

Minutes of the SWISAC meeting

Held at Citizenship and Immigration Canada [CIC] Settlement Directorate Office

September 14, 2006

Participants:

Richard Lecours, CIC
Jasminka Klacar, SEPWR
Beverly Lawrence, SEPT, OCASI (Recorder)
Peter Dorfman, SWIS Coordinator
Elizabeth Coelho, Ont Ministry of Education
Colette Snyder, CIC
Lucy Bacchet, YCDSB
Jean-Francois Picher, CEPEO
Dipal Damani, Ont. Min of Children & Youth Services
Joan McCatty, Toronto Public Library
Jorge Barahona, CultureLink

Regrets:

Abou Nabe, Can Heritage
Lloyd McKell, TDSB
Michelle Munroe, TDSB
Joshua Sit, Ont Min of Citizenship
Julie Mathien, City of Toronto
Debbie Douglas, OCASI
Morteza Jafarpour, SISO
Elizabeth Glass, Toronto Public Library
Fawzia Ratanshi, United Way Toronto
Jehad Aliweiwi, TNO

Guests: Laura Heller, Frameline Productions
Marilyn Ziedenberg, CIC

1. INTRODUCTIONS, WELCOME & GOODBYE

- The committee said goodbye to Jean-Francois Picher, and bade him best wishes on his retirement.
- The committee welcomed Jorge Barahona from CultureLink, as the new replacement representative for the SEPT Coordinators.
- The committee welcomed Joan McCatty from the Toronto Public Library.
- The committee said goodbye to Dipal Damani, who recently took a position with the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services. Dipal will undertake to find a replacement SWISAC member from the Ministry of Children and Youth Services before the next meeting.
- The committee said goodbye to Beverley Lawrence, who will be starting a new position at OCASI. OCASI will be assigning a new recorder for SWISAC meetings.

2. REVIEW OF MAY 4 MINUTES

- Section 4i of Reports and Updates (YCDSB, Lucy Bacchet) corrected as follows: “New Moves is being well used by both boards in York. There will be a joint in-service in April with staff of both boards with settlement workers making presentations in small workshops. A similar in-service took place in December 2005. The school boards with Reception/Assessment Centres have established a network meeting group composed of representatives from the Reception/Assessment Centres to complement the work they are doing.”

3. REPORTS AND UPDATES

a) CIC, Richard Lecours:

- Over the summer, CIC officers have been negotiating all of our current ISAP, HOST and LINC agreements with the SPOs - looking at "true costs", expansion of services, and some new initiatives, such as LINC levels 6 and 7. All of this negotiating has posed many challenges for both the officers and the SPOs. He noted that the timing had not been under the Ontario CIC Settlement office's control.
- In particular, CIC officers approached most of the SWIS agencies over the summer proposing a significant expansion of existing services where warranted by the school board data. Some of the areas with the most increase include Toronto and Peel. Part of the expansion for Peel is as a result of extending service into Brampton, where there is an RFP for a new provider.
- A call for proposals will be out soon for a Regional HOST Coordinator for the HOST program, similar to Peter Dorfman's role with SWIS.
- LINC and HOST applications would normally be going out around this time for April 2007 starts, but may wait until the strategy comes out from the recent Canada-Ontario consultations.
- As part of itinerant services with regular ISAP agencies, CIC is funding a pilot project of year-round ISAP workers in Toronto Public libraries. This process is being coordinated between CIC and TPL. The year-round pilot program has started in five libraries in Toronto so far.

(b) Toronto Public Library, Joan McCatty

- We have gone ahead with a pilot program with ISAP workers located year-round in selected library locations. The program will run at 4 branches that have high numbers of newcomers, as well as continuing with the Reference Library location. There will be an orientation session for the settlement workers and library staff this Fall. We're looking at expanding the number of locations if the pilot is successful.
- The summer program was successful overall, with three new sites added. Also, this year, workers were placed in 3 new French pilot sites.

© Ottawa, ALM/MLO, Jean-Francois Picher

- There will be a symposium to discuss issues of francophone students. This is being organized by the Ministry of Francophone Affairs and the Ministry of Education.
- EQAO results are going up; above 75% of level 3.
- Showed grade 3 pupils are below average but usually catch up by grade 9.
- The concern is that the French Board statistics shows newcomers is low in registration. Assuming that parents tend to move to places where work is available. This will be discussed at the Symposium.
- Summer program runs in 2 schools High schools and 4 elementary schools. Hope to have more schools join the summer program by next year.

(d) Ministry of Education, Elizabeth Coelho

- Using research data, the focus is currently on Spanish-speaking, English Speaking Caribbean and Aboriginal students.
- The Ministry is currently focusing on the following developments:
 - I. November 9th, there will be a consultation session to review the ESL policy.
 - II. Based on the Rob Brown report, Educational Conferences will be held separately for Spanish-speaking, Portuguese and Black communities. Spanish session will be on September 23. Dates to be determined for the other 2.
 - III. English Language Learners (ELL) strategic response to community advocates.
 - IV. EQAO from grades 3- 6 on literacy and numeracy
 - V. Developing province-wide policy as a guide to assist students from K-12.
 - VI. Developing language assessment tool for K-12.
 - VII. Field test for implementation province-wide
 - VIII. Assessment kit for when student first arrive.
 - IX. Curriculum Review: focus more on English at Kindergarten level.
 - X. Preparing a manual for long-term strategy.
 - XI. Ministry looking at policy, guidelines, etc to address newcomer issues at Ontario schools.
 - XII. Parent Involvement Office has been established to encourage more parent participation. Elizabeth suggested it would be beneficial to include someone from this office on SWISAC. **Elizabeth to provide Colette with a contact name to invite to next SWISAC meeting.**

(e) SWIS Coordinators Outside Toronto, Jasminka Klacar

- Some projects are preparing for SWIS expansion, and focusing on getting additional funding.
- Summer program in all projects showed much success.
- In this early start of the new school year, all projects are currently working with school-readiness program.
- All projects are doing intensive variety of settlement services in their regions.
- In Waterloo Region, running youth programs in a non-traditional way. The program received assistance from volunteers in the community.

(f) SEPT-Toronto Coordinators, Jorge Barahona

- Due to SWIS expansion, Toronto SPOs are currently working on the hiring process of new Coordinators, administrative assistants and settlement workers. Job postings will be out soon.
- Cluster 2, Thorncliffe Neighbourhood Office, media event with high school students received good coverage by the Toronto star.
- TDSB and CultureLink organized a Tibetan conference with newcomer families on August 26.
- Had been informed city-wide that the Summer Program was successful. The number has double compared to last year. Shows that partnership with Toronto Public Library is working.
- Issues with space allocations at SEPT schools due to staff expansion and new administration. This was discussed at the new Principal Orientation session which took place earlier in the morning (September 14).

- Additional resources make a difference at the reception centres.

(g) Provincial SWIS Coordinator, Peter Dorfman

- Convening a meeting in January to look at additional resources and practices to make service delivery more effective at the school board reception centres.
- Created a road style map showing NSP and ISAP funded settlement agencies in Toronto for distribution at the reception centres and in schools.
- Completed maps showing where newcomers reside in each SWIS community. This is based on October 31, 2005 school board reports.
- The elementary Parent-Teacher video is complete and will be distributed shortly and launched in Peel closer to p/t interview time (end of November). The secondary version will be filmed at North Albion Collegiate in Toronto.
- Created a poster/brochure in English and French on '8 things' that high school newcomer students and parents should understand about the secondary school system.
- With Susan Hoo of CMAS, working a "cartoon" on dressing your child for winter.

(h) York Catholic School Board, Lucy Bacchet

- SEPYR had their Steering Committee meeting.
- Not much change at the reception centers.
- Partnering with intake went well.
- New Moves well received in high schools.
- Settlement workers provide orientation to newcomers.
- There were a fair number of visa students. There were challenges in encouraging their guardians and agents to join the orientation.
- There is great number of requests for the newcomer guide which shows its usefulness.

4. VIDEO FOR NEWCOMER PARENTS

- The subcommittee reviewed all the proposals received, and Frameline Production was chosen. The committee agreed that the French version must be reflective of the English version. Jean Francois expressed that an original version of New Moves should also be reproduced.
- Laura Heller (Frameline Production) explained the production process. Shooting will begin late Fall and should be finished by March 31, 2007. She will be working closely with Peter Dorfman throughout the process. Both will be looking at different dates for interviewing in different SWIS communities.
- **The committee is asked to inform the Frameline of any agency activities and school events to assist with the production.**
- **Peter will consult with the other SWIS projects.**

5. CANADA-ONTARIO IMMIGRATION AGREEMENT (COIA)

- Marilyn Ziedenberg was invited to update the group on the consultations that took place in July and August. The consultations will inform a strategy to guide CIC with the large budget increase that will be coming. Consultations were held in many Ontario cities. Non-CIC-funded organizations were also included, as were newcomers themselves. The consultation happened in two phases. Eight areas of newcomer needs were identified.
- The report will be released first to participants of the consultation later this fall, then it will be posted on Integration-net and Settlement.org.

Meeting adjourned.

**Next meeting date: Thursday, Dec. 5, 2006, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
RESCHEDULED TO TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2007, 9:30 AM TO 12:30 PM.**