MEMORANDUM

November 19, 2008

To:       The OISE Community

From:   Joe Weinberg
        Chief Administrative Officer

Re:         OISE Building and Operations Update – November 2008

I am pleased to provide OISE faculty, staff and students with a status report on building projects in and around the OISE building as well as an update on other building-related activities.

BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS

5th Floor Stairway Extension

The stairway extension from the 4th floor to the 5th floor is nearing completion. The construction hoarding on the 4th floor has now been removed and the area has been turned back to the English Language Program, School of Continuing Studies. The stairway is expected to be fully in-service by the end of November with a bit of clean-up work remaining before OISE’s Continuing Education staff return to their original 5th floor location.

I again would like to thank all staff in the School of Continuing Studies -- English Language Program as well as staff in OISE’s Continuing Education unit for being so accommodating during the construction period.

Accessibility Improvements

Over the past several months, there have been a number of improvements to accessibility into and within the OISE building.

a)   As we complete the work above to return OISE’s Continuing Education unit to their previous location on the 5th floor, we will be installing an automatic door opener to their
new entrance to ensure a welcoming and accessible experience for their many current and returning students.

b) A new barrier-free washroom on the 5th floor lobby area is expected to be in-service next week. This washroom will be available at all hours, and will supplement the existing barrier-free washroom located in the ground-floor Library that is available during Library hours.

c) Two additional code-compliant accessible parking spaces have been added to Parking Level 1.

d) A sign has been added at the Bloor Street entrance to the building to highlight the location of the wheelchair ramp.

e) Automatic door openers have been added to the main entrance door leading to the Auditorium, as well as to the Men’s and Women’s washrooms on the ground floor. These were installed through funding administered by SAC WAC (Students Administrative Council Wheelchair Access Fund). Although these washrooms are not designated as accessible washrooms, the auto-door feature will be of immediate assistance to some people. We are currently looking at the possibility of making the necessary design changes to these washrooms in the future to allow them to be designated as fully accessible.

Ground Floor – Food Services

We continue to work closely with ARAMARK, the operators of the food services area, to make improvements or additions to their selections.

Earlier this month, we helped celebrate the Nutriclicious promotion by hosting a team of chefs from ARAMARK who prepared delicious vegetarian wraps using locally-sourced vegetables. Many staff and students took advantage of the made-to-order wraps, and enjoyed selecting their ingredients from the brightly coloured array of fresh produce. We hope to be able to offer similar events in the future.

We are also working to finalize the installation of a “bagel station” as part of the OISE Café. This station will feature a supply of bagels and breads, a bagel slicer and rotary toaster.

Bloor-Bedford Parkette

Many of you may notice construction activity in the Parkette just east of the OISE building. Thanks to funding provided through the City of Toronto, improvements are being made to the Parkette, including the installation of paved walkways, the creation of a small assembly / performance area, and improvements to seating and lighting. This work will be undertaken over the next several weeks.
UPCOMING PROJECTS

Auditorium Modernization

In December, OISE’s ground floor Auditorium will be taken out-of-service to allow for the much needed replacement of the carpeting and seating. The Auditorium seats approximately 500 people. After many years of use, the existing carpet is worn and frayed, and many of the seats are either broken or have tears or wear-marks on the upholstery. This renovation will give the Auditorium a bright new look, and will make the room a much more welcoming environment for hosting major events. The work is expected to be completed over December and the holiday break, and return to service in early January.

Now .... if we could only do something about the Subway noise!!

Classrooms

With the completion of the 5th floor stairway extension, we have been actively planning for the creation of new classrooms on the 5th Floor. We have completed a preliminary design that calls for the creation of two 68-person classrooms, five 36-person classrooms and a lounge area. We are in the process of obtaining construction estimates for this work and examining possible funding sources that will allow us to create these classrooms in time for the start of classes in September 2009.

SAFETY

Emergency Response and Personal Safety References
During orientation activities this year the CAO’s office presented a Quick Reference Guide to Safety and Emergency Response to OISE staff. A one-page sheet entitled Quick Reference Summary to Safety and Emergency Response was also made available to students. Both of these references will soon be available on the CAO’s website at http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/oise/About_OISE/Chief_Administrative_Officer.html

Safety Message re: Interior Glass

Many of you know that, following an incident involving the breaking of an interior glass panel, all interior glass panels were retrofitted with a coating of safety film. This safety film provides additional strength AND PROTECTION against accidental breakage. In the event the glass does break, the film serves to contain the extent of protruding shards of glass. Nevertheless, the prospect of breakage and injury is still possible.
SUSTAINABILITY

The Sustainability Advisory Committee has now confirmed its student members. The complete list of members is listed below.

Joe Weinberg, CAO (SAC Chair)
Lori May, TPS (Committee Secretary / Communications Officer)
Jane Forbes, CTL
Larry Bencze, CTL
Elizabeth Rentzelos, ICS
Suzanne Stewart, AECP
Dorothy Goldin-Rosenberg, TPS
Patrick Hopewell, Education Commons
Elizabeth Broccoli, Operations and Services/CAO
Gary Pluim – PhD student, CTL
Andrew Kett – MA student, AECP
Krystina Faria – B.Ed. student
Katrusia Balan – B.Ed. student

The committee has met twice since the beginning of term. The second meeting was held to review OISE’s application for funding under the University’s Sustainability initiatives fund. OISE’s application requests matching funds for a project to install motion / occupancy sensor lighting controls in 44 OISE classrooms, meeting rooms and common spaces throughout the building.

QUESTIONS / COMMENTS

If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to call me at 416-978-7779 or contact me via e-mail me at jweinberg@oise.utoronto.ca.

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