

**WEST • VANCOUVER • SECONDARY • SCHOOL • P A R E N T • A D V I S O R Y • C O U N C I L**  
**Executive Meeting Minutes – VIRTUAL MEETING**

**Date: TUESDAY May 11 2020**

**Time: 5:00 PM**

1. **Chair's Welcome-Dana/Mindy**
  - Land acknowledgement
2. **Principal's Report – Mr. Steve Rauh**
  - Land acknowledgement
  - School is operating well, proud of challenge that WVSS took on for “Making West Van Sparkle Again” ...17 teachers and classes (about 475 students) participated
  - Grade 10 numeracy and literacy exams for graduation; students earn 0-4...Unclear how it is used post secondary, but gives school good feedback; students can write exams up to 3 times
  - Virtual Talent Show- Instagram @wearewvss; Prerecorded talent show acts and students vote
  - Spring sports are underway with no games, but practices: Track and Field, Girls Rugby, Tennis, Mountain Biking, Ultimate, Girls Soccer, Badminton, Boys Rugby; Thank you coaches for helping
  - Grade 12 graduation: 2nd bulletin was sent home this week; June 2 is filming day; school is in the midst of selecting valedictorians; Co-sponsor with PAC for Semi -formal themed foodtruck event on June 28
  - Shawn Anderson is working on timetable and schedules for next year
3. **Guest Speaker-Brandys Evans** –registered clinical counsellor with extensive training in neurobiological and developmental approaches to human behavior; Author of : [Listen! Helping your Child Manage Emotions](#)
  - Behind Closed Doors: what teens are saying in the therapy room; understanding the brain of a teenager; mental health and your teen; how to proactively interact with your teen
  - Teenage Brain- before 12 children have blinders on with narrow focus. At 12 , often parents ask where did my child go? Blinders have been ripped off and they are overwhelmed with the scope of life...if you offer any guidance or suggestion, their brain shuts you out and they say no(it's almost like they can't help it). Their brain is on the trajectory to be independent and listening to you indicates dependence in their brain
  - Ages 13-15...the brain is much like having a 2 year old again...the cognitive, rational part of brain is on vacation...very difficult to have rational conversation...big mood swings...emotional part of brain is running the show...can be fine one moment and in the next feeling dark, empty, void, hopeless...a very real experience for them. When a child gets in this space, it is scary and they don't know what to say... They will exhibit a variety of behaviors by acting out or acting in because they don't know what to do or how to articulate their thoughts. Parents often wonder if their child has depression at this age, but clinical depression is actually for an extended period of time (at least 2 weeks)...These intense mood swings are normal...High school teaches the child how to fit in the society-this is where all of their energy goes
  - Ages 15- 18...things are getting a bit back to normal; cognitive functioning/rational brain is working again, but now the child starts questioning you more -they are reasoning who they are and how do they fit in here? Teenagers at this age take on the identity that is the most stable...Behaviors are varied...risk taking behavior is a push for independence-their brain isn't developed until mid twenties
  - Question: is it wise to be the always the wrong one as a parent-do you contend with their opinion or let it go? Answer: depends on the situation...seems that it only is with one person...the person they push back with the most is the one they are most connected to because they are looking for you to hold your ground appropriately; If you engage in any emotional charged interaction, it validates their sense of power....Teenagers always try to get you engaged in emotional responding because it feeds the sense of power, but they need you to not engage in the emotion...when you involve yourself emotionally-it stunts

development

- Question- Impact of pandemic on the children? Answer: Children are **resilient**- impact on them is less than ours...part of them doesn't really understand...allow them the space to feel their emotions. Allow them(and us) to grieve and mourn through the process
- Question- will there be a shift in the brain development because of Covid? Answer: we don't know what will happen, but we are adaptable creatures, much depends on critical growth periods that the child might exhibit during the pandemic. we are very adaptable creatures
- Question: Since teenagers are much like toddlers, at what age range would you start to worry about mental illnesses(depression, anxiety, bipolar, OCD, etc) Answer: Huge need for teens to feel special/ unique. Some mental health conditions actually can't be diagnosed until you're an adult. Usually the one that is experiencing it, isn't the one putting it out in the world; Need to understand what is going on inside without worrying about putting a label on it ...Big thing to look for is the connection with you. What the child wants is **acknowledgment** of the difficulty they are having. Don't tell them that to do, don't tell them that your scared for them, just let them know that being a teenager is hard, and your are there for them -they don't want you to solve it, give them advice- and definitely don't say you understand-ask them what you can do for them"Let me know if you want me to help?" Even though they push you away, they want to be connected to you, but they CAN'T show that because they are still trying to establish independence
- Question: How to manage social media? hard one:
  - At night everything shuts down, expect the part of brain that is constantly scanning to be safe, teenagers have increased anxiety and fear factor thus intense need to have phone at night because that is when things are happening ...however, if you take the phone away, then they're social outcasts without a phone...the worst consequence for this age because the main focus is to fit in.
  - Gordon Neufeld(Hold on to Your Kids) Best bet is having a connection to your child..this takes your ability to manage your own emotional space....they will constantly test you..connection grows the more they try to push buttons and you keep your emotional ground...Most powerful when you own that you made a mistake
  - A source of self esteem is when they are emotional and you don't join in
  - We want to save them and tell them what to do, but this isn't what helps...trying to control it works against you because you can't control it ...You can inform them and tell them where you stand, but you CANT control it..
  - Share if they ever run to an issue-tell them where they can go(school counselor)...tell them that you understand they might mess up (if this happens, do this) tell them what they can do...you're telling them that you know they'll probably mess up, but this is what they can do...
  - To get in touch: <https://brandysevans.com>

#### 4. Treasurer Report –Mindy Ward

- Spring plant fundraiser raised \$847(-currently \$3300 for fundraising budget)
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- Optional \$25 Cash Donation \$5550 actual (budget \$5000)
- Gaming Grant application (completed by June 25)(about \$24000)
- Grad Signs deadline to order is next Friday \$15 per sign
- Grad food trucks \$1,000 approx
- Grad blankets ordered – PAC to share cost with Steve \$3750 approx
- Budget for 2022 will be posted once Mindy shares with the executive team at June's meeting

#### Executive team for September 2021

- Co-Chair: Morag Burke, Dana Sebal
- Vice-Chair: Sophie Won Macintyre
- Treasurer: Lorna Zebedee
- Secretary: Carrie Haver
- DPAC Rep: Hoon Choi
- Education Committee: Lisa Black
- Members at Large: Bob Xiao (PAC website and Translator), Monica Scoles, Sophie Callander, Leslie MacGregor, Genevieve Hassan, Nahid Jalali (translator), Shahin Najak, Kyra Smilhjanic, Sophia Kim

## 5. DPAC Report: Hoon Choi

- Click the link for [DPAC Minutes](#)
- 2 presentations:
  - John Lo, Chief Constable, West Vancouver Police Department...Introduction to the new Chief of the WVPD
  - Sandra Lynn Shortall, Director of Instruction, Student Support Services
  - Jessica Wollen, Certified Health Instructor, Shift Education
    - *How is WVS Supporting Students in Navigating Puberty and Building Healthy Relationships?*
      - Hear about how sex education is delivered in our schools.
      - Learn about SHIFT Education and how schools are focusing on the development of healthy human relationships.
      - What should your children be learning, and how to support at home.
      - Supporting healthy boundaries and respectful behaviour.
- DPAC nominations open until May 28
- May 18 at 5- Board of Education Meeting

## 6. Questions Arising from Meeting:

- Teacher's lunch? Answer: No, did one at Christmas time, planned on ordering doughnuts from Harmony's; spent most of budget in winter and helping with graduation; moving the remainder to next year's budget

## 7. Meeting Adjourned at 6:18 PM.

### ***Next WVSS PAC General Meeting***

**Date: Time: Venue:** Virtual (*link to be sent*)