



COWICHAN VALLEY DISTRICT PAC

**Minutes: September 19, 2019 Regular Meeting
SD79 School Board Office Boardroom, Duncan**

Call to Order 7:01 p.m. by Chair

Welcome and Introductions.

Voting Attendees

Aurelia MacInnis – George Bonner Elementary Secretary/DPAC Rep/ DPAC Secretary

Caroline Kirman – DPAC Chair, Cowichan Secondary Chair/DPAC Rep

Carmen Sundstrom – DPAC Vice Chair, Drinkwater DPAC Rep, Quamichan Chair

Heidi Hunton – Bench Elementary DPAC Rep, DPAC Treasurer

Sylvia Cox - Ecole Cobble Hill DPAC Rep

Hina Charania - Mill Bay Nature School DPAC Rep

April Foster - Crofton Elementary

Kjersten Herkel - Alex Aitken DPAC REP

Bevis Green - Quamichan DPAC REP

Amber Marsh - Ecole Mt. Prevost Treasurer / DPAC REP

Anna Huston - Khowhemun Elementary DPAC REP

Ann Marie Braithwaite - Discovery Elementary DPAC REP

Non-Voting Attendees

Robyn Gray - Superintendent

Barb De Groot - Board of Education Trustee/ Vice Chair

Mary Souter - Mill Bay Elementary

Andrew Wilson - Drinkwater Elementary

Cynthia Lockrey - Ecole Mount Prevost Elementary

1. Introductions

2. MOTION to adopt agenda as amended moved by Quamichan seconded by Drinkwater. Carried.

3. MOTION to approve minutes from May 16, 2019 meeting moved by Quamichan, seconded by Mt. Prevost. Carried.

4. Reports

4.1 Chair Report – Caroline Kirman

We hope that everyone had a good break over the summer, and that the school start up has gone smoothly for your families and your schools. Your DPAC Exec has been back into attending a number of meetings, including Open Board Meetings, a meeting with the Superintendent regarding visioning for the new District Strategic plan, meeting with Tom Longridge Associate Superintendent as part of the new IEP Committee, and this week the monthly Advisory Committee.

The Districts attempts to get a Vaping Steering Committee working was postponed on a number of occasions and has been rescheduled to 11 Oct. I will be attending, and am glad to see that this huge area of concern has been recognised at the federal level and hopefully restrictions on

advertising, flavours, and nicotine concentration and better information around the effects of vaping is having on lungs which is being highlighted in the media will make more kids question why they would choose to vape.

4.2 SD79 Administration

We have some new staff, including a Director of Operations.

District started last spring looking at the vision for the District (Strategic Planning Process). There has been a lot of transformation including a new curriculum, lots of work involved over the past years. There will be lots of student focus, student voice while drafting the vision. There will be questions for students, will look at responses, look at the draft vision and ask is it working? Does it need revision? Are we on the right road map? Should it be looked at annually? In 3 or 4 years so much can change. Also consulting with advisory groups, DPAC, overall community, will likely put out a survey monkey.

As a parent and advocate I think that school takes place in context sometimes. Bench could look different than Crofton just because of context of communities, they all have a different flavour. Looking forward to it as it will be my guidebook and what we stand for.

Non Instructional day on Monday is around the workplace. Being respectful in workplace conversations. There are four themes that day, curriculum, inclusion, Indigenous understandings and mental health. It will be held at Cowichan Theatre.

Two posters (were shown) for teachers. New curriculum for grades 11 and 12 will be implemented this year. Sharing the posters so we know as parents what the teachers learning will be. Working towards reconciliation, mental health, strong support for teachers to understand local First Nations, Metis, etc.

Next week there is a career fair for grade 12 students. It's driven by the District Student Advisory Committee.

4.3 BC PARKS

A letter from BC Parks was received regarding safety, liability and destruction of park space. Comments: It is a problem that comes from history, tradition and other communities. Overall we have a community responsibility in supporting students to make the right decisions. This is a community responsibility. Great that they want to work with the District and PACs. In the past they have worked with student leaders, going back and cleaning up. We need to continue the dialogue with our children and our parents that they don't go to these events.

Appreciate that they listed all the fines, that they will start issuing/enforcing.

Would like to send something out to Cowichan Secondary PAC.

Can bring DSAC into the conversation.

Chair requests that those present not post the letter on social media.

4.4 Board of Education

(New) Cowichan Secondary is still on the table, hoping to get some good news soon.

Looking at old Crofton still to find a way for it to be demolished.

Looking at Indigenous education, working on a plan for reconciliation. This isn't Board only, it's District wide, there is a lot to do and a lot of planning to move forward.

4.5 Treasurer

Gaming grant has been applied for. Gaming has to be used for very specific things. Used mostly for parent education hosted by schools.

Reminder to PACs - put in your application for the gaming grants!

Chair reminder that DPAC has subsidies if a school hosts parent education, opens it to families of SD79 and does not charge. DPAC can support some of the cost.

DPAC also has term deposit.

4.6 IEP Committee

Report attached

4.7 Supervision

It has been brought forward that at elementary level/outdoor recess/lunch there are situations where kids are not being tracked as to whereabouts (inside or outside school).

It's different at every school.

Ask your PACs, do your kids know the procedure if there is an emergency while they are outside? Is there a procedure at the school?

A new Manager for Health and Safety has been hired at the District. They can go to any schools who would like input and help with what to do.

5. New Business

5.1 DPAC AGM Nominations

DPAC AGM is in November - nominations need to be endorsed by PACs. Nomination package can be sent out.

5.2 DPAC Rep Code of Ethics and Registration

New people/pacs and new schools, not sharing information properly - send out Code of Ethics for new reps.

5.3 DPAC Summit

DPAC Summit run by BCCPAC in November. Ministry of Education funds 2 members of each DPAC. Usually held in Vancouver. Will be held before our AGM. No cost but registration is required. Hotel and event paid for. Travel subsidy is paid afterwards. Already in DPAC budget. It will be Friday and Saturday, November 15/16.

BCCPAC runs September to September, registration online, \$75 for PACs. What is BCCPAC? they are the parent advocacy group at the provincial level. They are in Ministry meetings, they brought in feminine products in washrooms, raising speeding fines in school zones, the provincial process for handling anaphylaxis.

5.4 Parent Education

We need to have parent education around IEP. Looking forward to upcoming events.

DPAC has subsidies to schools for parent education if it's open to SD79 families and no cost.

The District supports us in using facilities if needed (ex. Quam theatre)

Screenagers was 2 years ago, there is a new one out - can anyone take a lead on organizing?
October 17 - *How to Advocate for kids with special needs* is hosted by the Clements Centre - at the Best Western hotel from 6 to 8. Free event but you must register through Clements Centre

6.0 Next Meeting

October 17 at 7pm

7. Adjournment at 8:56 pm by Chair.

Submitted by Aurelia MacInnis, DPAC Secretary

IEP Committee update – September 19, 2019

Over the summer, members of the IEP Committee had two meetings with Tom Longridge, Associate Superintendent.

In the first meeting (June), we explained why the IEP Committee was formed, what it was trying to accomplish (finding ways to support families) and how we can collaborate and work with school district staff.

The second meeting (August) was focused on looking for specific ways to support families.

In this meeting, we narrowed it down to the following topics for workshops or panel discussions throughout the school year (realistically hosting three events).

- IEPs - What is an IEP. School district explaining the specifics with a parent talking about the emotions. Tips for preparing for an IEP meeting. Responsibilities related to IEP.
- Resources available by the school district. What's available (ex. speech therapy, OT, EAs, swimming program and more), how to access it and the process (not guaranteed each year).
- Communications – How to open the lines of communications with your school. Tips and techniques to provide updates, let them see your child as a person not just a diagnosis and the importance of updating siblings' teachers on your child (as it could also impact their brother/sister).
- Onboarding new parents – Exploring ways to support not only new parents coming into our schools, but also parents and caregivers new to the IEPs or a diagnosis. Considering a mentoring program – parents supporting parents.
- What is inclusion? Why does it matter if your child doesn't have special needs? Recognizing we all have diverse learning needs. How inclusion benefits everyone.

We also discussed looking at having the IEP Committee as a resource and mechanism for parent concerns or PAC concerns to be brought forward -either formally via DPAC or informally to the IEP Committee. This could include:

- Educational resources – sharing information on key topics (videos, articles, facts) with PACs who then could decide whether or not to share these materials on their social media and/or newsletters.
- Advocacy – collective voice of families of kids with special needs to advocate for common concerns. Example – in September some school have seen a reduction in their EA support even though the number of kids needing support has not changed from last year. The impact is kids are receiving less support, EAs are running from class to class, and kids and EAs are unable to build relationships (which are key). Is this a District issue? Provincial funding? How can parents advocate for more support?
- IEP support – exploring having volunteers attend IEP meetings (at the request of the families) to take notes or support them.

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