



Dear Parents of Current and Prospective Space Sim Members.

The Ottawa Carleton Educational Space Simulation (otherwise known as "spacesim") is a student-run forum in which students teach each other about the practical aspects of space exploration and astronomy. It also provides educational services to other schools in the form of space science workshops (Elementary Education Program (EEPs)) and planetarium presentations (we own a StarLab© portable planetarium) for elementary and high school students. The sale of these services provides some of our funding.

This organization is entirely run by its student members. The club serves the community in a number of ways. It meets the need for engaging, hands-on instruction in astronomy and space exploration for non-member students and teachers. It provides a focus for students to apply skills in math, physics, chemistry, and biology toward the solution of practical problems. It also provides students with simulated hands-on experience in the activities and planning involved in space exploration.

The club has two locations out of which it works. Room 414 at Lisgar Collegiate Institute is the main office of the club. Students meet here during the week, conduct planning and training activities, and co-ordinate all of our other activities.

Our main work area is at the Albert Street Education Centre (440 Albert Street). Our work room is room W027 which is on the ground floor at the west end of the building. The easiest entry is the main doors off of Slater Street. Several signs are posted leading people to the work room. In this room is our spacecraft habitat (a drywall/metal frame structure), mission control area, simulator area, store room, and construction areas.

There are two principal meetings each week.

A planning meeting takes place each Friday at lunch, usually in room 413. This is when we finalize plans for the work session that evening and make plans for future activities and what materials must be obtained to carry out those plans.

Work sessions take place on Friday after school at 440 Albert St. Students are allowed to arrive starting at 3:30 PM. Work sessions last until 10 PM. A wide variety of activities take place at work sessions (see About Space Sim on www.spacesim.org). Each is lead by a senior student. We carry out an number of different activities at these work sessions: mostly preparations for our main mission (research, designing and building planetary surfaces, training on flight and engineering software and hardware, making mission profiles and schedules), but also repairs and upgrades to our spacecraft mockup, computer system, EVA suits, electronics, dry wall, cleaning up and organizing supplies etc. One of the best aspects of this club is the wide range of activities that it encompasses.

Attendance at the Friday lunch meeting and Friday work sessions is not compulsory, nor must students arrive and leave the work session at any particular time.

The Friday evening work session does take place on school-board property, it always is supervised, and all student codes of conduct must be followed. Attendance is not taken, as such, although a record is kept of who is at the work session at any time.

In order to accomplish this:

- 1) each student must inform the teacher advisor upon their arrival
- 2) each student must inform the teacher advisor before they depart
- 3) each student should inform their parents as to their particular plans for work session attendance.

These rules allow me to know how many students are present in case of an emergency, such as a fire alarm, and so that I can accurately inform any parents who call concerning their son's or daughter's presence at the work session.

Students are not allowed in any part of the building except the ground floor of the west wing (where the spacesim room is located).

As work sessions can run as late as 10 PM, students departing at the end of a work session are encouraged to either travel with other students or to be picked up by a parent or guardian. The area around the Albert Street Education Centre is quite safe, but reasonable caution always is warranted. The teacher advisor will wait at the centre until all students have been picked up. Students can go home for supper and return later in the evening. Many students eat at the work session. The spacecraft has a refrigerator and microwave oven and there are facilities for eating and washing up.

Parents are welcome at work sessions at any time and are encouraged to drop by to observe our activities. Questions or concerns can be addressed by phone (613 239-2696), email (jim.magwood@ocdsb.ca), or in person at Lisgar or at the work sessions at Albert Street.