

# Sir James Douglas Parent Advisory Committee General Meeting Minutes for September 16, 2015 in Library

Members in attendance: Kris Repay, Laura Jones, Paula Marchese, Michelle O'Neill, Alice Cochran, Paisley Tremblay, Justin Hodkinson, Nancy Needham, Michelle Gilmour, Murray Harris, Brenna O'Connor, Cici Morgan, Janice Williams, Peggy Baudon, Deanna Miller, Deana Verkirk, Deniz Unsal, Kym Harvey, Jami Watson, Anna Tvarozkova, Ed Manero, Karen Henry, Isadora DeBartoli, Christy Jackson, Alex Cruikshank, Kathryn Nicholls

Initial social/mingling opportunity for first half an hour with food and drinks.

1) Co-Chairs (Paula Marchese and Laura Jones) welcomed parents & each attendee introduced themselves.

2) Explanation of what the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) is.

- \*\*Advise and present parent perspective to administration

- \*\*Fund school activities and programs that enrich our children's school lives such as providing additional funding for Kindergarten through Grade 2 classes to attend Mr. Organics gardening field trips to the Lieutenant Governor's House in Rockland

- \*\*Present parent education programs on such topics as school safety, childhood anxiety and special needs education plan workshop

- \*\*Organize events to bring community together and raise money for the school, such as the Spring Fair, Halloween Dance, Swim Club, Purdy's chocolate sales at Easter and Christmas and Holiday Emporium

- \*\*Organize sushi/pizza and Subway lunches

3) Treasurer Alice Cochran gave a summary of PAC finances and budget process.

Budget for each year is the money that was raised from the past academic year plus gaming funds that are provided by the province. This year our budget is approximately \$18,000. The PAC also has a "Rainy Day" fund to be used for a project that would benefit the whole school.

Budget will be voted on at the November PAC meeting.

Discussion followed that the PAC is liaising with teachers to explain that the PAC provides funds to enhance school life and learning for our kids. The PAC is beginning discussions with staff and school administration to find out what the teachers would like the PAC to fund.

4) Purdy's Chocolate Fundraising coordinator Deana Verkirk explained that school PAC gets 25% of the wholesale price of the chocolates that parents order through the PAC.

This fundraiser will start after Halloween and will offer holiday chocolates for sale to the school community.

5) SJD Swim Club parent coordinator Deana Verkirk reported that Swim Club will resume for 3 terms of 9 weeks each starting October 8 to December 3 – but not on day of parent teacher meetings; January 14 to March 10 and April 4 to June 2. Information is available on the PAC website.

Parents drive their children to Crystal Pool for the swim club lessons on Thursdays from 3:30 pm to 4:15 pm. There are 4 different levels, so swimmers of all abilities are welcome. For families that cannot afford the fee, funding is available. Families that need financial assistance are encouraged to speak to Murray in confidence.

6) The PAC brought a suggestion box for ideas to be submitted to the meeting. PAC emphasized that we want parental feedback as to what the PAC should accomplish this year.

Some of our ideas:

movie night in November for all families, likely Star Wars related  
(on agenda for October meeting)

fund school programs for more than one class (i.e., artist in residence program, school wide physical activity for kids, Growing Farmers)

fund a nature playground in the back or outdoor classroom

Roots of Empathy program where teacher in which mother and baby are brought to a classroom so that the children learn how to look after those more vulnerable in society. Guidelines have been sent to Murray for the school to consider further.

School chess club for children in Grade 2 and up to assist in learning math skills. Math club is underway. Murray says that if a parent or community member would serve as instructor, he will sponsor the club.

5) General discussion about whether the PAC should continue to offer babysitting at meetings. Consensus was that babysitting should be provided for future meetings to encourage parents to attend meetings..

6) Discussion about using Survey Monkey and/or possibly customize the School District Grade 4 survey to receive feedback from parents on a variety of topics relating to what they would like to see the PAC take on. Another possibility is to conduct Twitter or chat functions during live PAC meetings to engage parents who cannot attend in person.

7) One attendee suggested that PAC meeting minutes should be posted to the PAC website. We will do this starting with the September meeting minutes.

8) Paisley Tremblay gave an explanation of the responsibilities for class representatives. They liaise with the teacher to communicate information to the parents, coordinate volunteers for the hot lunch program, field trips and arrange for teacher gifts if individual classes decide they want to do this. Murray explained that sometimes the role of the class rep is to explain to the teacher all the different ways that he/she can assist the teacher.

#### 10) Volunteer Opportunities

- Exec elections in October
- Halloween Dance (Oct. 30): sign up now
- Class Rep openings: all slots filled. Thank you, parents!
- Hot Lunch volunteers: ongoing
- Lice Check: hope to start up in November, if there are enough parent volunteers

11) Admin Update: On Friday September 11, Murray was informed by the School District that SJD would receive an additional teacher to assist in reducing the English class sizes for Grades 4 and 5. Consequently, Murray was not able to confirm class locations and teachers and move children to their classes until the following week.

12) **Door prize draws** – Laura Jones won 4 Grizzly Hockey tickets (donated by Wilson Entertainment) and Deanna Miller won a bottle of wine, donated by Cook Street Liquor Store.

See you in October at the PAC Executive elections!