

Kootenay Lake District Parents' Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, April 27
Nelson School Board Office, 570 Johnstone Rd., Nelson
Videoconferencing to Creston Education Centre, Creston

1. Welcome/Call to Order at 7:10

We acknowledge, respect and honour the First Nations in whose traditional territories the Kootenay Lake School District operates and all Aboriginal people residing within the boundaries of School District #8.

In Attendance: Martha Wilson (LVR), Cate Baio (WF), Jonathan Reynolds (WEG), Sonja Thoma (WEG), Patricia Routien (Hume), Tina Rubak (LVR), Ester Zdebiak (MSSS), Rena Vandembos (MSSS), Raina Gardner (Winlaw ,by Phone), Kelly Fitchett (Erickson/PCSS), Sharon Bloodworth (CL/PCSS), Jeff Jones (Superintendent), Paul Boscarol (NDTA)

Regrets: Raeanne Gow

2. Adoption of Agenda- Adopted by consensus

3. Approval of March 16 Minutes- Adopted by consensus (with correction to Sharon's last name)

4. District Reports

Jeff Jones, Superintendent

- Lieutenant governor visiting Slocan Valley schools May 5th
- Developing 17/18 budget (one month behind because of recent MOU restoring 2002 BCTF language)
- Working on staffing with KLTF to restore agreement as per BC Supreme Court ruling
- Received preliminary allocation to fill staffing from current staffing to expected staffing
- Superintendent interviews/presentations will be next week. Candidate will be selected or search will continue
- May 19th youth Pow Wow in Creston. 7th year.
- 7 grad ceremonies coming up in the district starting in June
- Retirement and service banquet June 3rd
- Gail Higginbottom has accepted the position of Principal of Aboriginal Education. She starts September

Paul Boscarol, NDTA

- Working with Jeff and Deanna on restoring previous agreement language
- Looking forward to what additional staffing will look like throughout the district
- Q: do we know how many FTE we are entitled to?
 - Look at comparisons to other years

- Compared with September 30 2016, staffing projection looks like about 15-16 FTE equivalent higher.

5. School Reports

Mt. Sentinel

- \$65,000 tech ed grant with LVR
- Robotics building/design

Winlaw

- Active PAC this year, purchased sound system. Had a school dance. Spring fling coming up in May. Plant sales, penny raffles. Looking forward to "Mask" screening.

LVR

- PAC managed to spend most of their funding. Band in Whistler. Rugby in Kamloops. Busy. Forward thinking PAC meeting for Fall.
- digital and applied arts showcase
- girls soccer team doing well
- epic clothing swap with Mt Sentinel that students are organizing

WF

- 2 classes headed to Four Nations in May
- Great visit with David Hatfield. Girls had Michelle Mungall in to speak about women in politics and watched some of MissRepresentation

WEG

- Fundraising for new playground
- Garage sale
- PAC purchased 4 picnic tables
- Hoping to beautify front of school
- Health and safety committee struck for the school. Need to figure out what to do about lead in the school's water. Planning on writing letter to Board regarding concerns.
- Wonderful experience with new principle
- Environmental organization made paddles

C/L

- Getting ready for Focus on Youth starting Monday, it's a non-competitive talent showcase, including art show within the town
- Every class is participating
- Year end trips happening
- Are clearing out area behind school to build outdoor classroom. Funded by part of budget surplus from last year.

PCSS

- Had a young student request new pinnies for gym class. PAC purchased 120 new pinnies
- Waiting for Supernova to be installed in playground (yes, a secondary school playground)
- Concerned about cleanliness and safety because of low lighting issues; have contacted district and it is hopefully being addressed

Hume

- Fundraising for playground expansion
- Swim lessons starting
- Ice Cream Social in May
- One more movie night

6. Correspondence

Emails from one parent and the BK PAC expressing concerns about moving winter break one later

a) Business Arising from Correspondence

- Supt Jones - It was requested by parents in western areas to move winter break to later date to be in alignment with SD20. PVP made recommendation for this change based on feedback from their parent communities. District Calendar committee responses were in favour. The board debated the change and agreed to it, but it was not unanimous.
- There was a general discussion about the very limited consultation process for changing the winter break timing in the 2017-2018 calendar. The consensus was that since the district usually does extensive consultation and the change was brought forward by principals who had heard from parents who wanted to move the winter break one week later that there was no need for DPAC to write a letter to the board.

7. Discussion Items

a. Parent Education Update

i. The Mask You Live In

- Poor turn out at both TMS and WF venues
- One more showing at Mt. Sentinel
- Potential lack of messaging as to why we are bringing people together to discuss film when they can see it on Netflix
- Perhaps parent education for PAC could be around communication

ii. David Hatfield recap

- Was originally planned for the drama room (for more intimate setting)
- Most parents were expecting more lecture format
- Curiosity about feedback several weeks after event. Initially perhaps not what parents expected at first but so much to reflect on they might feel different.
- Creston had powerful experience of Rites of Passage with David

iii. Substance Use

- At one point it appeared that the district was going to organize a parent education panel, however that has been replaced by a broader event organized by the education subgroup of the community fentanyl task force which includes local school districts and Selkirk college representation.
- The event is growing, however with growth come further delays. Director Fehr referred me to Cheryl Dowden, ANKORS executive director, and I requested that parents be asked to provide input into topics. As per discussions at previous DPAC meetings, parents have requested education around what substances of concern are available in our communities including from local dispensaries. Cheryl Dowden will follow up with Director Fehr.

- Tina is part of the task force and will follow up and let us know.
- Committee has had challenges meeting
- Tina will send request to meet specifically to get into the schools
- Tina and Raina worked with grade 9 girls at LVR during David Hatfield's work and there was a big concern from students regarding drugs and alcohol.
- Tina will report back after discussing strategy around working in schools

b. BCCPAC

- Nichola Lytle and Raeanne Gow are the KL reps attending. Only 5 resolutions (2 from KL) so far although more anticipated. Few candidates for the board so a by-election will be held. Vote proxies are trickling in and we will be hitting that hard this weekend.

c. Student assessments for special needs designations and support

Sharon Bloodworth:

- many families have expressed frustration over delays in having their students assessed for special needs designations and support. They can be waiting 2 – 3 years. Some are told that if they want it sooner, they can pay for a private assessment, which is very expensive, and some do, but many families cannot afford this
- also, if child is diagnosed with disability but it doesn't fall on the spectrum, or meet the criteria, they do not qualify for funding.

Supt Jones:

- we can't receive the funding until we've done the assessments, took inordinate amount of adult time to prepare for the audit, time away from providing services to students; difficult to attract psychologists to school districts, especially in rural districts like ours
- recommend parent advocacy at the provincial level for additional support, opportunity to train teachers to complete some testing, integrate better with community organizations, streamline the system
- structure that aligns funding with the assessment isn't working, teachers know when students need assistance, but we are not allowed to provide that support without going through the process of assessments and diagnoses
- pre-school identification helps
- 3 pieces – a) assessment and diagnosis requirements to meet criteria to get funding, b) having staff to do assessments, c) having staff to provide services

Rena:

- Selkirk has a much more "nimble" system – don't require assessment by psychologist

Paul:

- take your voice to govt that makes it so onerous to get funding, they are putting obstacles in place
- many kids are not getting identified until post-secondary, whereas the earlier we intervene the more positive effect it will have on the child's education
- schools spread out funding over more students to include those that don't meet funding criteria but need support

Q: Why is the problem growing? Why are so many more students waiting to get the support they need than 20 years ago?

- government funding
- The bar is much higher for a child to access funding
- inclusion

Supt Jones:

- cultural expectations have changed as well. Once upon a time, students would “fail”. There is an expectation that all students will move on.

Jonathon:

- but advocacy to government more effective if many parents write letters, not just one letter from DPAC and one from BCCPAC – DPAC could advocate for and to district parents to send letters
- Too late to make this an election issue or submit a resolution to BCCPAC, but general consensus that DPAC will draft a letter to the new government advocating for a more efficient and effective special education funding and support system. Sheri will start, Martha W and Tina R offered to assist as did the superintendent.

d. 2017-2018 DPAC executive & district committee rep recruitment- postponed again

8. Treasurer's Report

- Treasurer absent, report is that DPAC funds are spent.

9. District Committee Reports:

a. Budget Stakeholder- May 2

b. Finance- May 2

c. Education- terrific presentation from 3 secondary teachers on how they are incorporating the new curriculum into their classrooms

d. Policy- draft policy and regulations 213: Maintenance of Order out for field testing until June 1. Policy reflects section 177 of the School Act that provides authority for district staff to direct a person to leave school property to maintain order and ensure a secure environment. Forging ahead on the computer and internet use. Discussing codes of conduct. Next meeting May 16.

e. Healthy Schools- meeting scheduled for June 6, reps are Cate Baio and Meghan Paterson

10. DPAC Meeting & Presentation Schedule

Thursday, May 25: Child & Youth Mental Health & Substance Use Support Services + trade training opportunities

Thursday, June 8 – Party! (Parent Appreciation Awards)

Meeting Adjourned 8:50pm