

DPAC MONTHLY MEETING: 1 FEBRUARY 2018

Katia Dilkina called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

In attendance:

Katia Dilkina	Sam Hampton	Erin Prescott
Robin Grazley	Katie Ryan	Natalie Buchmann
Adrienne White	Wendy Huibers	Marika Glickman

Staff: Ms. Brenna O'Connor, Mme Josée Paris

1. November 2017 Minutes to Approve -- motion to approve by Wendy Huibers, seconded by Katie Ryan

2. Movie Night -- Sam

- The event went well -- choice of *Elf* on the poll was confirmed again at the event
- Thanks to Sam and Glenn for organizing!

3. Bingo Night -- Katia/Katie for Mercedes

- Will be held February 22 -- things are moving along.
- One hiccup: Wade, who was the caller last year, cannot make it this time, so Mercedes will be asking for volunteers. If anyone knows someone with a loud booming voice who likes to call numbers, let us know! It might also be possible to get students involved, since reading the announcements, MCing at assemblies is popular.
- Information for food orders will come out at the beginning of next week, most likely. Vendors this year are Pizza Hut and Fujiya; Marika suggested that Oregano's may also be willing to donate. We could look at alternating pizza vendors next year.
- Mercedes and Katie are doing the bulk of the organization so far. Adrienne will put a call for volunteers in the newsletter, and interested parents should email Mercedes. Marika and Katia volunteered to help as well.
- Will also be putting a call out to creative parents, if anyone wants to donate a handmade item to be used for prizes -- open to ideas. Erin suggested we could also offer Doncaster T-shirts/sweatshirts (leftover from 2016).
- Start time: Mercedes messaged to say 5 pm for food, bingo starting 5:45 pm.

4. School Garden Update -- Erin

- Erin, Brenna, Abigail Bigam, and Matthew from LifeCycles met last week to discuss the grant application prepared by Abigail and Andrea Skinner for the District. Things are moving forward! Erin has approached Coast Capital for financial support as well, and we will be looking for in-kind donations as we get closer to build time. The first hurdle is to obtain grants and district approval, then we will need to organize a work party to get our garden project started.

5. PAC Budget

- Quorum is not present, so we will have to wait for next meeting for approval. In the meantime, those present were urged to look over the proposed budget for 2018-19 and ask questions.

6. Fundraisers -- Katia, Erin, Katie

- The email about the Purdy's Easter buy has gone out to parents
- Erin proposes that we initiate a fundraiser with West Coast Seeds, targeted specifically to the garden project. They will donate 40% of profits. We could hold this campaign mid-February to mid-March, with the orders ready to go out after Spring Break. We would need volunteers to help sort the orders -- Katia, Sam, and Robin all expressed interest. Erin to follow up with West Coast Seeds.
- TC10K run -- Katie has signed Doncaster up to participate on April 29. Katia will forward Catherine's email re: Thrifty's Fun Run from the fall to Katie; Katie is happy to partner with Catherine to organize if she would also like to organize this event. Track will be happening later in the term, and the school has lots of keen runners. Question from Katie about updating the sports info on the website: Brenna and Josée noted that this has not been done yet, and the information varies year to year. However, we could identify days and which grades typically participate. Brenna suggested talking to Margo about putting the section in and updating as information comes in. Katia clarified that Margo does the website updates. Each school works with a district template to create their own website, which can be challenging.

7. Fun Day -- Katia, Erin

- Wednesday, June 27 (12:30 - 2:30pm)
- booked from Games2U: 4 hamster balls, bouncy house, obstacle course for \$1,070
- half of it has been paid for -- Margo is sorting out the payment from the special RBC fund

8. Garry Oak Meadow Restoration -- Katia, Erin

- Katia got in touch with the Mount Tolmie Community Association (MTCA), and their president, Marlene Davie, took this issue to their board meeting. They are supportive and very excited that we have tried to engage with them, establish a relationship; they have assigned us a liaison, Mei Ang Thiessen. Mei came back to us with two suggestions we have already begun exploring: the Habitat Acquisition Trust (HAT) Green Spots program (outdoor classrooms), and the Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team (GOERT).
 - HAT helped with Oaklands Elementary's Garry oak meadow restoration. Melissa has already applied to their Green Spots program, and we are waiting to hear whether we will be accepted this year, or possibly next year. HAT would look to the PAC for financial support, with a minimum commitment of \$2000. Our proposed budget allows us to commit up to \$3000 to Garry oak restoration. They would do some of the work to restore the meadow.
 - Erin noted that GOERT is a good technical resource, but we have not reached out to them at this time because they are in flux as a society right now. They are also not a resource for funding.
- MTCA cannot provide financial support, but we hope that we might get their help in distributing requests for donations in future.

- Question from Wendy: is the PAC responsible for this restoration? Brenna: SD61 says they do not have the money to fund this work. She has requested that the Director of Facilities or Supervisor of Maintenance come and talk with the PAC about this. especially questions regarding future maintenance. The arborist's report does outline some of the future issues which will need to be addressed. The \$10 000 estimate is for the immediate work, as far as we know, but it would be better to avoid the back-and-forth and have us speak with them directly.
- Our preference is to meet with them prior to the next PAC meeting. Brenna will email the PAC executive and David Loveridge, Director of Facilities, and suggest possible times.
 - Katia, Erin, Robin, and Glenn are interested in attending the meeting -- others?
 - Wendy: is the entire area school property? Brenna: yes -- it is more extensive when you see the map than it seems.
 - Marika suggested contacting the Cedar Hill residents' association as well. Others noted that this had been raised previously and Doncaster may be outside their boundaries.
 - Sam spoke about Community Toolshed, and the restoration projects led by Cheryl Bryce (Songhees First Nation). She felt approaching Cheryl Bryce about our project could allow for an excellent opportunity to deepen our and our children's education as to why these ecosystems are so significant, and how to care for them. She noted as well the importance of including indigenous partners, since we are on unceded territory. Sam has Cheryl Bryce's email and is willing to contact her.
 - Adrienne raised an additional question regarding the arborist's quote. Brenna reiterated that it is better to cut out the middle person and bring our questions directly to Facilities. Katia also noted that if we speak directly with them, we can explore the possibility of us hiring our own arborist, making long term plans, and how the work actually gets done. Again, better to have them come to the table and answer our questions directly.
 - The PAC hopes to balance informed participation in this meeting with giving more parents an opportunity to participate. Josée suggested that we inform people who have not been present thus far that the meeting is taking place, and ask them to send us questions if they have them.
 - Natalie observed that her son's class has been doing art using natural materials, many of which used to be gathered from the Garry oak meadow; student art is a component we could think about employing to show the relevance of this environment to our children's education.
- Overall, we hope to have more answers by the next PAC meeting.

9. Traffic Congestion/Crossing Guard -- Katia, Erin

- Traffic congestion continues to be an issue this year. Our new crossing guard, Alison, has identified some issues of concern, including drivers blocking intersections and traffic backing up from the drive-in loop around the corner onto Cedar Hill Rd. These problems are particularly acute at pickup time in the afternoon. Brenna organized a meeting earlier this week with Erin; a representative from Beacon Services; our school liaison officer from Saanich Police; and Kate Bernier from the CRD's Safe Schools program, and they came up with an action plan.
- Brenna outlined the main points for action:
 - Reinforcement (i.e. reminding parents not to block traffic or sit in the drive-in loop for extended periods) may not be effective.
 - Kate from CRD will talk to Saanich about zoning Rowan St. as single-side parking only. Parking would be removed on the school side, under this proposition, due to concerns about crossing the street and visibility.
 - Katia has designed a questionnaire to go out to parents which will gather data about current practices, but also inform and suggest alternatives to reduce congestion and divert traffic from the school.

- Events like Walk & Wheel Wednesdays, tracking at the division level through graphs, and rewards (e.g. pizza parties) for divisions with the most students walking/wheeling to and from school will be employed to engage students in leading their parents to reduce traffic congestion around the school. Our police liaison can be present at events and partner with us.
- A short discussion of these issues ensued. We are aware that some of the school's neighbours are frustrated and in some cases furious about the parking issues. It was noted that parking at the Cedar Hill Golf Course lot (our CRD Drive to 5 location) can be inconvenient when coming from certain directions. The Shelbourne St. Church of Christ (at Shelbourne & Cedar) has been receptive toward parents using their lot when Erin reached out to them; St. Luke's (at Cedar Hill & Cedar Hill X Rd) has also offered the use of their lot. Weather is also a factor in traffic congestion.
- Katia has printed the questionnaire for feedback tonight, but will wait to circulate it until mid-next week to give the staff a chance to organize a display. Currently the idea is to do a count on Wednesday and one other day of the week, and see if it changes over 4 weeks, with a focus on the afternoon trip. We will also seek feedback from the crossing guard.
- Alison, our crossing guard hired through Beacon Services, has a contract for the year; however, Beacon Services will no longer be providing that service for anyone after this year. It is unclear at this time how this service will be managed in future, but the change will affect all Victoria schools.

10. Principal & Vice-Principal Reports -- Brenna O'Connor and Josée Paris

- Brenna shared some of the appreciative inquiry results:
 - good citizenship and what that looks like
 - teachers working together collaboratively
 - hands-on opportunities for learning
 - garden and environmental learning
- The staff has had a first chance to review these results and respond.
- We are looking at reviewing the school's code of conduct, making it very understandable re: rules and expectations. This may begin with a small committee, perhaps also might be brought to a PAC committee or meeting for feedback -- process underway.
- linking to enhancement agreement with indigenous teachings and animals also
- Josée: the Board Game café was open at lunch for the first time this week, for grades 3-5 -- we will alternate younger and older students, and hold it twice a week. So far it has been a huge success -- expanding social interactions among students. Question from Katie: will the Board Game café run all year long? Answer: will see how it goes with weather. Some of it is novelty too, but has exceeded expectations -- approximately 200 children in the library to participate.
- Another citizenship initiative: Grade 5 students have been helping as playground buddies to the little kids. As part of leadership, 35 students have also invented their own games and submitted a proposal (including materials needed) to bring them to the playground. We will be creating a schedule for "games of the day" -- "if you want to try it, see * on the playground."
- technology meeting -- Josh Barks from SD61 will do a Lunch & Learn for staff on technology -- Chromebooks, iPads, hands-on stuff for kids -- coding in the MakerSpace
- student learning survey soon for grade 4s who participated in the EFS testing -- snapshot of the learning environment and areas for improvement

- Question from Natalie: are there shared classes between French and English track, or other opportunities to foster community across grade levels, for example? Answer: sometimes. Grade 2s were recently working together on a salmon project -- this is up to individual teachers, however. There are also some opportunities to connect through sports. Building connections is something administration can promote as well -- for example, stations that brought some of the English grades together before holidays could be done across French/English as well. Katia: extension to middle schools -- Cedar Hill has only one French feeder school, effectively keeping students with the same cohort for an extended time.
- basketball season for the grade 5s: huge turnout, so we are holding alternating practice days -- Mme Lampard doing mini-jamborees at lunchtime -- two dads are helping to coach -- mixed play
- English Kindergarten registration is on this week. We have a waitlist for French Immersion: 39 spots, approximately 20 on the waitlist. Other schools do have space in French, so parents can choose to take a spot elsewhere. English numbers were much higher than expected -- 27 registered so far. Our go-to number is 20, but our priority is to make sure that there are spaces for kids in their catchment school, and we have not yet had to turn catchment students away. We expect fluctuation in these numbers in any case.

Next Meeting: Thursday 1 March 2018 -- quorum required to pass the 2018-19 budget

Katia Dilkina adjourned the meeting at 8:10 pm