

C.R. District Parent Advisory Committee Minutes of Meeting Held Wednesday, February 19, 2014

Present: Michael Savoie (President), Karen Worsley (Secretary), Lisa McCosh (Acting Treasurer), Violet Shade (Director), Jennifer Boulet, Amy Allard, Karen Gauthier, Suzy Roberts, Linda Missio, Shauna Schmitke

By Invitation: Michele Babchuk (Board of Education), Elaine Thompson (CRDTA), Nevenka Fair (SBO) (note: arrived 7:20 pm)

Regrets: Kate Morgan (Director), Christine Szaflik (CUPE)

Minutes from Previous Meeting:

Draft Minutes from the January 15, 2014 meeting were circulated for review, a copy had previously been delivered to each school to the attention of the respective PACs, and also emailed directly to the attendees listed on the December meeting sign-in sheet.

Agenda:

There being no additions or revisions, tonight's Agenda was approved.

Correspondence:

Items received and presented for review:

- Teachers' Magazine (circulated)
- Information for schools on youth gambling – from the Province of BC (circulated)
- FORCE “In the Know” session on mental health/youth issues this Wednesday from 3:30 to 5:00 pm at Robron - information circulated.
- Email received from Rhonda from Pinecrest - any other schools interested in running basketball or running club/track this year? If so, please contact her via email: rhondateramura@gmail.com.
- Both Carihi and Timberline informational open houses re next year students are both being held on February 25th.
- School District Policy Manual binder updated re local school calendar procedures bylaw.

School News & Reports from PACs:

- Willow Point - carnival this week, pancake breakfast tomorrow morning, all students skating on Friday. Leadership program implemented for grade 5 students, off to a good start.
- Southgate - muffin and fruit cup event in April being planned. Lunch time Olympic events happening now. Talent show in two weeks time. Band travelling to UVIC in couple of weeks for concert and adjudication.
- Phoenix - band concert packed at the Tidemark.
- EDM - KF/1 teachers doing great work implementing nature kindergarten program, taking students out at least 2x a week for one hour each, to increase next year. Kids are thriving.

REPORTS

A. Treasurer – Lisa McCosh, Acting Treasurer

In the general report there is currently \$260.46, and in gaming \$4,656.99. We have now received this year's gaming grant in the amount of \$2,500. There were no questions.

UPON MOTION duly made, seconded and carried, the Treasurer's Report was accepted and approved as presented.

B. Board of Trustees – Michelle Babchuk

- Calendar data will be at board meeting next week.
- Board is in process of putting together 5 year strategic plan.
- The Board has prepared a letter to the Minister of Education (dated February 18th, copy circulated and attached to these Minutes), communicating serious concerns regarding not only funding but the ability to recruit a large number of teachers. Concerns re special needs definitions and funding, as well as concerns re language, potential chaos from implementation of current ruling and ability to best serve students. Should know within next week or so whether stay will be allowed (hearing on Friday). As a board, not even sure what we are budgeting for - has to wait to see what language will allow for. Asking for advocacy re people wanting to see dispute finalized - need parents to step up and say "get it done", otherwise not enough pressure.
- Conversation followed and question was asked, where does BCCPAC stand on this? The BCCPAC's convention is not until the end of May. We could put resolution to BCCPAC - can talk under New Business whether we want to send a letter. Sometimes many voices are better than one orchestrated opinion from one part of the province.
- Speech from the Throne - not a lot on education, still moving forward on 10 year plan for teachers - budget came out - disappointed no extra funding on education or child poverty. Money actually moved from public sector to private schools, will find out more on Friday re this issue (\$14 million).
- Is there an organized effort to inform parents at school re this issue? This falls upon the PACs, local representation starts at this level. PACs have to ensure that they are looking beyond what happens just at their school as it affects all of us and impacts your children in the end. Suggested that PACs advocate to send their own letters. Important to be proactive, be part of forming the question rather than reacting to what happens to them.
- If PACs would like Michelle to come to their meetings, please send her an email with your request and she will come in to speak. Note that she is only one member of the Board, but is more than willing to give her information. Contact via email, michele.babchuk@sd72.bc.ca or phone: 250-203-9219.
- Trustees are also available to come to schools events (ie pancake breakfasts).
- Elaine Thompson has also requested that CRDTA reps go to PAC meets to provide information.
- No way we can have that amount of money go out (\$3.1 million mentioned in letter) and have the school district remain the same as we know it.
- No further questions.

C. District Diary – Nevenka Fair

- School support conversations being held with all schools to discuss how supports are being utilized, what still needs to be addressed, where is extra help required, what are the successes, etc. Can then set up connections/networking between different individuals and schools regarding different programs/strategies.
- Pro-D: the focus is on how do we help teachers to provide them with tools to deal with areas that require more support. First Steps in Math (could be guest speaker for us), has approx. 250 teachers now trained in our District. Discussion ensued re "new math" vs. traditional math. Numeracy seems to be the biggest goal that is being worked on in the District.
- Student Voice (grade 5, 8 and 11/12) forums have been held to be part of the Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement process. April 9th is the date for parent forum.
- Budget process, parent night forthcoming.
- Nautical science program integrates math skills in a practical way where students learn to sail and scuba dive. There are 26 students in class. Eight sailboats donated which will be sold to pay for the course.
- Assessment for learning - been contacted by individuals at provincial level re our new reporting

- procedures re communication for student learning and positive results - new project.
- Calendar committee has had 2 focus meetings, now recommendations go to the Board.

D. Teachers' Association – Elaine Thompson, CRDTA President

- Lengthy handout circulated re Bills 27/28 and the Supreme Court Ruling and additional data – first 2 pages attached to these Minutes, balance of information available on CRDTA website: crdta.ca. Pamphlet also passed out.
- Explained that “stay” means that restored language has to wait until the appeal has been heard.
- Concern is that with increased money now given by the government to private education, they can afford specialist teachers (Trustee confirmed that they are actually funded 50%, not all funded by tuition fees by parents) so that math teachers specialize just in math, PE just in that subject, etc. Definitely a two tiered situation which is growing farther apart.

E. CUPE – Christine Szaflik

At a conference in Vancouver, not available to attend tonight.

F. BCCPAC (www.bccpac.bc.ca) – Michael Savoie

Nothing new to discuss at this time.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

1. Island DPAC Conference

- Went to meeting in Parksville this last weekend, approx. 75% DPACs from Island represented. "Necnomination" new thing in social media, nominated to drink and do something stupid. Timberline sent home an email to all parents. Talk to your kids about it, as not talking about it doesn't protect them from it.
- DPAC reps talked about challenges/viewpoints according to those present – it was interesting to find out the top three are as follows:
 - (1) parents and partners, or lip service? Lot of discussion, different views from all districts and how they felt relationship was in their area. We should discuss more our role in this district, getting different parents involved so not just one continuous person and their perspective.
 - (2) fundraising fatigue - challenge is when PACs start buying educational materials, no parity between schools and districts. Question asked: what happened to Will Dirksen's discussion re earthquake kits and what is the PAC role versus the District? He is no longer with the District, Nevenka will follow-up and report back.
 - (3) teacher assessment and accountability - human nature that it only comes up when there is someone with an axe to grind, but most just want an understanding of how the procedure works, as it has changed so much in the past few years. How does it work? Elaine Thompson advised that the Teacher Regulation Branch used to have a majority of teachers, but now a mix of Ministry and teachers and parents (former BCCPAC person).

2. Pro-D Info

Pro-D days and teacher education, expectation of teachers, parents don't know what happens, it's a real mystery and we don't know what teachers do and the efforts they make for additional training, etc. Also, is it possible for parents to sit in on some of the pro-d sessions to better have dialogues about

students and opportunities/issues. Per Nevenka - hopefully school newsletters are sharing information on what their teachers are doing on their pro-d days. If they are not, ask if that can be done so that parents can continue the discussion with their child's teacher(s).

3. DPAC Island Association?

(To be discussed more at next DPAC meeting) – there is talk about DPACs on Island forming association to collaborate on information/seminars to reach broader range of parents to cover regional issues (not at the level of BCCPAC), such as resolutions. Question asked to PACs, is this something you think that we should move forward on? We don't lose our own voice/autonomy, but gives us more resources and larger voice. Please think about it and bring your information/ideas to next meeting. Perhaps a letter campaign?

4. Supreme Court Ruling & Bills 27/28 and 22

Reference is made to the Board of Trustees' letter to the Minister of Education covered above. Further discussion ensued.

UPON MOTION made, seconded and carried, IT WAS RESOLVED THAT DPAC pen a letter to Mr. Fassbender (Minister of Education) about our concerns and impact as communicated in the Trustees' letter of February 18th. Will send a copy out to the member PACs. Suggested if you want to send something on your own PAC level it would also be appropriate, please discuss at your next PAC meeting.

OTHER MATTERS

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.

NEXT MEETING: March 12, 2014 at 7 pm in Robron Library.