

District Parents Advisory Council (DPAC) School District No. 46 (Sunshine Coast)
—DPAC MINUTES—
Thursday, October 30, 2014

Call to order: 7:10 p.m.

Motion to adopt minutes from May 22, 2014 DPAC meeting: Tabled for future meeting.

Amendments to October 30, 2014 Agenda:

- Add SD46 Trustee Board Report (at 7:25 p.m.)
- Add Treasurer's Report (after Roundtable)
- Motion to adopt amended Agenda: Debra Shorthouse (first motion), Natasha Mural (second motion). Passed.

PRESENTATIONS & REPORTS

DPAC Chair's Report: Allyson Fawcus (Full report attached)

Highlights:

- SD46 School Trustees Christine Younghusband, Dave Mewhort, Pammila Ruth and Lori Pratt have been elected by acclamation in Sechelt, Gibsons and Rural Area 1. Elections for other areas will take place on November 15. Kailyn Pritchard was appointed as the SD46 Student Trustee on October 14.
- Langdale Elementary held a Terry Fox Run in combination with a food drive. Students raised \$1,700 for the Terry Fox Foundation and collected 100 items for the food bank.
- Telus Optik donated \$32,450 to the Gibsons/Elphinstone Community School to run the "Cool School" program which provides hands-on trade education opportunities.
- Ted Chisholm, Sechelt's Community School Coordinator, is working hard on W. Sechelt's Farm to School Program. Work has started on the farm land donated to the school.
- DPAC's Facebook group now has 84 members! Feel free to join and post information about your school in regards to news/events/questions/information sharing. Please contact Allyson Fawcus if you'd like to be added to our DPAC email list.

School Calendar Consultation: Greg Kitchen, Assistant Superintendent (Handout attached)

Highlights:

- Traditionally, schools ran from September to June to accommodate an agricultural calendar. The school calendar was written into the School Act, so all schools had to abide by it. Recently, the Ministry (in consultation with educators, parents) decided that the calendar may not support all communities and removed it from the School Act.
- While the number of hours/minutes of instructional time are still regulated, how those hours are distributed is up the discretion of local boards and as a result, SD46 has the flexibility to change the calendar to suit our region's needs.
- SD46 would like more input in regards to an expanded spring break. Attached is a summary of the survey responses collected during the consultation process last spring which garnered 393 parent responses and expressed support for keeping the 2-week Winter Break and adding a possible 2-week Spring Break, though other suggestions (more 3-day weekends) and considerations (challenges of finding additional child care, possible educational impacts) were also noted.
- SD46 has to finalize a calendar in the spring and present it to the Ministry. Are we going to leave the calendar the way it is or make some changes?

DISCUSSION re: School Calendar

- Question: What does a second week of Spring Break mean for CUPE employees?
 - There could be a financial impact on CUPE staff (who are primarily paid hourly vs. salary). Other districts have extended work days for CUPE staff to equal out their wages—other districts have not.
- Question: What is known about the impact on learning (an extra week off vs. extra minutes added to each school day)?
 - So far, research is inconclusive. There are no studies that show that a 2-week over a 1-week Spring Break indicate a difference in academic achievement. There is more research around a 2-month break, which shows that shorter and more frequent breaks are better for education than one longer school break.
 - Anecdotally, educators have voiced opinions that a two-week break may make it more difficult to finish curriculum in the time allotted (adding approx. 10 min. to each school day may not necessarily make up for 5 fewer days of classes).
 - Christine Younghusband explains that the Board has been discussing the school calendar and budget savings are not a main priority when talking about a longer spring break. They are looking at innovative ideas that will enhance learning. She notes that the new curriculum is an invitation for innovative learning, such as offering courses in clusters, or blending classes together.
 - Sharon MacKenzie adds that the current school calendar (with a 2-month summer break) is important for students who work over the summer to pay for post-secondary education.
- Mr. Kitchen invites further feedback and comment about the school calendar from DPAC, PACs and parents. Please contact him via email or phone.

Trustee's Report: Christine Younghusband, SD46 DPAC Liaison

Highlights:

- Christine Younghusband reminds us that SD46 general meetings, Education Committee meetings and Operations Committee meetings are open to the public and that parent involvement is always welcome. Meeting times/dates are posted at www.sd46.bc.ca.
- Very excited about SD46's District Student Leadership Team (DSLTL) and welcomes Kailyn Pritchard, the new Student Trustee.
- Area 2 has 5 candidates running for 3 spots in the upcoming November 15 election. She urges residents in the area to vote. Notes that the lack of turnover in the School Board seems like a positive reflection on how things are going overall.
- Younghusband would like to acknowledge Silas White, who is not running for the School Board this term. She believes that his work and leadership has been transformative and wants to recognize his hard work for the years he served on the Board.

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:

- Patrick Bocking says they are working on the Achievement Contract (a continuation of last year's contract), as well as assigning a budget, assessing Professional Development activities and will be submitting them to Ministry of Education.

- Important highlights of the **Achievement Contract's** goals:
 - Elementary level:
 - Every elementary student will learn to read at his/her grade level.
 - Secondary level:
 - Every secondary student will successfully complete grade 12
 - For the first time in the history of SD46, Aboriginal students and non-Aboriginal students have had an equal completion rate up to a grade 11 level.
 - Part of this success is due to the work of Rick Gibb and Phil Luporini, offering work/trade opportunities to senior students.
 - All schools have a social responsibility goal as well.
 - To view full Contract: <http://www.sd46.bc.ca/index.php/achievement-contract>
- Bocking says they moved the first **Pro-D day** (originally September 22) to a later date because of the strike action. It is tentatively scheduled for **January 19, 2015**.
- There are two new **Administrative Regulations** (attached), which are under consultation for two months, circulating until December 8, 2014:
 - **Honoraria** (how we can recognize people in appreciation for their services without a normal fee--i.e. guest speakers-- and rules for income tax reporting)
 - **Student Leadership** (regulations on how the DSLT is formed, how the Student Trustee is selected, representation from all four high schools)
 - Bocking notes that it is impressive and inspiring to see the DSLT run their meetings. In addition to some projects within SD46, they are also starting an international project to support impoverished countries.
- Bocking introduces **David Barnum**, the new Coordinator of Transitions. In this role, Barnum will be working in the following areas:
 - Support for schools as they address transition issues, especially between elementary and secondary school
 - Support the "Learning Together" Program (learning opportunities for teachers)
 - Support parent engagement initiatives
 - Curriculum implementation coordination
- David Barnum speaks about his background (among other positions, he was involved with the SPIDER program for 4+ years). He is looking to open up conversations with parents and within the community. There is a **forum** next week at **Chatelech Secondary, at 3:45pm, November 5**, to discuss the issue of transitions between elementary and secondary school. Everyone is invited to come.

STRIKE RESOLUTIONS/Q&A: Patrick Bocking

- With the job action, students were away from school for 3 months. The impact for families, especially those with younger children, is not good, especially for those vulnerable children not yet reading at age level.
- Bocking visited schools in the 2-3 weeks after school started and was pleased to see the vast majority of teachers excited to be back in school, with positive morale.
- Some schools are feeling pressure about report cards and tighter timelines, especially at the elementary level. But overall, a successful start-up for a shortened fall term.
- At the secondary school level, the first semester has been pushed 2 weeks later so the semester ends in early February instead of late January.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION: What Topics Would You Like to See on the DPAC Agenda?

Facilitated by Patrick Bocking/Allyson Fawcus

- Possibilities include information presentations on topics relevant to parents such as:
 - Careers
 - Student support/special needs (represents over 20% of SD46 students)
 - Aboriginal education
 - Technology (Phil Luporini could do presentation)
 - Emergency preparedness
 - What are other PACs doing about hungry children at school? How do you feed them and deal with this problem?
- Members at the DPAC meeting said they would like to hear more about the different PACs up and down the coast, from PAC members themselves. Would like to create more of a dialogue between PACs so we could support and help each other.
 - It was suggested that each meeting has a roundtable component so members from the different schools would have the opportunity to share how their school addresses the issue/question/problem being discussed.
 - The roundtable format is positive because the question might evolve from a problem, but the discussion is centred around solutions.
 - Would a DPAC website facilitate communication between schools?
Allyson Fawcus will also talk to SD46 about utilizing the current SD46 website—which has a DPAC component—to see what may be possible.
- If anyone has any other ideas about topics they would like to see discussed at our DPAC meetings, please contact Allyson Fawcus so she can discuss it with the Superintendent.
- The **November meeting** will have a presentation/update on the District and **Emergency Preparedness**. One of the questions circulating around PACs is who is responsible for purchasing perishable supplies for the schools' emergency preparedness lockers (water, granola bars).

Treasurer's Report: Eric Stephan (Treasurer's Report attached)

- The gaming grant money has been deposited. Regarding the surplus of funds from last year's gaming grant (amounts allocated for spending were not able to be used due to the job action), Eric Stephan contacted Diane Wagner at SD46 about how to best use the funds through the School Board and was able to use them for transportation. He encourages next year's treasurer to use Diane Wagner's expertise!
- Currently there is \$1,559.94 in the DPAC Account and \$2,750.56 in the Gaming Account for a total of \$4,310.50.
- Question from Marilyn Baines—have we paid our BCCPAC (BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils) fee for 2014-2015? The general consensus from the floor is that it is important for the Sunshine Coast DPAC to be a member.
 - Marilyn Baines makes a motion that we become a member of BCCPAC and pay the fee. Debra Shorthouse seconds the motion. Passed.
 - Allyson Fawcus to look into the applications and paying the fee.
- Eric Stephan is moving from the Sunshine Coast and will not be able to serve as treasurer for another term. Fawcus thanks Eric Stephan for all his service.

ELECTIONS

Chair:

- Sharon MacKenzie nominates Allyson Fawcus for Chair. Marilyn Baines seconds.
 - Allyson Fawcus accepts the nomination.
 - No other nominations forthcoming. Passed.

Vice-Chair:

- No nominations for Vice-Chair. Position open for nomination next meeting.

Secretary:

- Eric Stephan nominates Marisa Alps for Secretary. Sharon MacKenzie seconds.
 - Marisa Alps accepts the nomination.
 - No other nominations forthcoming. Passed.

Treasurer:

- No nominations for Treasurer. Position open for nomination next meeting.

Next Meeting: November 27, 2014. 7:00 p.m. Chatelech Secondary Library

Meeting adjourned: 8:40 p.m.