

# REPORT TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT NO.46 (SUNSHINE COAST)

## STRATEGIC PLAN REPORT: POSITIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Submitted by Superintendent Kerr  
April 13, 2022

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Goal 2e: Our staff will engage in **positive partnerships** with students and their families.

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*“Partnerships are not hard work, but heart work. Not more work, but the work. Not harder work, but smarter work to mobilize all available resources that will contribute to student success.”*

- Dr. Joyce Epstein

### Overview:

Family engagement in their child’s learning leads to happier, healthier, and more successful students. We support family engagement through communication structures, district wide initiatives and positive partnerships with students and their families.

### Synopsis of this Year’s Initiatives:

Our staff do their very best to engage in positive partnerships with students and their families. To that end we connect in many ways. The following is a synopsis of this year’s initiatives:

- The active **District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC)** continues to develop deeper connections amongst PACs and with trustees and district staff. SD46 leaders provide a wide variety of information to the monthly DPAC meetings which are open to all parents/caregivers in the SD46 Learning Community and have been held virtually this year. Excellent discussions take place related to parent engagement, education and student success. This year, SD46 also supported DPAC in their virtual learning offerings to families:
  - Ensouling Our Schools: Schools as Places of Healing with Kevin Lamoureux in September 2021
  - Trauma-Sensitive Education with Kim Barthel in February 2022
- **The superintendent’s PAC visits** during the Fall and Winter provided the opportunity to hear from families. These check-ins confirmed that our community feels heard, supported, and well informed.
- **Parent/teacher interviews and one-on-one meetings with families:** This year, meetings primarily occurred virtually, with some in-person options occurring outdoors or safely in the school setting. Virtual meetings continue to provide an opportunity to really connect with parents/caregivers and also opens up more convenient times for families to participate.

- **The District Family Engagement Committee (DFEC)** examines effective communication and develops strategies to ensure the school/ home partnership is well developed. Communicating student reporting continues to be a focus for the Committee and supporting the roll-out of the Ministry's New Reporting Order. Also, supporting students and their families in transitions to secondary school and supporting the leadership skills of DPAC and PACs in the district. This year, DFEC has welcomed new parents and staff to the Committee bringing new voices and ideas to the table. Also, this year, the Committee has two book studies informing their work and direction:
  - School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action by Joyce L. Epstein and Associates
  - Ensouling Our Schools by Jennifer Katz with Kevin Lamoureux
- **Kindergarten Registration: Welcoming new families to their schools!** Families were encouraged to complete their child's registration online via MyEducation. The kindergarten registration campaign in February included radio messages, newspaper ads, posters, social media posts, and website information. KinderSPARK! and SPARK! to kindergarten also kicks off this Spring helping families and their children prepare for kindergarten transitions and familiarize themselves with their new school space.
- **SPARK! to Secondary** offered by United Way of the Lower Mainland's School's Out program: Four virtual sessions offered for all parents with children entering high school this Spring.

#### **Formats and Methods for Engagement:**

- District Family Engagement Committee (DFEC) Meetings
- DPAC and PAC Meetings and Learning Opportunities
- Teacher/parent/caregiver ZOOM and in-person meetings and offerings
- Volunteers and Coaches
- District and school websites and calendars
- School Messenger email and phone messaging
- Contact Us: [questions@sd46.bc.ca](mailto:questions@sd46.bc.ca)
- Coast Reporter
- Coast 91.7 FM Radio
- Social Media: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube
- Secondary School Apps

#### **Data Analysis and Review:**

##### **Data Sources:**

- Survey conducted in June of 2020 seeking input on our communication efforts from parents/caregivers.
- Informal requests for feedback and discussions with stakeholders.

##### **Data:**

## 2020 End of Year Covid-19 Response & Communication Survey Excerpts

As a parent/caregiver, would you be MORE LIKELY to engage in district/school/(D)PAC family engagement activities if they were offered online? (PAC meetings, parenting courses, online game nights for families): 59% would most likely engage with family engagement activities if offered online. 39/153 = YES; 52/153 = MAYBE

- **What information was most helpful from the communications from the DISTRICT?**
  - Overall pleased with communication from district level.
  - District communication was more aligned to the business of learning. It was informative and provided more of an overall forecast of what to expect which is good knowledge to have.
  - I was impressed with the information from the District always direct and to the point and made me feel that we knew all there was to know from the Ministry of Education as soon as the info was available and advised to ask questions if we had them. Thank you!
  - The information that was most helpful was the actionable items... the things that were clearly defined in what needed to be done to move forward in support in our kids
  - I think the district did a fine job of communicating with me, although, the school repeated the district's message each time as well.
  - Videos were great to actually see what school would look like on return.
- **What would you have liked to have known more about from the DISTRICT?**
  - Timelines, expectations about assessment, exact protocols.
  - short quick messages and not long-winded district messages. Don't have time to sort through the fillers. Get to the point.
  - I found many of the messages were about the joy of the situation, rather than how things actually looked and being realistic. That would have been more helpful in preparing the students.

### Data Review:

- Families appreciate direct email communication with clear details about updates from the district.

### Resources/Budget:

- Guest Speakers and training
- DPAC and DFEC initiatives and support

### Emerging Areas of Need:

- The new K-12 Student Reporting Order implementation has been delayed by the Ministry of Education by one year and will remain in draft until the 2023-24 school year. The additional year allows for time, supports, communication/messaging with families and a more gradual implementation for our learning community.
- The elementary reporting platform of FreshGrade will no longer be available after this school year. We have collaborative teams developing criteria and opportunities for staff

to review new potential platforms supported by the Ministry. The new platform will require a communication plan for families.

**Adaptations/Next Steps:**

- DFEC is looking ahead to when they can support the district and schools in family community in-person events again such as district wide PAC training with Betty Baxter.
- Ensure Ministry of Education reporting guidelines are followed while still being creative in their implementation.
- To continue to encourage a culture of belonging and connection between staff, students and their families.