

Members of 2011/2012 School Council

Parents: Angela Koklis (Chairperson), Cindy Anderson (Recording Secretary), Brenda Della Maestra, Tina Bender, Wendy Burley, Kathy Kennedy-Brown, Lynn Hicks, Sue Lambier, Meredith Taylor.

Teacher Representative: Colleen Kaus.

Student Representative: Alaine Spiwak (Student Council President).

Principal: Randy Gallant.

Vice Principals: Evelyn Wilkie, Brent Monkley.

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 that are issued throughout the school year.

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, the Sherwood Administrators and 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 Jackie Brown and Gary Deveau, Brock University students (who come and observe, and sometimes participate in discussions). Some of our special guests were the Head of Library Services Ms. Beheil, Ms. Trikoupis our LRT, 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. 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 held on October 13th 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, the teaching staff and visit our School Council booth in the main foyer.

Activities and Accomplishments

At the beginning of this school year, Sherwood was very fortunate to have Vice Principal Brent Monkley added to the administration team. Mr. Monkley came from Mountain Secondary and brought with him an abundance of knowledge and years of experience. His addition to the Principal's office has been an asset and he was proud to make Sherwood his new home.

October was the first meeting of the year for 2011/2012, and that is when the membership election and executive positions took place. Angela Koklis remained as Chairman. Our Recording Secretary remained as Cindy Anderson. Our Staff Representative changed to Colleen Kaus. We welcomed several new parents to council this year, and thank them for taking the interest and time out of their busy lives to work with our Council group at Sherwood. The new parents this year were: Lynn, Hicks, Wendy Burley, Kathy Kennedy-Brown, Sue Lambier and Meredith Taylor.

Sherwood has certainly, without a doubt, been in the spotlight and news media the entire year. With the whole South ARC process behind us now, we can breathe a huge sigh of relief. Sherwood has been saved, and will remain open for all our current and future Saints! There is also no doubt in saying that this has been one of the biggest and most controversial Secondary ARCs to take place in Hamilton for many years and probably for decades to come. The way Sherwood came together to join forces and fight to stay open, was also without a doubt, fabulous. The staff, the students, School Council, Student Council, parents, siblings, the Sherwood community and outside residents, all played an integral part and we all have good reasons to be proud of ourselves. Myself, as well as some other Council members, worked very closely with the Sherwood student group who presented at Delegation night back on April 10th. The students who made presentations that night did a wonderful job representing Sherwood and we were very proud of them all for making a stand and having their voices heard. Two of our students were the only ones who received a standing ovation by some of the Trustees after their presentations. These presentations can be viewed on the South ARC website. Although a couple of us missed being in person during the actual vote night that took place on May 23rd (but thanks to today's technology), we were kept in the loop via texting. We understand there was quite a

celebration both that night at the Board and the following day at the school pep rally. We wished we had been there to be a part of it too, but we were out of town with another Sherwood function.

This year, School Council once again participated with Sherwood at the annual Hamilton Santa Claus Parade. Last year was our first time presenting a “real” Saint (a St. Bernard dog named Cooper) as the Sherwood Saint’s mascot. Well this year we wanted to beat our own record and we did! School Council Chair A. Koklis was able to round up five St. Bernards to participate with us. The turnout was amazing and the dogs ranged from 4 years old right down to 10 week old puppies. They were a HUGE hit with the crowds, especially wearing their Saints football jerseys and Christmas garland around their necks. Pictures can be viewed on the school website and the Sherwood band website. Repertoire Ensemble of course was the lead, and Sherwood was proud to say we were the only secondary school in the HWDSB to have a band enter the parade. The group was also joined by the Cheerleaders, the Student Council, staff, Principal Gallant and even some parents!

Both our School Trustee Laura Peddle and our Ward Superintendent Manny Figueiredo attended meetings this year again and spoke in great detail about the ARC process and its progress. This continued to be an extremely important issue/concern this year for Sherwood staff, students, families and Sherwood community members. In respect to the schools named in the South cluster, Sherwood has been by and large the only school in our cluster that has had public outcry and support to the extent it did. It was very apparent that everyone wanted to keep Sherwood open and was willing to do whatever was needed to convince the Board and School Trustees of that fact. 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 had 2 parent representatives (Jackie Brown, Ken Durkacz) and 1 teacher representative (Gary Deveau) on the South ARC committee. Even though they were all Sherwood teachers, they were also Sherwood parents. Complete ARC information and Board Meeting Minutes can be found on the HWDSB website.

Financial Statement

School Council does not participate in any fundraising but did receive the annual \$500 grant in the fall from the Ministry of Education for Parental Engagement Funds. Only \$66.32 of the grant has been spent on 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). The 2012/2013 P.R.O. Grant (Parents Reaching Out), was not applied for this year. It will be reviewed again 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 important school council issues to Sherwood families and the community

In Closing

To all Sherwood families and community members, please consider volunteering for our School Council. It’s an important opportunity for you to meet other parents, staff members and demonstrate support for your child(ren). 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. As in past years, we have had many opportunities to contribute comments and/or participate through HWDSB online surveys on topics: The Facilities Partnership Policy, The Draft Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting Policy and the French Immersion Program Proposed Change.

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 2012-2013. Council reconvenes for the final 2011-2012 meeting on September 11, 2012 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 2012 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 Brent Monkley. They continually exhibit their leadership and dedication to Sherwood staff, students and Council members.

Kindest regards,
Angela Koklis, 2011/2012 Chairperson
Sherwood Secondary School Council, Hamilton, ON