

Kootenay Lake DPAC Meeting

Thursday January 22, 2009

Nelson School Board Office, video conferencing to Creston Ed. Centre

Present:

S. Wilson - WEG PAC DPAC rep, DPAC Chair
G. Mackinnon - LVR PAC Vice chair, DPAC Vice-Chair
K. Mann - Rosemont parent, DPAC Secretary
J. Henri - Mt. Sentinel PAC DPAC Rep, DPAC Treasurer
R. Marsden - Erickson PAC DPAC Rep
S. Giles - Trafalgar parent
M. Fuller - Yahk parent
C. Heron - LVR PAC Chair
G. Pasutti - Rosemont PAC DPAC Rep

Regrets:

Verna Myers Mackenzie, Trustee
Barbara Lindsay, Trustee
Lenora Trenaman, Trustee
Pat Dooley, Superintendent
Becky Blair and Tom Newell, Kootenay Lake Teachers' Federation

1. Welcome - called to order 6:00 pm

2. Approval of agenda - as circulated

3. Acceptance of December 18, 2008 minutes - by consensus

4. Correspondence - see attached list

5. Discussion Items

a.) Business arising from correspondence

- Draft policies currently being field tested are on school districts website - www.sd8.bc.ca. The Policy Committee is accepting feedback until Feb. 2nd. Health Promoting Schools is one of the policies being field tested which deals with PAC Hot Lunch programs and fund raising.

b.) BCCPAC

- Nominations are open for several positions on the BCCPAC Board of Directors, to parents of member PACs.
- Spring conference & AGM is on April 30th
- Visit www.bccpac.bc.ca for more information.

c.) School District Finance Committee

- After much discussion the Board decided not to make further cuts to the budget for a contingency fund. School district staff is being very proactive in keeping to the budget and expect to be able to limp to the end of the school year in the black.
- We expect the next meeting is Feb. 3rd just prior to the Board meeting

d.) Full Day and Pre- Kindergarten

- The Early Childhood Learning Agency has finished their research and not accepting any more submissions. It was decided by the committee not to pursue the survey of parents.
- We are awaiting the throne speech in February to see if the government will be making this a priority.

e.) Student Transportation

- Transportation Review Committee:
 - The review will look at two areas: efficiency and equitability. Walk limits and bus catchment areas, set by Board policy, will be looked at closely.
 - A preliminary report should be available on Feb. 24th at the Board meeting.
 - Student transportation is a privilege and not required by the Ministry of Education. It is up to the Board to develop a student transportation system. “School busses are not big, yellow taxis.” (Larry Link, Transportation Coordinator)
- Bus Accident in Creston area:
 - On Thursday January 8, a school bus driving on Highway 3 heading towards Creston veered into the opposite lane to avoid a semi-truck and trailer jackknifed in the middle of the road. An on-coming car forced the school bus to the left hand side, slid sideways and hit the corner of the truck trailer coming to rest in a snow bank. There were 18 students on the bus. Another school bus arrived at the scene minutes later and transferred some students to the second bus taking them to their schools. There were five students who remained on the bus in the snow bank to wait for first responders, RCMP and ambulances. Those students were taken to Creston Valley Hospital with cuts, concussions, sprains and bruises and released that day.
 - Creston parents shared their concerns about the bus accident:
 1. Should the children have been on the bus given the road conditions? RCMP officer fell and broke a rib and shattered his pelvis while attending the scene.
 2. Should the transfer of students from one bus to another have taken place without flaggers directing traffic?
 3. A first responder should have evaluated all students prior to letting any leave the scene.
 - Superintendent Pat Dooley and Director of Operations Larry Brown held a meeting with Creston parents on January 20 to collaborate on a draft policy and procedures when dealing with bus accidents. This will be on the Policy Committee agenda for the February 2nd meeting.
 - There was some discussion regarding seat belts on buses. The common reason for not having seat belts is the need to evacuate students quickly however this information is out-dated. Currently bus seats are designed to absorb the impact of a head-on collision with no protection for side impacts. Even when busses drive over large bumps and must swerve, students are often tossed from side to side resulting in concussions, whiplash and other injuries.
 - There was discussion around finding out bus accident statistics, contacting ICBC safety & research branch with a possible resolution to BCCPAC requesting the Ministry of Education require all school busses in the province have seat belts. The cost to retrofit all school buses is affordable compared to litigation and paying for one

child with disabilities for a lifetime.

- For information about seat belts on school busses please visit <http://www.safeguard4kids.com/>
- DPAC will make recommendations to the Board to create a system to ensure if road conditions are in question the school district can make informed decisions. Our school district maintenance department should be in contact with local highway maintenance offices and Ministry of Highways and Transportation to ensure the safety of students.

f.) Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA)

- FSA is an annual check of the effectiveness of the provincial curriculum in reading, writing and numeracy. All Grade 4 and Grade 7 students are required by the Ministry to take these tests. The tests take 4.5 hours and the testing period is the entire month of February.
- S. Wilson met with the Kootenay Lake Teacher's Federation earlier this week. Teachers across the province voted to withdraw from the preparation, administration and marking of FSA. Teachers feel the results of the FSA do nothing for students' learning or classroom resources and feel standardized testing is the wrong way to go in a public education system.
- For more information about the FSA, and to find your child's FSA results go to <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/assessment/fsa/> You will need your child's Personal Education Number which can be found on any report card or contact the school's office.
- For more information about teachers' opposition to the FSA please visit www.bctf.ca.
- There was lots of discussion around parents desire to see the FSA go ahead without incident. Many parents feel these tests do no harm to students and the dispute between the ministry and the teachers' union should stay out of the classroom.
- There was discussion on random sampling versus consensus when administering the FSA. Can the ministry still check the effectiveness of the curriculum by testing on a certain percentage of Grade 4 and 7 students? Many parents feel they want to know where their child is compared to other Grade 4 and 7's across the province.
- There was discussion around the need for a complete public education check, not just language arts and numeracy. There is a desire to check how schools and staff are doing, as well as the curriculum. Parents understand the FSA results do not give that information.
- There was unanimous agreement that the misuse of FSA data by the Fraser Institute is wrong. DPAC will ask PACs for FSA homework to see how FSAs went in their schools. DPAC will look into drafting a letter, possibly to local media, stating our opposition to outside organizations' unfair ranking of schools using only one set of results.

g.) All Parents Belong! Conference

- DPAC is looking into the BC Teacher's Federation's Presentation for Parents for possible parent education sessions.

6.) Committee Reports

a.) Treasurer report: November statement balances -
Regular - \$292.62, Gaming - \$2376.82

b.) Executive Report - see attached

c.) Education Committee

- Wednesday Feb 11th 9-12 at the Best Western Baker St. Inn - **WE NEED PARENTS FOR THIS COMMITTEE**

d.) Finance Committee

- Tentative date: Feb. 24rd - **WE NEED PARENTS FOR THIS COMMITTEE**

e.) Healthy Lifestyles Committee

- G. Mackinnon attended. The committee looked at relationship building, sex education and Daily Physical Activity. The implementation of the Guidelines to Food and Beverage Sales in school continues. - **WE NEED PARENTS FOR THIS COMMITTEE**

f.) Policy Committee

- Monday Feb. 2nd 1-3 - **WE NEED PARENTS FOR THIS COMMITTEE**

School Reports

Erickson:

- Selling Easter Lilies as a fundraiser.
- Helium balloons with treats attached is another fun fund raiser for students.

Rosemont

- Flydini was a big hit last Fall.
- PAC raised \$1900.00 using Lamontagne Chocolate Fund Raiser. While the fund raiser itself went well, there were some issues dealing with the company.
- PAC organized a Christmas dance for the students in December
- The Community Room at Rosemont will hold their Grand opening on Tuesday January 27.
- ArtStart Grant has Jeff Forest, a local theatre artist, work with students to further develop their live presentation and performance skills.

Adjourned at 8:05 pm

Meeting Schedule:

February 26, 6:00/7:00 pm

March 26, 6:00 pm

April 23, 9:00 am