Summary of Annual Reports

Rationale:

To provide trustees, school councils, principals and senior administrators with the status of school council initiatives and a summary of the annual reports received from school councils.

Background:

School councils complete an annual report and submit it to the Board. Highlights of each school council's report are also shared with the school's local community. Annual reports also include a year end financial statement.

Beginning this year, the annual reports include two questions which replace the former "Service Quality Survey". These questions ask school councils to note those areas in which they feel their school and the Board are doing well – and those areas that they would like to see improvement.

The annual reports are summarized and reported to the Board, senior staff, principals and school councils. The summary is also posted on the school council pages of the Board's website. This information, including the two new questions which replace the "Service Quality Survey" assist the Board and its administration in setting priorities in such areas as the Board's Plan for Continuous Improvement, the budget, and specific supports and training for school council.

Summary of School Council Annual Reports

A total of 145 School Council reports were summarized, 124 elementary and 21 secondary. The following sections summarize the information provided by School Councils in response to the questions asked in the annual report template. Unless otherwise noted, Councils' comments are listed in order of frequency of response. Responses that were common to both elementary and secondary School Councils are noted at the beginning of each section. The appendices provide a more detailed breakdown of responses by CEC for four questions (i.e., questions 5, 11, 12 and 13) that inform our next steps to support School Councils and their role.

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1. In what ways was your school council _involved in developing or revising_ the School Plan for Continuous Improvement during the past school year?

The vast majority of both elementary and secondary School Councils reported being part of the consultation process, providing feedback and recommendations and also helping to prioritize goals for their School Plan for Continuous Improvement (SPCI). Input was sought in a variety of ways through meetings, surveys, and subcommittees. For both panels, new school councils reported that the administration outlined and explained the SPCI and invited input.

Secondary:
- Several secondary School Councils are beginning to develop working relationships with councils from their feeder schools.

Elementary:
- At some schools, council members actively participated in subcommittees acting in an advisory capacity on a variety of issues such as Literacy, Character Education, Homework Policy, Safe Schools, Parental and Community Involvement and Effective Schools;
- Some schools are developing partnerships with community businesses and other service providers to build community capacity; and
- 4 schools noted no involvement.

2. What ways has your school council _supported the implementation_ of priorities and goals set out in the School Plan for Continuous Improvement?

The majority of School Councils from both panels listed acting in an advisory capacity and communicating with parents as the main ways in which they support implementation of the goals identified in the SPCI. For the councils of elementary schools, fundraising was also mentioned frequently as a means of supporting the priorities and initiatives in the SPCI. Particular emphasis was placed on supporting literacy-based activities, such as purchasing additional library resources, supporting reading programs, setting up book rooms and inviting authors to visit the school

Secondary:
- using surveys to gather data to inform their SPCI and receiving presentations from staff on a variety of issues and providing financial support for additional resources.

Elementary:
- supporting other SPCI priorities including technology, arts and music, mathematics, safe schools, and Character Matters;
- hosting special events and family nights (e.g. book fairs, fun fairs, dances, bingo, parents nights, curriculum nights, Meet the Teacher, BBQs) in which school council members encouraged volunteering and more parental participation in school and council activities;
- using newsletters, surveys, informal chats, and coffee mornings to communicate with and gather feedback from parents;
- supporting teachers and administration by paying for supply teachers to enhance sports, music initiatives; and
- in the case of schools with culturally diverse communities, trying innovative ways to increase the involvement of all parents (e.g. ensuring that translators are available to assist at family nights; hosting special teas for particular communities with a translator on hand).

3. Identify documents developed or revised by your school council this year.

Almost all of the School Councils reported that they reviewed the Administrator Profile. Other documents that both elementary and secondary School Councils frequently mentioned included the following:
- Constitution and Bylaws;
- School Annual Plan and Priorities;
- Dress Code;
- Homework policy;
- Website;
- School Profile; and
- Code of Behaviour.

Secondary**:**
- Grade 9 Transition;
- Literacy;
- Character Education;

- Assessment and Evaluation Policy; and
- Cell Phone and Gambling policies.

Elementary**:**
- Operating norms for councils;
- School uniforms; and
- After school programs.

<table>
<tr><td>4. Identify your council's participation in the following activities.</td></tr>
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Both elementary and secondary School Councils indicated they had been involved in a wide variety of activities such as the following:
- attending school council forums and/or family of schools meetings;
- attending Board arranged professional development;
- networking (although more reported they would welcome the opportunity to network with neighbouring schools);
- attending conferences such as the Ideas and Inspirations Conference sponsored by OSA (and funded by YRDSB), Quest and the School Council Conference;
- responding to surveys (e.g., the Service Quality Survey);
- attending such workshops as Changing Communities and CAYRE; and
- attending YRDSB Board meetings.

> *"The Ideas and Inspirations Forum (April 2005) was excellent! I will encourage future council members to attend. Please continue this initiative." (Mazo de la Roche PS)*

<table>
<tr><td>5. Identify three successful activities in which the council has been engaged this year, as well as three activities that have challenged the council this year.</td></tr>
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<table>
<tr><td>Successful Activities</td></tr>
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The vast majority of elementary School Councils listed fundraising for resources and activities related to SPCI priorities as successful activities undertaken in 2004-05. While about one third of secondary School Councils also mentioned successful fundraising for this purpose, the area of success that the majority of secondary School Councils mentioned was input and/or consultation into school policy development and review. Input into policy development and review was mentioned much less often by elementary School Councils. Nearly half of both elementary and secondary School Councils also reported success in increasing parental involvement in school activities. Examples ranged from curriculum and Meet the Teacher nights, career fairs and the safe arrivals program to parenting workshops and Character Matters initiatives. A detailed breakdown of responses is provided in Appendix A.

Secondary:
- improved collaboration and recognition of school councils;
- increased attendance and participation in school council;
- support for literacy initiatives.
- improved communications (e.g. school website, newsletters);
- improved supports for the transition to secondary school; and
- development/launch of the School Council website.

> *"The staff, parents and administration work well as a team in promoting student learning and continue to strive for excellence in providing a strong, positive environment for our students to thrive in. It has been a pleasure to be a part of this." (Dr Denison SS)*

- support for literacy initiatives (e.g. workshops, primary leveled readers, reading circle, homework club, math/science programs, snuggle up and read, literacy café);
- improvements to school sites, notably repairs and replacement of playground equipment, beautification of property and outdoor classroom;
- collaboration and recognition of the work of school councils (e.g. creation of council at new schools, surveys, establishing meeting formats, identifying goals and priorities, networking);
- health and wellness initiatives (e.g. hot lunch, breakfast and milk programs; health and wellness/nutrition committees); and
- promoting community partnerships with other service providers such as Parks and Recreation and Public Health.

> *"Our annual 'Spring Fling' fundraising event was a tremendous success once again, both financially as well as a community builder." (Aurora Grove PS)*

> *"Totem Poles were created by our students symbolizing the school environment. This collaborative project with parents, teachers and students emphasized character attributes. The totem poles are erected in front of the school for all to enjoy." (Devins Drive PS)*

Challenges

For more than half of both elementary and secondary School Councils, the biggest challenge related to the operations of the School Council, including establishing the membership base, maintaining regular attendance at council meetings, setting goals and managing meetings. Close to half of secondary School Councils reported challenges related to communication and collaboration (e.g. challenges communicating to the Board, to the councils of other schools and to the parent community; understanding the differing roles of the council, the principal and parents; establishing a communication protocol and council newsletter). Problems of this nature were cited by about one quarter of elementary School Councils. Lack of volunteers and fundraising were also cited as challenges by about one quarter of the elementary School Councils, but were mentioned less often by secondary School Councils. Detailed responses are provided in Appendix B.

Secondary:
- difficulties with fundraising;
- lack of volunteers to support school activities;
- the need for school site improvements; and
- implementation of extra curricular activities.

> *"Although principals can remain in their positions for up to 5 years, VPs are being changed much sooner. This creates confusion when a council only operates September – June. In the last three years, we have had three different people in charge of the School Council portfolio at the administrative level." (Huron Heights SS)*

Elementary:
- lack of volunteers;
- challenges with fundraising (e.g. lack of staff and parental support, opposition to initiatives and allocation of funds);
- challenges related to communication and collaboration
- safety issues (e.g. playground safety, safe walking community, parking safety, snow removal policy, traffic problems; public access to schools; schoolyard safety/bullying); and
- the need for school site improvements.

"The Board needs to provide 'reasoning' to schools councils for changes in policy, i.e. why was school plowing cut? What was the fallout from this decision? More transparency and more communication to the community" (Vellore Woods PS)

"It is becoming harder to get parents involved in council and events at school." (Maple Creek PS)

6. How have you sought input from parents and the school community? (e.g. surveys, memberships on sub-committees, focus groups, coffee meetings, town hall etc.).

For both elementary and secondary School Councils, surveying parents and using newsletters to encourage participation and membership on subcommittees were the most frequently cited means of seeking input from parents and the school community. Councils also mentioned seeking input through focus groups and email and/or website communication, as well as invitations to participate at such events as parent nights, registration, open houses, school council meetings, breakfast meetings, Meet the Teacher, socials and community BBQs.

Secondary:
- Synervoice messages;
- school message board and outdoor signs; and
- coffee meetings, fundraising and participation in student awards.

"We asked parents who have expressed concerns to participate in sub-committees that will address these concerns." (King City SS)

Elementary:
- workshops/presentations by teachers, administrators, superintendents, trustees;
- encouraging volunteering;
- word of mouth/informal meetings;
- signage/bulletin boards;
- telephone calls;
- information nights for ESL community; and
- use of Community Coordinator, donations and suggestion box.

"The Council supported an invitation for parents of Iranian background to attend a special evening of information and greeting." (Walter Scott PS)

"Input is also obtained in our weekly coffee get-togethers, primarily with new parent members of the community." (Thornhill PS)

"Special invitation to entire school community to attend a meeting in spring to gather ideas on school improvements." (Willowbrook PS)

7. In what activities has the council engaged to assist parents in more effectively supporting their children's learning?

Activities which both elementary and secondary School Councils mentioned as ways to assist parents in supporting learning included guest speakers, parenting programs, fundraising and purchasing additional resources and information for parents.

Secondary:
- participation in subcommittees;
- meeting with department heads;
- mathematics and at-risk initiatives;
- supports for SPCI initiatives;
- improvements to school site;

- information/meetings in different languages; and
- school dress code.

> *"We have had a variety of guest speakers including Department Heads, Board personnal, community workers (nutritionists, Sheena's House)." (Huron Heights SS)*

> *"We invited Department Heads to attend our meetings and discuss the important issues faced by their departments. These were positive experiences for both staff and parents." (King City SS)*

Elementary:
- support for literacy based activities and resources (e.g. book fairs, book exchanges, reading programs, reading tutors, literacy evenings, library resources);
- community and special events/workshops of interest (e.g. community teas, Street Reach program, summer advantage program, Tsunami relief, CPR courses, anti-bullying and car seat safety workshops);
- parenting centres at schools offering pamphlets and information on a variety of programs and services;
- information in newsletters;
- opportunities to volunteer;
- purchase of equipment and extra resources for schools;
- support for technology initiatives;
- attendance at Quest; and
- school visits from trustees.

> *"To bring more reading material into classrooms, council suggested to the school administration to send out a letter before Christmas suggesting to parents that buying books instead of teacher gifts would be an excellent way to show appreciation and to also support literacy in our school. I think it would catch on over time and would better suit the children and our teachers." (RL Graham PS)*

> *"A Board endorsed/sponsored guest speaker contact list (with associated fees) would be very useful." (Glen Cedar PS)*

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8. List two potential objectives/priorities for next year's school council.

Councils of both elementary and secondary schools overwhelmingly noted the need to encourage, maintain and increase membership on school councils. In addition, many emphasized the need to continue to support school plan initiatives, particularly literacy.

Secondary:
- increase opportunities to dialogue with feeder schools regarding transition issues;
- continue to look for fundraising opportunities;
- participate in sub-committees;
- plan meetings with department heads;
- improve the school site;
- plan meetings in different languages;
- support mathematics and at-risk student initiatives; and
- review the dress code and Administrator profile.

> *"Offer some parenting programs in a variety of languages." (Milliken Mills HS)*

> *"Have parents play a more active role in broadening students' learning experiences by sharing their expertise in the classroom as part of the school plan/educational process." (Westmount CI)*

Elementary:
- continue to work on school related policies (e.g. dress and behaviour codes; technology initiatives; school safety and/or traffic issues; school population and boundaries; healthy schools; and homework);
- improve communication to parents through increased use of newsletters, website and other means;
- continue fundraising activities to support SPCI;
- look for strategies to include non-English speaking families;
- invite more guest speakers to council/school events;
- site improvements, namely playground repairs and planting;
- continue school council activities (e.g. review constitution, prepare council's Plan for Continuous Improvement, set goals, post agenda and minutes on the website, manage budget process more effectively, interact with high school councils and networking with other school councils);
- hold more discussions on EQAO results with attention to numeracy and boys' literacy; and
- plan more community events and develop partnerships to increase community capacity.

> *"Boys' literacy levels." (Mackenzie Glen PS)*

> *"Providing greater assistance to parents in supporting their child's learning; developing stronger community feeling within the school" (Adrienne Clarkson PS)*

> *"Increasing level of input into SPCI… raising funds in a more thoughtful and goal-directed manner, with clearer ties to SPCI" (Walter Scott PS)*

> *"Offer more outreach programs to the school community" (Richmond Rose PS)*

> *"Support the Nutrition Subcommittee with their objective to educate and influence the school community" (Highview PS)*

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9. What strategies has your council used to support a smooth transition from this year's council to the next?

Both elementary and secondary School Councils cited the need for consistency/continuity of membership as the most important factor in a smooth transition. They also frequently mentioned ongoing and increased communication with the parent community regarding the roles and responsibilities of school councils, as well as encouraging participation in the council. Specific examples that were mentioned included having past members mentor new members and providing opportunities to find out about councils through various means (e.g. Board orientation sessions, emailed information, providing information at other parent nights).

Secondary:
- provide information to grade 8 feeder school parents;
- consistency in members and/or continuity of co-chairs; and
- active support from the administrators and/or trustee.

> *"We [the school council] had an information table at Grade 8 Parents' Night, took the names of interested parents and invited them to attend our last meeting of 2004-05" (Milliken Mills HS)*

> *"Letter from Co-Chairs [was] sent out with June report cards" (Huron Heights SS)*

Elementary:
- use strategies to plan for new school council (e.g., preparing for elections, planning fundraising activities, having start up money available, providing dates of meetings to parents in advance, planning the first meeting);
- make presentation to new kindergarten parents and other parents new to the school;

- provide documentation to new members (e.g. files, minutes, school plans, status of current initiatives, up to date accounts); and
- arrange to attend special school events to highlight activities of school council.

> *"By having family movie nights on the same nights as council meetings, we have been able to increase our attendance at meetings and have set the stage for parents to build their confidence, feel more comfortable and hopefully to serve on the council for the coming year." (Armadale PS)*

10. Was your school involved in fundraising this year?   If yes, please list the types of fundraising activities undertaken.

The vast majority of elementary School Councils participated in fundraising activities in 2004-05; most often this fundraising took the form of regular pizza/hot lunch fundraising programs. A wide range of other fundraising strategies were also cited.   Just over one third of the secondary School Councils reported engaging in fundraising, most often in the form of a one time request for a voluntary donation or a fundraising fee.

Secondary:
- raffles, grocery store receipts and/or the sale of flowers and plants.

Elementary:
- magazine subscriptions and sales;
- book fair/fun fairs;
- chocolate sales or bake sales/cookie dough;
- milk programs;
- plant sales or grocery store receipts/Campbell soup incentives;
- family/movie nights or BBQs;
- dance-a-thon, walk-a-thon, run-a-thon, read-a-thon;
- other fundraising activities including entertainment coupons, raffles, calendar sales, auctions, school cookbooks, penny drives, garage sales, skate exchanges, bingo, gift catalogue sales, spring/fall flings.

11. What additional support or training would your council like to receive in the next school year?

Just under half of the secondary School Councils and one quarter of the elementary School Councils reported that ongoing training and strategies to increase the effectiveness of school councils would be valuable. Specific examples included providing orientation for new members and training about how to support the goals of the SPCI, as well as professional development on such topics as understanding school programs, how to expand involvement in and support of the school, how to maintain attendance and manage meetings, and how to complete the annual/financial reports.   About one third of both elementary and secondary councils requested opportunities and, in some cases, financial support to attend Board workshops, forums and conferences, including Quest. A similar number of elementary School Councils requested increased opportunities for collaboration and networking, mentioning a variety of examples such as greater collaboration with neighbouring/family of schools, as well as greater sharing of successes in such areas as fundraising, building community partnerships and parenting programs. A detailed breakdown of responses is provided in Appendix C.

Secondary:
- strategies for increasing the number of parent volunteers; and
- increased opportunities and strategies for collaboration

> *"Would be great to pro-actively offer to school council chairs, to have representatives of YRDSB functional groups, present to school councils (at our regularly scheduled meetings) on topics AHEAD of theses being requirements…. i.e. someone should speak to councils ahead of Service Quality Surveys being conducted, ahead of SC Annual*

Report being due, ahead of major policy initiatives (ie fundraising/curriculum strategy changes)being implemented." (Westmount CI)

"Forum on recruiting parents and how to effectively engage feeder schools" (Thornhill SS)

"Getting together with other schools who have been successful in communication with their parent community" (King City SS)

<u>Elementary:</u>
- receiving information early in the school year about programs and speakers available (e.g. anti-bullying, internet safety, how to help our children); and
- how to recruit new members.

> *"Our parents are always interested in parenting presentations (discipline, helping your child with school, behavioural issues etc.) As mentioned earlier, a list of presenters and their associated fees would make scheduling that sort of activity much easier for individual councils." (Glen Cedar PS)*

> *"Bridges provides examples of how other school councils conduct "business". Expanding on the initiatives undertaken in these schools and successful strategies employed would provide good insight/training" (Castlemore PS)*

> *"Being made aware of successful initiatives at other schools" (Glen Shields PS)*

> *"Direct communication with the Board through smaller scale meetings with Council Chairs and Co-Chairs….Information to Council Treasurers on GST rebates…and issues that may benefit the school financially." (Blue Willow PS)*

> *"List of resources that school council can access that could be helpful" (Julliard PS)*

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12. In which area(s) does your school council feel your school and/or the Board has shown improvement during this school year?

The areas of improvement most often reported by elementary and secondary School Councils were similar. The majority of elementary and secondary School Councils indicated that their school has a strong focus on improving literacy for students, citing a variety of examples (e.g. literacy nights, reading programs, increased teaching time focused on literacy, parent workshops, added resources). Various improvements in communication and consultation were noted by two fifths of both the elementary and secondary School Councils (e.g. increased use of newsletters and websites, greater consultation with the council, greater use of translators to assist non-English speaking families). For both panels, another third reported improvements related to music/arts programs and/or physical and health education. About one fifth of councils commented on the strong leadership and support provided by the school principal. Results are summarized in greater detail in Appendix D.

<u>Secondary:</u>
- improvements to Grade 9 transition process; and
- Increased partnerships with businesses and/or service providers.

> *"The support that our school council receives from school administration continues to be exemplary. School administration helps with speakers, helps with the agenda, provides venue and supplies, works collaboratively and pro-actively to help school council be prepared for and help the school to achieve the school plan." (Westmount CI)*

<u>Elementary:</u>
- increased partnerships with the community, including increased community capacity; and
- Improved parental involvement in events and activities.

> *"Great show of support for school council by administration and staff, informative monthly newsletters, responsive to any query raised during council meetings." (Highview PS)*

> *"Better rapport between school council and the school. Much more collaborative environment." (Schomberg PS)*

> *"Despite volunteerism woes, we have many parents who volunteer as best they can. Our school has an awesome school spirit and we are all proud of our students' accomplishments and achievements." (Glen Cedar PS)*

> *"School's strong focus on literacy is supported with training of teachers and amazing teamwork." (Maple Creek PS)*

> *"Community partnerships are growing in number – existing partnerships are great!" (Woodbridge PS)*

13. In which area(s) does your school council feel your school and/or the Board needs improvement? Give clear examples and suggestions.

About two fifths of elementary and secondary school councils indicated that there is a need to continue to improve communication and consultation, citing a variety of issues in these areas. Roughly one third of the school councils from both panels identified improvements to school sites, particularly older schools, as a high priority (e.g. icy conditions, problems with portables, old carpets, need to upgrade old schools to the same standards as new schools, playground upgrading). Just under one third of the elementary School Councils reported a need for added funding and/or resources for specific programs including music, physical education, guidance and computer technology, or to address the needs of small schools. In contrast, secondary School Councils expressed few concerns about funding or resources in these program areas. However, roughly one third of them did report a need for increased Council and parent collaboration, participation or involvement; a similar percentage highlighted a need for added focus literacy and/or numeracy. A detailed breakdown of results is provided in Appendix E.

> *"The cost of replacing and upgrading equipment due to changes in Health and Safety guidelines or at aging schools places a financial burden on schools and communities." (Several schools)*

<u>Secondary:</u>
- increased opportunities for networking and involving feeder schools;
- fewer administrative moves to provide consistency;
- increase parental involvement from diverse communities;
- boundary reviews to prevent declining enrolment leading to fewer programs; and
- more feedback for councils regarding their activities.

> *"Recognition and communication: School Councils need more feedback regarding our advice, i.e. surveys." (Huron Heights SS)*

> *"The Board needs to keep on working on ways to involve the parents of a very diverse community in the school in ways that extend beyond their children's education." (Milliken Mills HS)*

<u>Elementary:</u>
- improved communication, consultation and transparency with school councils, particularly on decisions made at the Board levels which impact schools (e.g. Ministry mandates, snowplowing policy, growth and boundary issues);
- greater support to increase both parental participation in School Council meetings and activities, and their understanding of Councils' roles and responsibilities and the SPCI; and
- increase collaboration between school and community, including developing more partnerships with community businesses and service providers.

> *"Our school is a great school but the grounds and sparse equipment for student use at recess is lacking. School Council has done a lot of fundraising for playground equipment, benches for older students, landscaping, bike racks etc. This year, volunteers at the school painted a mural on one of the walls by the library and the students' enthusiasm and excitement was overwhelming. It makes the place they spend so much time a welcoming and fun place to learn. They are also very protective of it and that means less vandalism." (WJ Watson PS)*

> *"Improve support services for teaching staff, e.g. support for students with ESL needs, reestablish guidance counseling to assist students experiencing family problems."
> (Joseph A Gibson PS)*

> *"Increased accessibility/availability of curriculum information to parents, with clearly identified mechanisms for obtaining additional resources/support where required."
> (William Berczy PS)*

> *"School community is increasingly alarmed by decreasing services due to declining enrolment. For example, the music program will be reduced next year as the school population will no longer support a full time music teacher." (Ramer Wood PS)*

> *"We are a 'have not' school because of the age of the building. You need to put more focus and money into upgrading older schools to bring them up to the standards of the newer schools." (Whitchurch Highlands PS)*

> *"It is disappointing to see that we are in need of 2 portables within 2 years of opening"
> (Poplar Bank PS)*

> *"The Board needs to be more responsive to the needs of smaller schools and to recognize the funding difficulties associated with the funding model based on school population." (Stuart Scott PS)*

School Council Bank Account Activities for the Years Ending
August 31, 2004 and August 31, 2005

	August 31, 2004 All Schools Reporting	August 31, 2005 129 Schools Reporting
Opening Balances	1,078,934	953,057
Revenues	3,870,508	3,004,540
Expenditures	3,638,365	2,938,027
Ending Balances	1,311,077	1,019,570

August 31, 2005 figures represent the 129 schools that have filed reports up to October 17, 2005. Staff is following up with councils that have not reported as this information is required as part of the Board's audited financial statements.

Next Steps:
In response to the findings in this report, the following priorities have been set to support school councils in their work:
- Building Family and Community Capacity – revising this strand within the Board's Plan for Continuous Improvement;
- Enhancing the work of school councils in support of parental involvement through training and information sharing;
- Supporting participation in "Quest for Communities That Work";
- Increasing the diversity of membership;
- Recognizing and sharing strategies that work;
- Community profile – building links to other community initiatives;
- Continuing effective communications and searching for new ways to share information.

In addition to direct support for school councils, the findings within this report will be:
- Presented to the steering committee of the Board's Plan for Continuous Improvement for consideration in setting and monitoring Board priorities;
- Discussed by superintendents and principals during CEC meetings and school visits;
- Considered by the Board during the budget setting process;
- Shared and considered by Service departments of the Board

Communication Implementation Plan:
School council annual report presented to Board of Trustees (Oct. 27) and posted on Board website.
1. CCS (preliminary report);
2. Board Meeting– preliminary report – Oct 27;
3. Distribution to Trustees, principals, chairs, supervisory officers – November 2005;
4. Bridges, School Council Website;
5. DC – Next Tuesday
6. CEC principal meetings – November/December

Respectfully submitted
K Thurston

"Identify three successful activities in which the council has been engaged this year."	North* (n=28)	East (n=33)	West (n=32)	Central (n=31)	Elementary System Total (n=124)**	Secondary System Total (n=20)**
Fundraising - e.g., achieved goals; magazine sales; pizza lunches; fun fair; movie night; popcorn Fridays; spring/fall fling; school BBQ; new volunteers; what/how to spend money	75%	79%	84%	81%	**80%**	**35%**
Parental/Community Support of School Activities/Programs - e.g., career fair; curriculum night; meet the teacher; safety awareness; safe arrivals program; parenting workshops; Character Matters initiatives; environment program; graduation; assemblies	32%	52%	41%	58%	**46%**	**45%**
Consultation/Input into School Policy Development/Review - e.g., dress code; code of behaviour; head lice policy; school council constitution; SPCI; tech review; uniform survey	7%	33%	28%	29%	**25%**	**60%**
Support of Literacy Initiatives - e.g., workshops; primary leveled readers; reading circle; homework club; math/science programs; snuggle up and read; literacy café	32%	18%	16%	23%	**22%**	**20%**
School Site Improvements - e.g., repair/replace playground equipment; beautification; outdoor classroom	14%	15%	13%	19%	**15%**	**10%**
Collaboration/Recognition of School Council - e.g., creation of School Council; surveys; meeting format; identifying goals and priorities; networking	18%	9%	16%	13%	**14%**	**25%**
Health/Wellness Activities - e.g., hot lunch, milk, breakfast, nutrition and/or snack programs; health & wellness/nutrition committees	18%	6%	3%	23%	**12%**	**0%**
Promoting Community Partnerships - e.g., Parks & Recreation; Health Services; Community events	14%	6%	16%	6%	**10%**	**0%**
Communication - e.g., school needs; community information; monthly newsletters; website content	0%	6%	9%	16%	**8%**	**15%**
Improvement in Fine Arts Programs - e.g., Music; Visual Arts	14%	3%	3%	3%	**6%**	**5%**
Purchase of School Resources - e.g., computers; media; robotics; teachers' wish list	11%	6%	6%	3%	**6%**	**5%**
Increasing Attendance/Participation in School Council - e.g., recruiting new volunteers; positive, productive meetings	0%	15%	0%	0%	**4%**	**20%**
Development/Launch/Improvement of School Council Website	7%	3%	3%	3%	**4%**	**10%**
***Transition to Secondary** - e.g., working with feeder schools; attending Grade 8/9 meetings; transition planning; teen support groups	0%	0%	0%	0%	**0%**	**15%**
Miscellaneous - e.g., successful transition to new schools; performances; new photographer for school photos; staff appreciation events; extra curricular activities	18%	15%	19%	23%	**19%**	**10%**

*Note: % sum to more than 100 due to multiple responses

** % are based on only School Councils that responded to this question.

*** Due to this issue not being mentioned by most Elementary school councils, this category was not used for Elementary schools.

"Identify three activities that have challenged the council this year."	North* (n=26)	East (n=32)	West (n=29)	Central (n=30)	Elementary System Total (n=117)**	Secondary System Total (n=19)**
Attracting/Maintaining SC Members and Attendance - e.g., no active involvement on subcommittees; difficult getting feedback from parents at Focus Group meetings; goal setting early in year with new members; difficulty increasing parental involvement; attendance at meetings; focusing SC meeting on Agenda & keeping within time limits	62%	59%	72%	53%	**62%**	**58%**
Lack of Volunteers - e.g., difficulty engaging volunteers; lack of active volunteer participation	35%	16%	24%	27%	**25%**	**11%**
Fundraising - e.g., lack of staff/parental support; opposition to initiatives; poor participation; no volunteers for fundraising events; allocation of funds	23%	31%	21%	20%	**24%**	**16%**
Communication/Collaboration - e.g., to parents; to Board; to community; ESL issues; between council and parents; between councils; coming to understand the roles of administrators, parents, and SC; open networking between councils; starting SC newsletter; understanding how council contributes to student life; consistency in communication protocols; email addresses	15%	19%	24%	33%	**23%**	**42%**
Safety Matters - e.g., safe walking community; parking safety; snow removal policy; traffic problems; safety and public access to school (i.e. doors all closed except main doors); schoolyard safety/bullying	19%	13%	3%	13%	**12%**	**5%**
School Site Improvements - e.g., improvements to playground/equipment	19%	6%	7%	7%	**9%**	**11%**
Input into Policy Reviews - e.g., homework policy; maintaining ½ day kindergarten; SPCI issues- not enough discussion; lack of focus/accountability in SPCI	8%	9%	3%	7%	**7%**	**5%**
Parent Support Programs - e.g., Red Cross Babysitting course	8%	6%	0%	7%	**5%**	**5%**
Electives and Extra Curricular Program – e.g., implementation of extra curricular programs	4%	3%	0%	7%	**3%**	**11%**
***Transition** - feeder school council participation	0%	0%	0%	0%	**0%**	**5%**
Miscellaneous - e.g., website development; yearbook; year end trip; part-time vice principal issue; teacher work to rule; TSO musicians' visit; bank account fraud; naming of new school; sharing and improving EQAO results	23%	34%	10%	17%	**21%**	**32%**

*Note: % sum to more than 100 due to multiple responses

** % are based on only School Councils that responded to this question.

*** Due to this issue not being mentioned by most Elementary school councils, this category was not used for Elementary schools.

"What additional support or training would your council like to receive in the next school year?"	North* (n=21)	East (n=27)	West (n=21)	Central (n=26)	Elementary System Total (n=95)**	Secondary System Total (n=13)**
Collaboration - e.g., opportunity to collaborate, network or share and interact with other SC (between all schools and between local family of schools); sharing best practices (e.g. successful initiatives at other schools would provide good insight, best parent programs, best fundraiser); more support for the "family of schools" initiatives; partnering with high school councils; Council of the Year Award; communication; how to build community partnerships	33%	41%	38%	31%	**36%**	**23%**
Opportunity (and Financial Support) to Attend School Council/Board Forums, Conferences, Workshops on Topics of Interest - e.g., attendance at Quest; council input into P.D. topics; strategies to improve EQAO results; plan evening sessions; evaluation/report cards; student transition	29%	22%	33%	54%	**35%**	**31%**
Training and Strategies for Increasing Effectiveness of School Councils - e.g., training on how to support SPCI goals & priorities; P.D. on what and how SC should be involved in; P.D. to help SC understand school programs; how to expand involvement/support in school; P.D. re: completing SC annual/treasurer's reports; maintain consistent attendance; orientation for new members; managing meetings	33%	26%	24%	19%	**25%**	**46%**
Provide Information Early in School Year Regarding Speakers and Programs Available - e.g., anti-bullying; how to help our children; internet safety; provide information about available programs and resources	14%	7%	14%	19%	**14%**	**8%**
Guidance on How to Recruit New School Council Members - e.g., parents; teachers; volunteer trainer	10%	11%	0%	15%	**9%**	**8%**
Guidance on How to Involve Parents of Various Religious, Language and Cultural Backgrounds - e.g., early start for schools with diverse populations to allow time off for religious travel; ESL challenges; multicultural sensitivity training	0%	7%	19%	8%	**8%**	**0%**
Training in Fundraising and Planning Fundraisers - e.g., fundraising consultant (how to negotiate, with whom, where and when; other ideas for fundraising; do's and don'ts; continued development and clarity around fundraising regulations	5%	22%	0%	4%	**8%**	**8%**
Guidance on How to Increase Parent Volunteer Involvement - e.g., more volunteer recognition events	19%	7%	0%	4%	**7%**	**15%**
Additional Funding - e.g., IT resources-laptops; hardware; software; resources for libraries; textbook; tools for teachers to implement Living School initiatives; resources to assist with developing Parenting programs	5%	7%	5%	8%	**6%**	**8%**
Miscellaneous - e.g., support for primary students during initial weeks of school to ensure safe transfer of students from bus to school; access to "Quicken" software for those w/o computers or software	5%	4%	0%	4%	**3%**	**0%**

*Note: % sum to more than 100 due to multiple responses

** % are based on only School Councils that responded to this question.

In which area(s) does your school council feel your school and/or the Board has shown improvement during this school year.	North* (n=19)	East (n=27)	West (n=28)	Central (n=24)	Elementary System Total** (n=98)	Secondary System Total** (n=15)
Literacy - e.g., culling library books; replacing textbooks; literacy nights; reading programs; increased teaching time devoted to literacy; diagnostic resources to support literacy; literacy workshops for parents; book rooms; additional resources for library; financial support for literacy initiatives; improved EQAO results	74%	78%	64%	50%	66%	73%
Improved Communication/Consultation/Collaboration - e.g., increased use of newsletters; website; council meetings; "Wednesday File" to send materials home; more consultation with School Council on various issues; use of translator to provide information to non-English speaking families; collaborative environment in school; opportunities to collaborate with other schools & councils	63%	48%	29%	42%	44%	40%
Increased Music/Arts Programs, Physical Education Activities - e.g., hiring of music teachers; improved music programs; opportunity for more students to play instruments and perform; financial support for purchasing instruments; introduction of dance/drama programs; additional physical education and extra curricular activities	47%	37%	18%	25%	31%	33%
Leadership/Support By Administrators - e.g., improved relationship with administrators; strong principal support; Principal has been instrumental in setting up and providing consistent assistance to School Council; Principal is committed and tries to involve teachers; recognition of volunteers/councils	16%	15%	25%	25%	20%	20%
Community Partnerships - e.g., increased partnerships with businesses; service providers; increasing community capacity	16%	30%	14%	13%	18%	13%
Improved Parental Involvement In Events/Activities	5%	7%	14%	8%	9%	7%
Improved Professional Development/Training - e.g., personal growth and development	5%	7%	11%	4%	7%	7%
School Site Improvements – e.g., Board support for yard improvement plan; playground; responsive to council executive regarding playground repair	0%	11%	4%	4%	5%	7%
***Transition** - e.g., more support for students entering grade 9	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	13%
Miscellaneous – e.g., develop student leadership program; the Plant Department met our needs and were extremely proactive	11%	15%	11%	17%	13%	7%

* % in each column sum to more than 100% due to multiple responses.

** % are based on only School Councils that responded to this question.

*** Due to this issue not being mentioned by most elementary school councils, this category was not used for elementary schools.

In which area(s) does your school council feel your school and/or the Board needs improvement during this school year.	North* (n=22)	East (n=27)	West (n=25)	Central (n=23)	Elementary System Total** (n=97)	Secondary System Total** (n=15)
Better Communication/Consultation - e.g., increased and clearer communications; communication with parents need improvement; newsletter about School Council achievements; more interaction and communication between school council and board; improve website; better communication between employees, managers and principals; policy input (school boundary, snow plowing, school yard supervision); communication only in English	41%	33%	36%	48%	39%	40%
Additional Resources/Funding For Programs - e.g., Arts/Music; Physical Education; increase in Physical Education; Information Technology Resources; needs to be a better method for allocating funds to schools so that smaller schools don't suffer (fixed costs are similar); resources for musical instruments; choir risers; intermediate music-focus on performance; re-establish guidance counselling	32%	22%	36%	30%	30%	7%
School Site - e.g., property maintenance and development; planning re: class sizes, portables; additional funding for improvements; concern about childrens' health due to old carpets; lack of resources and improvements to the site; more focus and money into upgrading older schools to the standards of the newer schools; provide necessary information/process for new playground to all SC; icy conditions and hazardous land grading; more security measures	27%	33%	32%	17%	28%	33%
Additional Resources/Funding For Literacy, Numeracy - e.g., more funding for the library; more resources for literacy; literacy teacher; more staffing time devoted to the role of teacher librarian; the school should continue to develop a plan to better evaluate and drive EQAO results; consider an after-school homework/reading program for academically weak students	18%	22%	8%	9%	14%	27%
Increase Collaboration/Parental Participation/Involvement - e.g., parental involvement is extremely important; ideas/directions are generated generally from council members, other ideas would be appreciated; greater understanding/participation in the SPCI	14%	19%	16%	9%	14%	33%
Board Leadership - e.g., lack of support or direction from Board; connection with the School Board; Boards' long range plans for the community (3-5 year plan) and the impact it will have on the school community; "we don't feel we get information back on a timely basis from the board"	23%	11%	4%	13%	12%	0%

In which area(s) does your school council feel your school and/or the Board needs improvement during this school year.	North* (n=22)	East (n=27)	West (n=25)	Central (n=23)	Elementary System Total** (n=97)	Secondary System Total** (n=15)
Recruiting/Supporting Community Partnerships - e.g., Community capacity building; building a stronger collaborative environment between school & community; provide support with community services available; facilitator to support families in need (i.e. Rainbow Program)	9%	7%	8%	13%	9%	0%
Additional Resources/Funding For Special Needs - e.g., ESL; Special Education; funding; resources; staff; higher need schools	18%	0%	8%	9%	8%	0%
Training/Professional Development/Workshops For School Council - e.g., more school forums; family of schools meetings; need to offer parent education opportunities that reflect community needs and interests; technology support for website	0%	4%	4%	13%	5%	7%
Lack Of Volunteers - e.g., manpower required to execute the functions; try extend the volunteer base	0%	7%	0%	4%	3%	0%
Better Relationships - e.g., building relationship between teachers, parents and administration	5%	4%	0%	4%	3%	0%
Safety Matters - e.g., more security measures in place; safety issues that relate to behaviour	5%	0%	0%	4%	2%	0%
Miscellaneous – e.g., a parent room/family centre for volunteer work; meetings and resources; an alternate calendar year for this community; earlier start would benefit many students who do not benefit from a two month break as well as those who travel for religious reasons; need greater continuity in administration	9%	11%	12%	0%	8%	27%

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