



COWICHAN VALLEY DISTRICT PAC

Minutes: October 19, 2017 Regular Meeting
SD79 School Board Office Boardroom, Duncan

1. Call to Order 7:28 p.m., after a presentation by Nourish Cowichan.
Welcome and Introductions

Voting Attendees

Carmen Sundstrom – DPAC Chair, Drinkwater Elementary DPAC Rep
Sonja Clarke – DPAC Treasurer, École Cobble Hill DPAC Rep
Christine Heal – DPAC Secretary, Frances Kelsey Secondary Secretary/DPAC Rep
Jillian Woodley – Khowhemun Elementary DPAC Rep
Cristin Smith – Maple Bay Elementary DPAC Rep
Caroline Kirman – Cowichan Secondary Treasurer/DPAC Rep
Krista Brown – Crofton Elementary President
Jessica Erickson – Tansor Elementary President
Chrissy Wilson – École Mt. Prevost Chair
Lynne Adam – Alex Aiken Elementary Chair/DPAC Co-Rep
Aurelia MacInnis – George Bonner Elementary Secretary/DPAC Rep
Ann Braithwaite – Discovery Elementary DPAC Rep

Non-Voting Attendees

Elizabeth Croft – School Board Trustee
Rod Allen – Superintendent
Sheryl Koers – Assistant Superintendent
Jason Sandquist – Secretary-Treasurer

Regrets

Amber Marsh – DPAC Vice Chair, École Mt. Prevost DPAC Rep
Cathy Schmidt – School Board Trustee

2. MOTION to adopt agenda as amended moved by Alex Aiken; seconded by Maple Bay. Carried.

3. MOTION to approve minutes from September 21, 2017 meeting moved by Bonner;
seconded by Cobble Hill. Carried.

4. Old Business

4.1 Parent Workshops

- **Julie-Anne Richards: Childhood Stress & Anxiety: Building Resilience** – Oct. 11 at Drinkwater. Was fantastic. Great turn-out: approx. 150 people. Gave tips and tools we can all use.
- **Julie-Anne Richards** – Bonner on Nov. 22

- **Cindy Andrews “Let’s Talk About Drugs”** – Quamichan theatre in small discussion group around tables. Scheduled for Nov. 22 but will try to shift date. Different approach than scare mongering; promotes drug literacy.
- **Darren Laur, The White Hatter** – Bonner Oct. 25. Presentation will be by Darren’s son Brandon.
- **Sean Smith, Digital Hallway** – Cowichan Secondary (Quamichan) – Oct. 23
- **Jesse Miller, Mediated Reality** – at FKSS, was great. Highly recommended. Jesse has several different presentations, so they would have him back again. VERY reasonably priced; he lives in the Cowichan Valley.
- **BCTF** free workshops put on by volunteer teachers. Frances Kelsey PAC considering hosting one in 2018. Topics listed on BCTF website:
<http://bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Public/Parents/HomeAndSchoolComm/PresentationsForParents.pdf>
<http://bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Public/Parents/HomeAndSchoolComm/AbEdPresentationForParents.pdf>
- **Screen Agers**, a DVD presentation about struggling with screen time. Bonner PAC interested in hosting; Aurelia will find out more info., cost, recommended location (VIU?).
- **Most Likely to Succeed** was hosted last year by CSS at VIU: good movie.

4.2 DPAC AGM

Nomination forms available; need to have two PAC executive members sign your nomination form. Carmen will not be putting her name forward for the Chair position. She has served in the position for 3 years and the DPAC Constitution states an individual can hold the same executive position for a maximum of 3 consecutive years.

4.3 Busing

Rod: need to encourage kids – especially older – to carry and use bus passes.

Follow-up from last meeting:

- The child being recorded as getting on and off the wrong bus was because another child had his bus pass.
- Maple Bay buses are now running on time: was just a short-term problem.

Bonner: parents are frustrated as they have questions and no one calls them back.

Bus pass photos – expected photos would be one year old, but some are older than that.

Rod: current bus info., such as if buses are delayed, is on Twitter and SD website.

Cobble Hill and FKSS: very confusing that passwords had to be reset between when the bus schedules were e-mailed in August and before school started. Would be great to have full schedules/routes listed online as they were in the past.

Tansor: some bus routes are incorrect.

Carmen suggested everyone e-mail their busing concerns/questions to her so she could compile a list for Rod and the transportation department.

Rod will see if Selena Hayes, Transportation Department Supervisor, or someone else from the transportation dept. could attend a DPAC mtg.

5.1 Chair Report – Carmen Sundstrom

There has been chatter on social media about support/lack of support for special needs students. Majority has been positive and understand the changes due to Bill 28 and lack of EAs on call. Frustration because education is supposed to be inclusive, and with lack of communication, such as when an EA is ill and cannot be replaced.

Rod: one of the unintended consequences of Bill 28 and more classrooms is specialised EAs can no longer efficiently combine kids because the students are in different classrooms. We don't have many EAs on call. When kids are asked to stay home, it's because they are kids who need skilled EAs with specific skill sets and it's a safety issue. It's a complex situation and we are currently submitting another funding request to the Ministry.

We also added 65 classroom positions so those 65 teachers need to be replaced when sick. Most teachers take an average of 10 sick days/yr.

Carmen: need a DPAC rep to attend 3 school board mtgs/month on Tuesdays. Attending is a great way to keep yourself informed.

5.2 Treasurer's Report – Sonja Clarke

- Regular account balance: \$ 8,265.07
- Gaming account balance: \$ 543.46
- Term Deposit: \$ 8,424.11
- Total \$ 17,232.64
- less monies owed to Bonner and CSS

MOTION to accept Treasurer's report moved by Tansor; seconded by CSS. Carried.

5.3 SD79 Administration – Superintendent Rod Allen and Assistant Superintendent Sheryl Koers

Cowichan School District Video

Video crew was here Oct. 4 & 5. Filmed in a few different schools; special permission forms went home if video was filmed in that school.

Will be compiled into 10 minute video to tell Cowichan story and showcase very cool stuff going on in our District. Made for the public both inside and outside our district, to attract teachers, etc.

Harvard educators are very interested in what we're doing, and would only be interested if we were doing something right!

Starfish backpacks – Rotary Club sponsored

They have partnered with Nourish Cowichan. Starfish backpacks are backpacks filled with food that a student takes home for the weekend. They are currently being used in Khowhemun, where ~50 bags go home to feed multiple kids within each family.

Elizabeth: It's had surprising effects where parents are more likely to engage with teachers. It's helped increase literacy. When children who may not have had good family relationships bring home food for the whole family, they may get a new status within their families.

Rod: There doesn't seem to be any stigma attached and can be used as a class project to pack bags. In other areas using the program, they are bright blue backpacks with a big starfish but our district is more discreet and food is packed in grocery bags. Costs are approximately \$500/family/year.

Cowichan Valley has the highest child poverty rate in B.C. and one of the highest in Canada.

Report Cards

Sheryl: formal report not due until March, yet up until that time casual chats with teachers have been fine. Intent that March report is supposed to be a summary.

Some teachers are moving towards a portfolio:

- e-portfolio or scrapbooking but may not be enough information
- individual learning samples NEED to be posted
- portfolios need to be accurate e.g.: not show something child has copied from the board

Carmen: remember it is our right to communicate with teachers.

Alex Aiken: how long are you giving teachers to learn and USE e-portfolio?

Sheryl: teachers are trying: this year there were 4 after school learning sessions and 3 more up and coming. Change needs to come from teachers, not pushed by school board and we need to give teachers time to learn, adjust, etc.

2 options: report card A – old form with formal assessments November, March and June.
 report card B – March & June reports
 However, reports should be done all the time.

Parent Teacher Interviews

Carmen: although Parent-Teacher interviews were sometimes only twice a year, they were a community event, and were a good way to support vulnerable parents and vulnerable children.

Sheryl: We are trying not to make it a set time on a set date; instead, teachers should be inviting parents to dates/times that work for both of them.

Rod: Teachers HAVE to accommodate working parents. If a teacher won't talk to you, speak to the principal.

Road Traffic Safety

Bonner: parents have to drop off kids in the morning in the parking lot and it quickly becomes congested. There has been road rage in front of the school. RCMP and Speedwatch have been good. A crosswalk won't work at the school. Parents inquiries have been shuffled back and forth between CVRD and Ministry. Is there anything we parents can do? They will approach the CVRD Director.

Alex Aiken: 5 years of writing letters to the school district never had an effect, but now things are working well with the Municipality of North Cowichan.

5.4 School Board Trustee – Elizabeth Croft

- Still advocating for a new CSS.
 Rod Fleming was the education critic and now is the Education Minister. He has lots of integrity and is very knowledgeable.

Carmen: NDP gov't has said for capital projects they are going to be working as hard as they can to get schools up and running "in a timely manner," so hopefully that is good news for a CSS replacement.

- Website: before the end of the year are going to open a portal to ask people what they want and how they will use it, so the new website will be purpose-built.
- Automatic External Defibrillators
 FKSS: Are there AEDs in all schools, including elementary?
 Not all schools have them; parents and PACs have purchased them. Easy to install/store as they are battery run.
 Elizabeth: Heart and Stroke Foundation may donate them: worth asking. If not, perhaps a bulk purchase could be arranged.

6. New Business

6.1 DPAC Chair Summit hosted by BCCPAC – 2 spots available
 \$75 DPAC summit fee can include annual membership fee.

6.2 Check out info about gaming grants; there is \$11 million available: www.gov.bc.ca/gaminggrants

6.3 CORE French: Need a parent from a non-French immersion school, ideally from Grade 5, 6 or 7, to discuss and support district's French language program. Meet three times per year.

7. Next Meeting

November 16, 2017 at 7pm, School Board Office Boardroom.

8. Adjourned at 9:45 pm by Drinkwater.

Submitted by Christine Heal, DPAC Secretary