

District Parents Advisory Council (DPAC) School District No. 46 (Sunshine Coast)
—DPAC MINUTES—
Thursday, February 26, 2015

Call to order: 7:05 p.m.

APPROVALS

- Motion to adopt minutes from Jan. 22, 2015 DPAC meeting: Debra Shorthouse (first motion), Allen Stevenson (second motion). Passed.
- Amendments to Feb. 26, 2015 Agenda:
 - Add Sunshine Coast Health Promoting Schools Committee Report (Marilyn Baines) after DPAC Chair's report.
 - Add Education Committee Report (Allen Stevenson) after Treasurer's Report
 - No spending approvals required.
 - Motion to adopt amended Agenda: Brigit Breuer (first motion), Marilyn Baines (second motion). Passed.

REGULAR REPORTS

DPAC Chair's Report: Allyson Fawcus

- We need to decide how to spend this year's Gaming Grant. Please keep this in your thoughts and get feedback from your PACs as we will be discussing this at our next meeting. Possible ideas:
 - Transitions for Grade 7 students.
 - Busing for district-wide events.
 - Attendance at workshops or bringing in a speaker.
 - Tickets to Heart of the Matter Conference.
- Allyson has been visiting PACs to learn about the different schools, talk about DPAC and answer questions. Visits have been going very well and she has only 2-3 left.
- There is a Heart of the Matter Conference on the Sunshine Coast on April 9 & 10, 2015. Tickets are \$69.00.
 - Motion to purchase 2 tickets to the conference to send DPAC representatives to the conference: Brigit Breuer (first motion), Marilyn Baines (second motion).
 - Allen Stevenson suggests that we ask those DPAC members attending to create a report and present it at a DPAC meeting. Motion passes with amendment.
 - Allyson to send out a notice about this opportunity to her DPAC list. If there are more than 2 people wanting to go the conference on behalf of DPAC, attendees will be chosen by draw.
- DPAC brochure has been finalized (sample attached) and will be made available to each school office. Thanks again to Diane Wagner for her help and expertise.

Sunshine Coast Health Promoting Schools Committee Report: Marilyn Baines, DPAC Liaison

- The Sunshine Coast Health Promoting Schools Committee (SCHPSC) is a collaboration between Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) and SD46. The Sunshine Coast will have a new VCH representative, Karen Inkpen.
- The 2013 McCreary Report on its Adolescent Health Survey has now been regionalized, and our area's results are included in the North Shore/Coast Garibaldi region. There is a lot of valuable information on mental health concerns, especially of note is lack of sleep!

- Of the 30,000 youth surveyed, approx. 25% had not slept more than 8-9 hours the previous evening. Lack of sleep is a substantial indicator of mental health concerns.
- The North Shore/Coast Garibaldi 2013 McCreary Report on Adolescent Health can be found here:
http://www.mcs.bc.ca/pdf/AHSV_NorthShoreCoastGaribaldi.pdf
- SCHPSC will be meeting again on April 21 and will be discussing mental health. Marilyn would like to hear from parents if they have questions or concerns about mental health and youth—such as access to services—and would like them to be brought forward at the meeting. You can reach Marilyn by email: mbaines@dccnet.com.

Treasurer's Report: Allen Stevenson (Treasurer's Report attached):

- No withdrawals except a few small ones for coffee urns/refreshments for our meetings.
- Allen looked into the issue of the DPAC bank account's maintenance fees and found that if we moved to the Sunshine Coast Credit Union these fees could be deferred. However, because of the expenses we just incurred (a new order of cheques), we will stay with the Bank of Montreal for the time being.

Education Committee Meeting Report: Allen Stevenson

- The Education Committee met at the School Board office today. There were three presentations:
 - **Debra Nelson**, English Language Learners (ELL) Teacher: There are currently 119 ELL in our district, a number which has increased slightly in the past 4 years. Approximately 40% of them speak an English Language dialect. Connecting with parents is big focus for those working with ELL students.
 - **Laurie Watson**, Division Support Teacher: Spoke about interacting with students with visual impairments and the Kurzweil Educational System.
 - **Sandy Magnussen**, Special Education Technology Coordinator: Addressed how we use/integrate technology for education, and talked about resources such as educational apps for mobile devices. Sandy would be a good presenter for a future DPAC meeting! There is some technology information currently available on the SD46 website, including a list of recommended apps:
http://tech.sd46.bc.ca/Apps_for_Mobile_Devices
- The Education Committee is looking for parent input and feedback. Allen would be happy to bring questions/information back to the Committee.

Trustee's Report: Dave Mewhort, SD46 DPAC Liaison (Trustee's Report attached)

Highlights:

- The board had a presentation about DBES's "Nature Education for Sustainable Today's and Tomorrow's" (NEST) Program. DBES is also piloting the first year of reporting without scales (no rating system using letter or number grades).
- Update on International Education: There are currently 20 international students (12 FTE). SD46 is working with a consultant to recruit more international students.
- SD46 will be hiring a fourth music teacher to add to its expanded music program.
- New educational system, MyEducationBC, is fully implemented in the district as of this month, replacing BCESIS.

- While it was decided in November 2014 that next year's school calendar would be status quo with a 1-week Spring Break, as of the last Committee of the Whole meeting they discussed moving to a 2-week Spring Break next year. This new school calendar will most likely be ratified at their March meeting. Some notes on a 2-week Spring Break and what it will mean to SD46:
 - We were one of the last school districts in BC to move to a 2-week Spring Break.
 - This change to the calendar is primarily a financial decision. SD46 is unexpectedly losing \$600,000 in funding from the Provincial Government, and a 2-week Spring Break will only be one of several necessary cost-saving measures.
 - Approx. 7-8 minutes will be added to each school day (SCTA has already been discussing unique and beneficial ways the extra minutes could be utilized).
 - A new school calendar means that we are similar to neighbouring districts, so we would be aligned with Metro Vancouver in terms of sports tournaments.

Superintendent's Report: Patrick Bocking (Full Superintendent's Report is available on the SD46 website: <http://www.sd46.bc.ca/index.php/superintendents-desk>)

Highlights:

- Pink Shirt Day was on February 25, and Bocking visited a number of schools, including PHSS, MPES and HMBES. MPES had "Tie-Dyed Shirt" Day (emphasizing uniqueness), which was great to see. It is very important that all students feel safe and comfortable in their schools and SD46 plans to continue working towards this goal.
- Mental Health First Aid training is taking place right now, ensuring that adults who work with youth learn how to assess mental health conditions and issues effectively.
- SD46 is a part of the Shared Care Committee, a collaborative committee with VCH, Ministry of Child and Family Development, RCMP, the Sechelt Indian Band and others, which focuses on supporting students with mental health needs. SD46 is also part of a "A GP for Me" Committee, which looks to guarantee that all students/community members can have consistent access to a family doctor.
- The Reading Committee met today, which examines ways we can support parents with tools to use at home to help kids be the best readers they can be.

Presentation on Providing Support, Training and Consultation for Children and Youth Living with Complex Brain Difference: Karen Foley and Jennifer Davey, Circle of Support & Sunshine Coast Community Services Society's Key Workers (Brochure attached)

Highlights:

- Through Sunshine Coast Community Services, the Circle of Support Program enables Jennifer and Karen to work with students facing complex challenges. To access their services, students do not need a diagnosis. Although the program originally started as support system for children with FASD, now their mandate is to help youth/children with challenges in at least 2 or more of the following areas:
 - Communication, independence, social, emotional, behavioural, academic.
- As Key Support Workers, they can work in the classroom to offer training, observation and help by offering ideas, strategies and tips to how to work with children with challenging behaviour. They have done brain difference tasks in the schools, giving information to students as well as teachers and support staff.
- It's important to remember that behaviour is often a result of brain difference, or complex neurological developmental conditions.

- While they can't offer assessments or diagnosis themselves, they can assist parents and guardians with the process, helping them explore different avenues and assist them as they work with family doctors, pediatricians or the Children's Hospital. They can also help parents/guardians with the paperwork and information that results once a child has been assessed and guide them with primary recommendations.
- They also offer training and workshops. They will be doing a full-day of training in Pender Harbour on Saturday, February 28. They can customize training and consults and offer training at no cost (as it is part of their work). They share 30 hours a week.
- Contact information for the Circle of Support Program:
 - Karen Foley: (604) 865-0008, kfoley@sccss.ca
 - Jennifer Davey: (604) 885-5881, ext. 245

OPEN DIALOGUE TOPIC: Support Services in Our Schools

(DPAC meeting attendees broke into small groups for discussion)

Comments of note:

- I pads can be great learning tools for the classroom, with some very effective educational applications available. However there are often not enough technologies in the classroom for all the students that need them.
- SD46 is the second highest School District (per capita) for students with special needs.

SD46 will be hosting a **Community Forum on March 9th from 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm at Chatelech Secondary School** to receive feedback on the District's Visions for Learning. Please register at www.sd46.bc.ca.

Next Meeting: March 26, 2015. 7:00 p.m. Chatelech Secondary Library

Meeting adjourned: 8:40 p.m.