ESAC meeting.

Action: D. Fowler to provide further information and examples of School Yard Naturalization projects.

10. Food Garden AP

This item was deferred.

11. Election of Community Co-Chair

Trustee Murray nominated A. Mack as Community Co-chair. A. Mack accepted the nomination.

MOTION: That A. Mack be appointed as the Community Co-chair for ESAC.

MOVED BY: Trustee Murray. Carried.

12. Other Business

There was no other business discussed at this time.

13. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the ESAC is scheduled for April 1 2015, at the Limestone Education Centre, 220 Portsmouth Avenue, Kingston, at 6:00 p.m.

14. Adjournment

MOVED BY Trustee Murray that the meeting be adjourned. Carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.