

TIFFANY HILLS TRANSITION COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, June 15th, 2016

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Ancaster Meadow Elementary School

93 Kitty Murray Lane, Ancaster, Ontario L9K 1S3

MINUTES

In Attendance:

Trustee – Alex Johnstone

Superintendent – Mag Gardner

Principal, Tiffany Hills – Jane Gerritsen

Executive Assistant – Michele Lambie

Principal, Ancaster Meadow – Paul Clemens

Teachers, Ancaster Meadow – Betty Thompson

Parent Representatives, Ancaster Meadow – Amy Telford, Julie Hope

Vice-Principal, Chedoke – Jo Ann Corbin-Harper

Teacher, Chedoke – Kirsty Russell

Parent Representative, Chedoke – Jacqueline Moore

Regrets:

Teachers, Ancaster Meadow – Kyle Bunganich

Student Representative, Ancaster Meadow – Tamana Atta

Student Representative, Chedoke – Noor Al Neamat

Guest Presenters:

Manager of Parent Engagement – Lisa Kiriakopoulos

Associate Director of Today's Family - Bernadette Noon

1. Welcome and Introductions of the Transition Committee Members

- This Transition Committee was created in February, with member representation from both Ancaster Meadow and Chedoke, thus providing a voice from their administration, teaching staff, school communities and student bodies. This is the second Tiffany Hills Community Meeting and there will be (3) more meetings in the fall, prior to the opening of the new school
- In respect of Ramandan, some of our community members and student reps, were unable to attend tonight, and therefore this meeting is being videotaped, and will be accessible through the Tiffany Hills website, as well as the recorded minutes
- This agenda represents the community's concerns anticipated by the Transition Committee. As we grow closer to the new school opening it will be this community who will generate the items on the agenda

- The main purpose of the Transition Committee is to ensure a smooth and soft landing for students transferring to Tiffany Hills. Also, it provides the community with an opportunity to voice their concerns and thoughts, while encompassing their diverse views
- The Transition Committee will have another meeting on *Tuesday, June 21st in the Library at Ancaster Meadow School from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm*, to serve as a debriefing session deliberating through the issues raised at this meeting and the school colours
- A welcome is extended to the Tiffany Hills' community to attend this and future Transition meetings, to watch the committee work through the issues and challenges of transitioning to the new school, as they continue to bring new ideas to the table. *However, it is important to note that the public have no voting rights and will be provided special seating in the "gallery."*

2. Web site launch and email address tiffanyhills@hwdsb.on.ca

- The purpose of this website is to keep the public fully informed, with information and pictures of the progress of the building, as well as the minutes from each of the Transition Committee and Parent meetings
- To locate the Tiffany Hills website: go to main HWDSB website, where you will find Jane Gerritsen's Principal Message and tabs for construction updates, minutes, calendar and the Transition Committee
- We encourage the community to subscribe to this website in order to receive alerts as updates become available on this site. This is an evolving website that will not only serve the community, but will also include the participation of our students as they have a voice in what they want to see on their new school website
- The Board has created an email address to act as a platform to post the communities' questions that will keep the Transition Committee informed of issues they wish to be considered. Principal Gerritsen, Superintendent Gardner and Executive Assistant Michele Lambie will occasionally be checking this website (once a week or so), however if there is an urgent question please contact Michele Lambie at 905-527-5092, ext. 2626 or email mlambie@hwdsb.on.ca for assistance. The committee anticipates this email address will become a very useful tool as we start opening the new school

2. Update on Facilities and Staff

Facilities:

- Pictures of the progress of the construction of the new school were presented to the community from the Tiffany Hills website: the building is moving along well due to a mild winter and although there is no final completion date, Tiffany Hills Elementary will open in the 2016/17 school year.
- Consequently, your children will attend their home schools in September until the new school opens. Students who are presently in grades 6 and 7, who live in the boundary area of the new school have had the option to remain at their current school. This

should have been clarified with school administration by this point. However, any siblings in younger grades do *not* have this choice and will be attending the new elementary school

- Due to safety reasons, the public cannot go onto to the construction site. Therefore, you must rely upon the updated pictures on the Tiffany Hills website. Board members must wear safety equipment when invited to view the progress of the new school

Staff:

- Building the staff at Tiffany Hills was a long and involved process. The Tiffany Hills staff came together for the first time with Principal Jane Gerritsen last week. There was an incredible air of excitement and positive energy at this meeting, enabling staff to make connections with each other and share ideas. This staff is very student orientated, and are looking forward to hearing their students' ideas to transform their new school into an environment of their own creation that reflects their collective thoughts and diversity
- Presently, Ancaster Meadows has 247 students transferring to Tiffany Hills and Chedoke has 140 students. Therefore, the projected Tiffany Hills enrolment will be just under 400 students
- Students transferring to Tiffany Hills have been grouped with Tiffany Hills' students. Where the student groups were large enough, a Tiffany Hills' teacher was assigned to that grouping. This means that when the new school opens, the class will move en masse to the new building with their existing teacher and continue with their learning. Where the groupings were not large enough to compose a full class Tiffany Hills' students have been grouped together. As a result of implementing this method of class development, it will encourage early development of student friendships, consistency and familiarity, thereby ensuring a soft landing and smooth transition for the students

4. Daycare and extended daycare

- Lisa Kirakopoulos announced Tiffany Hills' child care provider as **Today's Family: Early Learning and Care**, and introduced *Bernadette Noon, Associate Director*
- Today's Family is a full service child care and will be offering all 3 services when the school opens
- 15 spaces for toddlers; 24 spaces for 2 year olds to Kindergarten; and 30 spaces for grades 1-5
- Bernadette Noon invited parents to either call (905-574-9344 ext.112) or email (childcare@todaysfamily.ca) for specific questions. Bernadette handed out business cards to the parents attending this meeting
- Today's Family have just been granted this opportunity to serve Tiffany Hills, therefore they are still working through the logistics of the process of registration. Parents are encouraged to contact the Placement Office that handles enrolment starting June 16th about registration by calling or sending an email listing specific information about your child (age, date of birth, type of care required, and your contact information)

- Information about child care registration and dates for the availability of child care registration packages will be posted on the Tiffany Hills website

5. Bell times

- Bell times will be the same as Ancaster Meadow (**9:00 am entry** and **3:20 pm dismissal**), with a *Balanced Day* program to ensure a smooth transition to the new school.

6. Transportation

- Tiffany Hills will be closed to out-of-catchment, which is a common HWDSB practice when new schools open. The growth in this area is still expanding with more housing developments being constructed. By allowing the community and school a “settling period”, the Board is able to assess present and future needs. Therefore, it may take some time before any out-of-catchment requests can be considered if you do not live within the Tiffany Hills boundary
- Audience was encouraged to refer to the coloured boundary map posted on the Tiffany Hills website. For queries regarding bus eligibility please visit the Transportation website: <http://www.hamiltonschoolbus.ca> . Students residing within all urban and rural areas will be eligible for transportation services to the school when the *walking* distance *exceeds* the following: **kindergarten** students living *more* than 1.0 km from the school, and for **grades 1-8** walking *more* than 1.6 km to school
- Garner Road: extremely busy, therefore if you live south of Garner Road, you will receive bussing *for now* for safety reasons. However, as we anticipate more housing growth there, the City will be providing safety measures (e.g. stoplights and sidewalks)
- Suggestion for parents, especially those families with younger children is to teach your children about how to walk safely to school. The school teaches this to our students; however it is *all* of our responsibility to educate our children on road safety. During the summer months practice walking the route your child will take to get to school, so that they will feel comfortable and mindful of traffic and safety rules
- The Superintendent has already been in contact with the City regarding Crossing Guards to ensure they will be in place for the opening of the school
- Students who choose to remain at Ancaster Meadow or Chedoke will need to arrange their own transportation after the date that the new school opens. Transportation will continue as it has in the past starting in September until the new school is officially opened. *Pickup and drop off times and routes for bussing will change when the new school opens*
- Ancaster Meadow and Chedoke students who are presently receiving bussing may not be eligible for transportation at Tiffany Hills Elementary. As we get closer to the new school opening date, expect to receive a letter if you are expecting bussing (please refer to website: <http://www.hamiltonschoolbus.ca>). *If you have not received a bus letter, then go onto the Transportation website.*

- Please be advised that a child in your family may receive bussing, while the other child in the older grade will be walking to school. Courtesy Transportation forms can be requested from the Principal, however there must be a settling period to ensure that all eligible students have seats, and then courtesy seats can only be granted *if there are seats available* . *Please note courtesy transportation has to be applied for every school year*

7. How to get involved in choosing School Colours

- The Transition Committee scanned through all of our existing HWDSB schools and after much deliberation each member chose a (2) colour combination. It is these colour combinations which are being distributed at this meeting to give the Tiffany Hills community an opportunity to have a voice. Each member of the community tonight will receive a ballot and vote for (1) colour combination that they feel will represent the new school. The Transition Team will collect these ballots and reduce them to (5) of the most popular colour combinations. Once Tiffany Hills opens, it will ultimately be the students' voice that will select from these (5) colour combinations and make the final decision for their new school. As a result this will promote student ownership and provide the "building blocks" to create the foundation for a strong sense of community. Following the selection of school colours, students will have the opportunity to work on their school mascot
- It is important to note, not to rush into a decision of the school colours, otherwise students will lose out on this exciting opportunity to work collectively as a community on making choices of historical value
- In the fall, we will make interim arrangements for sports clothing (e.g. t-shirts and sports uniforms) if colours are not chosen in time for the sporting season
- Principal Gerritsen will be involved with the Tiffany Hills students to engage them in discussions on getting involved in extra-curricular activities with their present Ancaster Meadow and Chedoke teams, as they will still be a part of these schools and we don't want our students to miss out on these programs
- Jane Gerritsen encourages the community to start getting connected now with the new school by subscribing to the Tiffany Hills website so they will be alerted to new developments of the building and other important information as it occurs; once the school opens consider joining the new School Council; and becoming involved in the formation of a Meet the Teachers Night Planning Committee

Q&A

Due to limited spots in the early learning and childcare program, will the acceptance into the program be similar to a lottery?

- Daycare spots are seldom 100 per cent full upon their opening. It usually takes six months before spots have been filled. Bernadette Noon for Today's Family will keep parents up to date with information and registration processes. All programs will be

running on the first day of the new school opening, Today's Family will adjust the staff required to the number of children attending each of the programs. Some of the children from the Ancaster Meadow and Chedoke before and after school care, who live within the Tiffany Hills' catchment area will transfer to the new school daycare

When families bought property the developer previously indicated that a city park was going to be built nearby and that originally it was supposed to be on school property?

- The Superintendent has been in contact with our HWDSB Facilities Department and we are working with the City on this issue

Some families live behind the Tiffany Hills School and there is no direct route for students to walk to school other than a long walk around the school to the main entrance. Will there be an alternate pathway?

- Trustee Alex Johnstone has offered to inquire with the City officials

Will the City will lower speed limits, or provide speed bumps, and signage for roundabouts?

- It is up to all of us to take responsibility for our children to get safely to school. Citizens of the community are encouraged to contact the City's By-law officers if they have concerns with people speeding in residential and school zones. There will be programs at school to teach students safety, however parents should reinforce road rules, including being cautious with cars manoeuvring through roundabouts

On a regular basis bus drivers are changed - will buses be clearly identified so that students will know the proper bus to take?

- Superintendent Gardner will take this request to our Transportation Department

Is there a plan for the opening of the new school during a "natural" transition time?

- Yes, the Board always has learning in mind. The Board's primary focus is on ensuring a smooth transition, and that student's learning is not impeded in anyway. As educators we know that students who feel safe and confident will be more successful and resilient to change

When will the community know which staff members are staying at Ancaster Meadow/Chedoke and who are transferring to Tiffany Hills? Is all of the staff from HWDSB?

- This information will be shared with the community just prior to the school opening, and yes all staff have been hired internally

The placement of temporary Chedoke portables, aren't they a waste of the School Board's money?

- No, these portables are transportable and will be used later in the system at other HWDSB locations

Will there be school uniforms for students to wear on a daily basis at Tiffany Hills?

- Once the school settles, if school uniforms are something that the community wants then it will be discussed with the Principal and the School Council where will be a process that must be followed for its implementation