



WEST BAY
ELEMENTARY
PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

West Bay PAC Meeting Minutes-9:15am, Mar 10, 2023, Zoom Virtual Meeting

Tanja Imhoff	Candice Montgomery	Bill Auyang
Nikta Razavi	Jatinder Sidhu	Michelle LaBounty
Kelly Chesko	Elmira Montezami	Emily Wing
David Wang	Alina	Heidi Chen
Vanessa Gill	Jenifer	Paris

Welcome and Call to Order:

Agenda for March adopted by: Kelly Chesko and Candice Montgomery

Minutes for February adopted by: Kelly Chesko and Candice Montgomery

PAC Business

Chair's Report (Tanja Imhoff)

Ping Pong Tournament – Mar 30 - Chen Tan had loaned an enormous ping pong table to be used alongside the permanent one outside the school library. About 15 to 16 kids have already signed up for weekly practice sessions and just a handful for the tournament. The event is open to all ages, and participants can sign up as singles or teams with parents, kids, or friends. Please sign up your kids and spread the word about the tournament to draw more participants and spectators.

Bingo – was cancelled due to low turnout and it was a bit disappointing as the great Sevens were keen to do some fundraising there.

Blanket Exercise event at Rockridge at Apr 4th 6:00 to 8:00 PM - an immersive experience in understanding Canada's shared history with Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Previous events included a walk-through history from contact to treaty-making through colonization and were interspersed with personal stories from the facilitators. The first hour was spent walking around on blankets on the ground and folding them up or sitting down based on the history of what's been happening. The second hour was a debriefing that the speaker describes as emotional. The exercise was limited to a maximum of 50 people and the facilitators were highly regarded. The speaker encourages others to attend the April sessions if interested and notes that Michelle will be attending as well.

Nowruz event – Mar 31 - with at least one parent volunteer for each division. Sara is looking for parent volunteers to take a small activity to the event and discuss it with the classroom teacher to see if it was something of interest. Sara managed to find at least one parent volunteer for each division.

Hot Lunch - the school is in need of volunteers to help with hot lunch, specifically on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. The volunteers would be responsible for being present at the school when the food is delivered. Please reach out to the West Bay Gmail account for more information.

Class Reps - will be getting class representatives to reach out and plan a spring get-together for parents to connect between different grades. It seems that the purpose of these class reps is to help build community and foster connections between families within the school.

Principal's Report (Michelle LaBounty)

Wrap up for Units of Inquiry - there have been wrap-ups for different units of inquiry, including a health fair for the grade fives, a fair on innovations through the lens of physics for the grade sixes, and the grade sevens are currently deep into working on exhibition. Additionally, there was a grade 2 wrap-up with various activities. These celebrations have been really amazing for the kids to be able to share their learning.

Westmount Little League - it is an organization that came in to work with primary students at the school. They focused on raising awareness and participation of females in baseball, which was done through a grant. The organization aims to encourage more girls to get involved in baseball and stay with it, as they often lose interest as they get older. Thanks to Steve Hickey for organizing the visit

Parent Ed - there are many parent education opportunities coming up and encourages people to check them out. They suggest looking at the schedule and mentioning specific events, such as the Hayley Watson Open Parachute, a workshop they found through UBC that looked interesting, and other events that may have been mentioned by Nikki or Tanja.

Nowruz - parents have come into classrooms to talk to students about Nowruz. Nowruz is the Persian New Year and is celebrated on the first day of spring. It is a time for renewal, new beginnings, and celebrating the rebirth of nature. Students, whether or not they are Iranian, are proud to celebrate Nowruz and it is always exciting to see pride around their culture. It is important to celebrate diversity and culture within the school community.

Salmon – they have hatched and are currently in the "alevin" stage, which means they still have their yolk sacs attached. We anticipate that by the end of spring break, they should reach the "swim up" stage, at which point they will be fed for a few weeks before being released. We are not sure which creek the salmon will be released in, but the project is being run in partnership with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and a grant from the Pacific Salmon Society.

Benches - funds have been set aside by the PAC to commemorate the time that both Kim and Judy were leaders at the school by installing benches. We found two different locations that will meet the needs of the benches. One location is outside the Grade 7 portable facing the undercover, where there are currently no benches or seating areas. The other location is where the PAC did all the work over the summer around the outdoor classroom space, specifically under the overhang of the building where kids often play and draw. We consulted with staff, and one location would be more parent-centered, while the other would be more kid-centered. We thought that this would be a nice balance for the placement of the benches. The installation has not yet happened, so we are open to exploring other options if people are against the current plan.

Student Events

- Ultimate Frisbee team has a huge turnout, with over 30 kids joining. They also note that it will be a challenge to negotiate playing time as there are only seven players allowed on each team and the games are only 20 minutes long.
- rock climbing field trip is being organized by the grade five students for team building and bonding.
- canoeing field trip is a special opportunity for the students to learn about the cultural significance of canoeing in Indigenous First Nations culture. The canoe that will be used is a special Indigenous First Nations canoe that was donated and is kept in a special building at West Van High School. However, the students will not be going out in this canoe due to liability and safety concerns. Instead, they will be going out in safer, calmer waters at Rocky Point. The school partners with a company at Rocky Point to provide additional wilderness training in canoeing and skippering to the students. West Vancouver Police also have their own canoe and they both go out at the same time as the school's canoe. The canoeing field trip is planned for June and is reserved for the grade seven students only due to liability and safety concerns.

Repository of parent and community experts - Maurik is curating the list. The idea behind this initiative is to have a list of experts that the school can call upon when needed, not necessarily for something that is attached to a child or a unit they are studying, but for any expertise that may be useful for the school

community.

We encourage parents to fill in the email that was sent out to share their skills, and notes that they would love to continue building the repository. The initiative seems to be ongoing and may be part of the school's effort to involve parents and the community more in the education of the students.

DPAC Report (Nikta Ardakani)

Effective communication via IT (information technology) - During the DPAC meeting, there were discussions about the importance of effective communication via IT for building a strong school community. It was noted that IT support and IT upgrade money needed to be allocated for this purpose. The aim was to make sure that there was effective communication between teachers, students, and parents in the community. This was seen as essential for supporting mental health for teachers, students, and parents.

Staff recruitment and retention - there were concerns expressed about the recruitment and retention of staff in the school district. It was noted that many of the teachers in the district reside outside of West Vancouver and it was discussed what motivates them to travel and work in the district. The need for the district to be a good employer was emphasized, and it was suggested that supporting the mental health of teachers is important in achieving this. Benefits for full-time staff were also mentioned in the context of supporting mental health. Additionally, the issue of under-happening in the district was discussed and it was suggested that both recruitment and retention need to be addressed.

ChatGPT and similar text generation technologies - there were discussions on the use of ChatGPT as a tool for producing authentic student work. While there were concerns about plagiarism at the university level, the discussions did not focus on the ethical concerns of the technology itself. Instead, the conversation revolved around the need for teachers to learn to teach purposefully and utilize ChatGPT in their lesson plans to maximize the benefits it offers.

Chris Kennedy suggested that parents should be encouraged to go into these online spaces and learn along with their children. He also mentioned that teachers should be interested in organizing lesson plans that utilize this tool in their favor.

The example given during the discussion was about an essay on the Haitian Revolution that had been done 200,000 times. It was suggested that such a widely done essay might not be the best assessment tool, and that teachers need to come up with brand new creative questions and assignments to take advantage of the tool.

The Framework for enhancing student learning - presented by Liz Hill at the DPAC meeting. It was a three-year program aimed at assessing three aspects of student learning: sense of belonging, intellectual development, and career development.

Success rates for sense of belonging and career development were reported to be over the provincial average, while anecdotal reports were used for numeracy skills. The next framework will focus on transitioning, numeracy, and a third goal to be decided with stakeholders.

Treasurer's Report (Kelly Chesko)

Where we are now - As of February 28, 2023 we have spent \$14,074.72 of the \$81,150 budget.

Projects/Items funded by the PAC in February:

- \$1,000 for Lunar New Year

Grade 7 Grad:

- I will be receiving funds via interac etransfer for the next grade 7 grad fundraiser so the amount of funds set aside will increase.

PAC Committee Reports

Hot Lunch (Elmira Montezami)

Spring Session - A big thanks the volunteers for helping with the hot lunch program. Dates for the spring session.

- Orders must be submitted by March 24, 2023
- The first hot lunch day of the spring session will be on April 3, 2023
- There won't be any hot lunch during the first week after spring break
- The cutoff for orders is on March 29, 2023, at 5:00 PM.

Coordinator and Volunteers wanted - Elmira is retiring at the end of the year and need someone to take over the coordinator position.

Volunteering for hot lunch days involves sorting and distributing the pre-ordered lunches to students at West Bay. The orders come pre-sorted, so there's no need for volunteers to sort them. Volunteers only need to put the lunches in order based on the student's division (Division 1 to 16).

Volunteers are expected to commit one hour of their time and have the option of doing it one day per week or every other week. Volunteers are also asked to stay during lunchtime to make sure that students receive their orders and to help replace any missing lunches with extra food from the vendors.

Anyone interested in volunteering, please email her at "lunchwithpay@gmail.com" to be added to the Hot Lunch volunteer WhatsApp group. Once added, volunteers can choose the days they are available and be formalized to work on that day.

Overall, volunteering for hot lunch days is a relatively easy and fun way to get involved with other parents from the school and to contribute to the school community.

A parent survey was conducted with questions related to topics such as anti-racism, supporting diverse learning environments, and post-secondary education.

Post-secondary education and anti-bullying were the most popular topics, and they plan to cover the latter as it has not been brought into the whole district.

They are brainstorming an event that partners with community organizations to create opportunities for participation and reduce issues such as bullying and racism.

Northbound presentation house and Black history with matters were suggested as interactive presentations

for students to learn about black history in British Columbia.

Traffic (Jatinder Sidhu)

31st street construction includes the main traffic affecting the school and neighborhood is related to the ongoing work at Thompson Crescent, 31st St, and Westmount Rd roundabout at the intersection of Rockview Place.

The work is ongoing, and the main phase of the work is expected to be completed by March 2023, with exact dates to be determined.

DPAC presentation - Jatinder provided an update on ongoing roadwork and a potential mural project in the neighborhood. He also discussed the need for improved safety measures around the school, including separating car traffic from kids, and emphasized the importance of infrastructure such as sidewalks and bike lanes. Additionally, there was a discussion about the need for parent volunteers to help improve traffic safety around the school.

School Traffic Round Table - a meeting that involves various parties concerned with school traffic, including police, bylaws, and engineering. It is chaired by Councillors and with Caroline Brody from the school. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss issues related to school traffic and come up with solutions to improve safety for students and parents. The meeting also provides updates on ongoing road works or infrastructure projects that may affect school traffic.

The provincial government has allocated \$8 million to Westvan, and there is debate over how to allocate the funds.

Traffic Blitz - The West Bay community plans to conduct a traffic blitz after spring break and is looking for parent volunteers to help remind others of traffic rules.

Grad / Gala Committee (Candice Montgomery)

Venue - upcoming Gala event, which will take place on May 27th at the Frind Family House.

The goal is to raise \$80,000 towards creating and enhancing a differentiated learning space for all classrooms in West Bay.

There are various ways to get involved in the fundraiser, such as contributing towards the wish list item or sponsoring part of the event:

- **Wish list items:** The school will provide a wish list of items they need, and you can contribute towards purchasing those items through the Schools Cash Online platform. This option will entitle you to a tax receipt.
- **Event sponsorship:** You can sponsor a part of the gala event such as the food, decor, photo booth, or entertainment. This option will not entitle you to a tax receipt, but your name will be recognized on the event's website and at the event.
- **Auction item donation:** You can donate an item, service, or experience to the silent or live auction. Examples include an extra bike, technology, a physiotherapy session, vacation accommodations, or tickets to a sports game. There will also be gift baskets made from unopened alcohol that can be donated.
- **Attend the event and bid on auction items:** You can attend the gala event and bid on auction items to support the fundraiser. There will be both a silent and live auction, including class collaborative pieces of art.

Learning Spaces Presentation (Michelle LaBounty)

The goal is to create inclusive spaces that reflect learner needs with deliberate use of colors and natural materials to aid better learning.

Michelle shares examples of differentiated learning spaces:

- **Choices around seating:** Different learners have different preferences when it comes to seating. Some may prefer a traditional desk and chair, while others may benefit from standing desks or bean bag chairs. Providing choices around seating can accommodate these different preferences and promote a more comfortable and productive learning environment.
- **Choices of workspaces:** Similarly, learners may have different preferences when it comes to where they work. Some may prefer to work independently in a quiet corner, while others may benefit from collaborative workspaces or group tables. Providing choices of workspaces can help learners feel more in control of their learning and engage them in a way that works best for them.
- **Deliberate use of colors and materials:** Research suggests that certain colors and materials can promote better learning spaces. Michelle mentions the use of muted colors and natural materials, as well as the red blue emelio approach, which advocates for the use of natural colors in the classroom. By intentionally selecting colors and materials that promote better learning, educators can create more effective learning spaces.
- **Celebrating learners and building a sense of community:** Differentiated learning spaces can also be used to celebrate learners and promote a sense of community. Michelle shares examples of how classrooms can display student work or incorporate personalized elements that reflect the interests and backgrounds of learners. By doing so, educators can help learners feel valued and connected to their learning environment.

Q & A (Michelle LaBounty)

SOGI (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity) - Michelle responds to many concerned parents regarding the subject

- It is not a curriculum, but a resource for teachers. There are no lesson plans for teaching it.
- Michelle believes that a lot of the concerns about SOGI are based on misinformation, and that confusion can be a good place to start teaching.
- Kids are not confused about SOGI, and when they are freed from their parents' misconceptions, they are happy to be themselves.
- Michelle recently revamped the school's code of conduct to reflect the idea that dress code should not be offensive or harmful, and that people have a choice in how they dress.
- there are people who spread misinformation and conspiracy theories, but parents should seek accurate information rather than believing such claims.
- She encourages open conversation and transparency between parents and school leaders to address concerns and answer questions.
- Michelle does not support keeping a child's gender identity or name change secret from parents but stresses the importance of having a larger conversation about gender identity in a thoughtful way. Gender identity and name changes are significant and should not be reduced to a simple curriculum.

Support for Families - Michelle is asked about support for families, and she mentions Family Services, which help families facing challenges in the home.

- She also says that there are supports in place in the school district for families struggling with specific issues, and that the school is often aware of these issues and has systems to address them.
- Michelle notes that there are many resources available to families and that they have been helpful, but she wishes that parents could have better understanding of issues like Soji without seeing them as a negative aspect of their child's development.

Next PAC Meeting: Apr 14th, 2023 9:15 am