

## **Parent Advisory Committee - Ecole Sir James Douglas Elementary - General Meeting Minutes for February 17, 2016.**

Attendees: Paula Marchese, Isadora DeBortoli, Raj Mehta, Michelle Gilmour, Janice Williams, Jennifer Canterbury, Tanya Binette, Karen Henry, Laura Jones, Murray Harris, Rob Paynter (elected director of the school board and liaison for SJD and schools feeding into Vic High), Brenna O'Connor, Alice Cochran, Don Cal, Shannon Black, Morgan Myers, and Tom Berkhout.

Regrets: Kris Repay.

1. Welcome: Co-chair Paula Marchese welcomed everyone.
2. Past Minutes: The Minutes from the meeting of January 21, 2016 were distributed. Tanya's husband's name, to be inserted in the January minutes, is Markus Kellerhals.

Motion: That the minutes of the January 21, 2016 PAC meeting be approved.

Moved: Isadora DeBortoli.

Seconded: Michelle Gilmour

Voted: All in favour, motion passed.

3. Treasurer's report: Alice Cochran reported that the PAC purchased additional music stands for the school. The school had only one school set, so if the choir and the strings were performing at the same time, only half the students had music stands. The school purchased a cart to store and move the new stands. Money for the stands came from line items in the PAC budget that will not be fully used this year, namely gaming surplus and physical activity. The Syrian Refugee Movie Night Fundraiser was a big success; it raised over \$4,000.00 for the local groups receiving refugee families.

4. School Update: Murray Harris reported the following:

- The school has finished the Grade 4 Foundation Skills Assessment. More students participated this year than last year, so the results should provide more information.
- The Grade 4 students, parents and staff are completing the Satisfaction Survey required by the Ministry of Education.
- Grade 4/5 Basketball and the Floor hockey games are continuing.
- The whiteboards purchased with PAC money have been installed and are very appreciated by the teachers.
- Mischa Smart, a teacher and professional artist, has begun consultations with staff and students regarding the creation of two 4' X 8' murals. One will likely be painted on the drywall behind the library main desk by students in Grades 4 and 5. The other will likely be placed in the hallway by the gym and created by students in Kindergarten to Grade 3.
- One parent suggested the murals be done on panels, which could be installed on the wall. Then, when the children who created the murals had moved onto Middle School, the murals could be removed, sold as a fundraiser and the next generation of students could create more murals.
- Staff are ordering books for the English home reading program, to be purchased with PAC funds.

- Murray is working with Pimlotts Sporting Goods to order more athletic equipment for the school (basketballs, soccer balls, playground balls, whiffle balls, and portable badminton and tennis nets that can be set up by just one adult). Murray and Doug Tellier have cleaned up the gym storage area to make it easier for staff and students to access the most frequently used athletic equipment.
- Story Studio for the Grade 4 and 5 classes will be taking place in April and May.
- The staff have discussed how to use the PAC funds for physical activity. Curling and yoga have been suggested. A parent suggested Groove Fit – which is a music driven opportunity for children to express themselves through music, flexibility and endurance. A local occupational therapist and fitness instructor offers the classes. The cost is \$100 for two sessions. As the older students have basketball, cross-country and hockey, the Kindergarten to Grade 2 students and their teachers would likely benefit from GrooveFit.
- Another parent suggested children be encouraged through prizes or acknowledgment to walk and bike to school.
- The survey of Grade 5 classes indicated support for a trip to Camp Pringle. The cost will be \$105 per child and the school will subsidize those families requesting help.
- A parent has volunteered to create the Grade 5 slideshow, which will be shown at the Grade 5 graduation celebration.

5. Tom Berkhout, SJD parent, letter to the school board on the Minimum Number of Instructional Days.

Tom presented at our November 2015 PAC meeting on the school board's recently adopted practice of averaging out the total school days over several years to meet the statutory minimum rather than meet the statutory minimum each year. The school board has to consider the applicable regulation and its contract with the Greater Victoria Teachers' Association (the "GVTA"). The 2015/2016 school year appears to be five or six days less than the minimum required, due in part to the late Labour Day in September 2015 and the GVTA agreement that the last instructional day will not be later than the last Friday in June. The 2015/2016 school year ends on Friday, June 24. Tom noted that the Vancouver School District calendar goes to June 29, 2016.

Tom has drafted a letter to the School Board with two requests, namely that the school board ensure the 2016/2017 school year has the required minimum of instructional days, and that the School Board will work in good faith with the GVTA to resolve this issue permanently so that future school years always contain the statutory minimum of instructional days.

We discussed whether the letter should be signed by the SJD PAC or signed by parents individually. We also discussed notifying other PACs, through the Victoria Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (VCPAC), of the issue and our letter to the school board.

Rob Paynter noted that the School District has posted the proposed 2016/2017 calendar for review on its website; parents are invited to review and submit comments. It will be approved in approximately one month, so comments need to be made soon. Rob noted that the former

regulation regarding the minimum number of instructional days contained more guidance on how early dismissal days and parent-teacher interviews were treated.

Motion: That the letter of Tom Berkhout be signed by the SJD PAC and sent to School District No. 61.  
Moved: Michelle Gilmour.  
Seconded: Isadora DeBortoli  
Voted: 8 in favour, 5 opposed; motion passed.

The next VCPAC meeting is on February 23. Tom will likely attend. The letter will be sent out by our co-chairs very soon.

#### 6. Updates:

A. Changes to the PAC Executive: Nancy Needham is on leave for medical reasons. Alex Cruikshank has resigned as she has a conflicting commitment, but has volunteered to help coordinate the Spring Fair in June.

B. Staff appreciation lunch: Set for Friday, February 26. Volunteers are needed.

#### C. Fundraisers:

1. Fernwood Coffee: March 5<sup>th</sup> is the deadline for coffee orders. Forms are available on the PAC website.
2. Purdy's Chocolate: Forms to order Easter chocolates are available at the school and will be sent home with students shortly.
3. School supplies: We will do next year's orders through Monk's Office Supplies, but orders must be done online. The PAC will charge a \$5.00 service fee per order. Laura Jones volunteered to coordinate the orders again next year. Tanya Binette volunteered to work with Laura.

D. Enhancing Outdoor Play Area: Michelle Gilmour will lead the committee that will meet soon. Volunteers for the committee include Morgan Myers, Janice Williams, Rob Paynter and Tanya Binette.

E. Parent Education: On April 13, 2016 at 6:30 p.m., we will host a workshop on mindfulness presented by Stephanie Curran. Child care will be offered. Parents will be asked to RSVP so we know the approximate number of attendees.

F. Spring Fair: The planning committee will meet this Tuesday. Many volunteers will be needed. We need a Games Coordinator.

One parent requested the PAC discuss incorporating as a society and revising constitution and by-laws at a future meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

The next PAC meeting is Wednesday, April 20, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. in the school library. We do not have a meeting in March due to Spring Break.