

Members of 2010/2011 School Council

Parents: Angela Koklis (Chairperson), Don Wilson (Vice-Chair), Cindy Anderson (Recording Secretary), Brenda Della Maestra, Robin Gagnon, Blair Gerrish, Amanda Vernon and Tina Bender.

Teacher Representative: Sandra Valeri.

Student Representative: Lindsey Fletcher (Student Council President).

Principal: Randy Gallant.

Vice Principals: Evelyn Wilkie, Wendy Yarr.

I wish to acknowledge all of the members who served on School Council this year at Sherwood, and generously donated their time each month. Council usually met the first Tuesday of each month (except January) for a total of 8 meetings. All of our council meeting dates are published in the student agenda monthly calendars, in the School Council showcase in the main hallway, and in the School Council Newsletters.

Council Goals

School Council is a parent advisory group who are devoted to improving education and our school environment for our students. We do that in partnership with Student Council and the Sherwood teaching staff. All parents are welcomed and encouraged to attend our monthly meetings, held in the school library. Each meeting includes reports from our Principal, Vice-Principal(s) and teacher representatives. This year, we've also had guest speakers, South ARC members and Brock University students, who came to observe and participate in discussions. Some of our special guests were the Head of Library Services Ms. Dupuis, Head of Languages Ms. Purdy, Head of History Mr. Jones, HWDSB Superintendent Manny Figueiredo and HWDSB School Trustee Laura Peddle.

The Sherwood School website features a "School Council" page that outlines not only current, but archived meeting minutes, annual reports and School Council Newsletters. Parents will be pleased to know that the entire website is currently undergoing updates and reformatting. Plans to continue upgrades are already in the works for the 2011/2012 school term. Please check the website regularly for newsworthy information and updates. Parents may also view information posted in our School Council showcase located in the main hallway.

The grade 9 Information Night/Open House outlined programming information, academic and enrichment opportunities along with specialty programs for incoming and existing Sherwood families. It was a great opportunity to visit classrooms and gather information from the Guidance Staff, Department Heads and the teaching staff.

As of August 16, 2010 two new Superintendents of Education joined the HWDSB Executive Council: Mag Gardner and Manny Figueiredo. Mr. Figueiredo is the Superintendent for Sherwood in Ward 6.

Activities and Accomplishments

At the beginning of the year, Sherwood was very fortunate to have Vice Principal Wendy Yarr added to our administration. Throughout her career, she has gained a tremendous amount of knowledge and wisdom. Her addition to the Principal's office has been an asset for sure. Her key areas of expertise are literacy, the Safe Schools and the Healthy Schools portfolios.

Sherwood started the year with a new concrete walkway and painted railings at the Princeton Drive entrance, also new carpet and a circulation desk were installed in the Library. Our Principals, Safe Schools Committee and School Council are always looking to improve the facility (to benefit students and keep them safe) so "Plant and Safety" is always a standing agenda each month.

The HWDSB implemented the new Nutrition Policy in 2010. Sherwood staff, the School Nutrition Action Committee (SNAC) and the HWDSB staff worked very diligently to ensure it was an easy transition into our elementary and secondary schools. Complete information on the Nutrition Policy can be found on the HWDSB website <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/parents/nutrition/>.

October was the first 2010/2011 meeting for Council, and is when the membership election and executive positions took place. Angela Koklis replaced Robin Gagnon as Chairperson. Angela has over 10 years experience working on Councils herself, holding an elected Chairperson role for 3 years at the elementary school level. Robin held the Chair position for over 4 years at Sherwood and did an amazing job laying the ground work for that role. Our recording secretary also changed hands from Brenda Della Maestra to Cindy

Anderson. Cindy Anderson also brings administrative experience to the table. The council thanks both Robin and Brenda for all their hard work, dedication, and time spent while in their executive positions and assisting the new elected members in their transitions.

This year, Sherwood was 1 of 2 Hamilton schools awarded \$10,000 by “Musiccounts” to buy new musical instruments. Musiccounts is a Canadian music education charity, which is associated with the Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (CARAS).

School Council, along with the Repertoire Ensemble, Cheerleaders, Student Council, even a “real” Saint (a St. Bernard named Cooper) represented Sherwood School at this year’s Hamilton Santa Claus Parade. The band was a huge hit, as well as the four-legged Saint!

School Council received the annual Parental Engagement Fund grant from the Ministry of Education and used this funding to purchase Sherwood School magnets for parents. These fridge magnets are a quick reference with important information such as the school address, guidance office phone number, student attendance phone number, email and website addresses for School Council. These magnets will be distributed in the student timetable packages at the end of summer.

Both School Trustee Laura Peddle and Superintendent Manny Figueiredo attended meetings and spoke in great detail about the Accommodation Review Committee process (ARC). This is an extremely important public issue, not only concerning Sherwood, but Ward 6 communities in general. The ARC discussions that took place at our meetings, allowed for an opportunity for both council and community members to share their views and ask questions. Sherwood has 2 parent representatives (Jackie Brown, Ken Durkacz) and 1 teacher representative (Gary Deveau) on the South ARC. Complete ARC information can be found on the HWDSB website.

Financial Statement

School Council did not participate in fundraising this year but did receive a \$500 grant in October, from the Ministry of Education for Parental Engagement Funds. The majority of this funding was allocated for the purchase of school magnets, with the balance targeted for stationary supplies needed to maintain School Council binders, the School Council Showcase in the main hallway as well as the two School Council Display Boards used for Parent Information Nights and Open Houses. In addition to that, the 2011/2012 P.R.O. (Parents Reaching Out) Grant was applied for. This grant could be up to \$1000 and would be received and expended next year.

Goals for Next Year

- Continue to enhance Parent Information Night for families
- Continue to bring in staff presentations and HWDSB representatives to monthly meetings
- Continue to report on the importance of ARC for our school and the community

In Closing

Please consider volunteering for School Council. It’s an important opportunity for you to meet other parents, staff members and demonstrate support for your children. Your voice is important and we always work together as a group. As a parent, you too will benefit greatly from School Council participation. You will gain suggestions and advice from fellow parents, examine new ideas and policies, influence decisions that affect your children’s education and future. Over the past year, there have been many opportunities for parents to contribute comments and/or participate through HWDSB online surveys on topics such as: how Special Education Funding is formulated, the South ARC, the Student Achievement Pillar Policy, the Parents Reaching Out grant, the Draft First Nation Metis Inuit Education Policy Community Consultation, the Draft Environment Policy, Nutrition Survey, the Equity Policy Interim Religious Accommodation Guideline, the Bullying Prevention & Intervention Policy, the Code of Conduct Policy, the Promoting Positive Student Behaviour & Progressive Discipline Policy and the Educational Excursions Policy.

A nomination ballot will be part of the School Council Newsletter distributed via mail, during the summer. Please return the ballot to the school office, the principal or school Council Chairperson, if you wish to become a Council member for 2011-2012. Council reconvenes for the final 2010-2011 meeting on September 13, 2011 at 6:30 p.m. For further information, you may contact the School Council at Sherwood.sc@hwdsb.on.ca or visit Sherwood’s website www.hwdsb.on.ca/sherwood.

We would like to wish the Graduating Class of 2011 continued success in all their future endeavours and post-secondary education. Go Saints Go!

Finally, we appreciate the year long work from Principal Randy Gallant, Vice Principals Evelyn Wilkie and Wendy Yarr. They continually exhibit their leadership and dedication to Sherwood staff, students and Council members.

Kindest regards,
Angela Koklis, 2010/2011 Chairperson
Sherwood Secondary School Council, Hamilton, ON