

DPAC MONTHLY MEETING: 4 MAY 2021

Nicole Woods called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

In attendance:

Nicole Woods	Chris Wright	Robin Grazley
Erin Prescott	Cindy Luchka	Adrienne White
Jennie Bartosik	Laura Mercer	Alison Hamer
Katie Shaw	Amy Verdun	Katia Dilkina
Elena Schultz		

Staff: Mr. Tim McCreesh

1. April 2021 Minutes to Approve: motion to approve by Adrienne White, seconded by Jennie Bartosik.

2. Parent Ed Update (Raising an Anti-Racist Child)

- Jennie: 31 parents in attendance, about 50 registered. It went well -- good feedback during and after the presentation.
- Thank you, Jennie, for organizing!

3. Growing Smiles Spring Fundraiser

- Nicole: delivery is coming on Thursday -- time is flexible-ish, as they are coming from the mainland via Nanaimo, and it's an early dismissal day -- working through that
- Volunteers? Timing ... driver will give 3 hr window, then 30 minutes in advance phone call
- About \$1100 raised
- Elena and Robin volunteered to help, schedules permitting

4. Pizza Night

- Nicole: Joel not present tonight, but he is thinking of setting it up for mid-June. Nothing pressing at this point -- can discuss next meeting

5. Garden Update

- Erin: Abigail will be thinking in the near future about a call for volunteers to check on garden over the summer -- coordination list -- no other work parties on horizon for now
- Abigail will also look at tool inventory -- thanks to Warren, Jen, and other parents for putting in the work to get different items -- items are trickling in
- Tim: a few donations of hand tools, garden tools are in now -- the garden getting lots of use, looking good -- classes have been out there, and logs have been moved in so kids can sit in the centre. This project will be fantastic once it's up and running -- thanks for support with the garden!

- Nicole: question -- how will watering work in the summer? Access to water source? Erin: we will need timers, but having a water source within the chain link was part of the requirements -- we'll just need people to check periodically that things are working.

6. Magic Forest Cleanup

- Erin: nothing to add -- Tim says daphne etc. looks fine, plus camas is out so not an ideal time to pull invasives.
- Erin is not able to organize a cleanup now anyway, but someone else is welcome to take that on.

7. Strings Program Update

- Cindy L: SD61 budget process -- May 17 is trustees' vote. The last meeting when budget was discussed in detail was the April 27 Board meeting, where a slightly changed proposal was presented. In this draft, they explore some ways to incorporate Grade 6 and 7 Band again, but Grade 5-8 Strings and Choir are not funded.
- District-wide group has been set up, Advocacy for Music in Schools (AMIS), and is going hard to try to save all the music programs. Last Friday (April 30) there was a Strings protest on Shelbourne, with signs -- done at various elementary schools at the same time -- successful. Coming up, there will be more protesting each Thursday (May 6 and May 13), with all major intersections to be covered. The "Last Stand" will be on Saturday May 15, with a line of people from the Board office to the Legislature building -- coordinators along the way, and families will register for a set spot to ensure that everyone is physically distanced. People will have signs, there will be a speech people will say at the same time -- they are excited about these advocacy events.
- There are also posters which people will be able to access -- encouraging everyone to make lawn signs -- anything to be out there, vocal, try to fight for Strings as well as Choir.
- Cindy recently watched a documentary, *The Silence of Strings* -- based on fight in 2000 when the district tried to cut strings specifically -- kind of saved it, but with outside funding, then district funded the program for years after. Strings has been in this district since 1914, and it's not something we want to see go away -- we'd like to keep it at Doncaster and the 15 other schools, perhaps add back in at other schools. Research shows that exposure before the age of 10 is really important with instruments, ensemble play -- that's the reason why it happens in Grade 5, for development.
- Nicole: rallying of community and parents has been amazing -- this is not over. Regardless of outcome, we may have to try to think about other ways to keep this going -- lots to follow -- further discussion in June. Cindy L: trustees need to have this wrapped up by end of May -- lots of things in the work, changing situation -- superintendent met with Education minister last week -- we don't see little changes to the budget all at once.
- Discussion followed about information going out through class reps -- Robin has been forwarding AMIS information to class reps on behalf of DPAC, but not all divisions seem to be receiving it. Katia reminded the group that the class rep's role is to pass on the information -- in forwarding messages, they are not taking a position on the actions. Katie suggested that emails for distribution be flagged as urgent to remind reps to pass them on, as we are all busy. Robin felt

that a reminder from Nicole, using the DPAC address, might be most effective. Nicole will follow up with reps to make sure that they understand the importance of their role in passing on info.

8. Grade 5 Celebration

- Nicole: last month we realized the end of the year was coming fast -- teachers and parents have rallied to organize the Grade 5 celebration
- Tim: teachers met last week, put together a bit of a plan -- Tim discussed with Nicole, class reps for Grade 5 classes -- haven't met yet, but hopefully later this week. Previously on the last day of school there was a BBQ in courtyard, Cindy H would say a few words, then the Grade 5s would receive a small gift from PAC (Grade 5 photo they would all sign).
- Things will be a little different this year, but Camp Thunderbird is a go, and there will be a celebration on the last day. For last day, will do same thing outside, but kids will bring a blanket/picnic lunch -- as well, there will be some treats we can hand out -- will talk to parents about ordering photos again.
- This celebration is not really a PAC-led initiative -- instead, Grade 5 parents -- would be okay to have one or two there for handout, help -- teachers will bring out sound system, games
- PAC has funded \$8/child -- covers the photo, and we'll find money for treats
- Nicole: thank you, Tim, for spearheading this celebration!

9. Monk's School Supplies

- Nicole: we didn't do this fundraiser last year because everything was so interrupted, but thought we would bring it back this year. Margo has prepared the lists, and they have been sent over to Monk's -- our contact there will get things set up, and the order link should be ready in a couple of weeks.
- Nicole called for volunteers to spearhead this fundraiser -- mostly, this would involve receiving the order and organizing the boxes by division for pickup.
- Question from Amy: as a ballpark, what is the price, and how much does PAC raise? Cindy L: the kit price varies by division/requirements, depends on what's suggested for each class -- different every year. We as a PAC normally get about \$1500 from this -- sometimes the PAC amount is incorporated into the kit, and sometimes it's an add-on donation, in which case we make even more. Everyone loves getting the kits, picking them up at the end of the year -- all ready to go for Sept (have always requested full delivery in June, so it's just the leftovers in Sept). New kindergarten families often come to pick up their supplies in June too. If people miss our order date, they can still order their pre-pack kit through Monk's and pick it up at the store.
- Basically, the parents in charge would just be dealing with organizing the order, then the few problems like missed orders etc. Cindy did this largely by herself last time, but usually it's been two people in the past. This year we will probably be looking at sending them to classrooms due to circumstances.
- Laura volunteered to take this on, and Elena volunteered to support. Thank you, Laura and Elena!!
- Cindy L noted that the other piece is emailing a few times to let people know it's time to order. Margo sends those messages out -- there's an official link and blurb from Monk's we use, then

one or two reminders. We set a deadline, then we extend it a few days at the end -- all goes through Margo.

- Nicole has the correspondence so far and will pass that on to Laura and Elena.

10. 2021-22 Budget Review and Approval

- Erin shared her screen to present the draft budget:
 - Exec met last week to go over draft budget for next year -- Erin will take us through it tonight -- we have quorum (13 parents present), so can vote
 - Revenue:
 - best projections, but have once again budgeted conservatively (realistic) -- no Craft Fair, no request for parent donations unless we are raising \$ for something specific
 - Thrifty Foods is changing their grocery cards program -- last year's cards are good until mid-June, and they will be switching to sales of preloaded cards only from here. Erin has not included revenue from Thrifty Foods in this budget, but that can be revisited next year if someone wants to take charge of that program.
 - As of May 4, we had approximately \$27K in our main acct; \$3K in the gaming acct; and \$20K in a GIC
 - Amy: why \$0 on the line for Cobs? Erin: they haven't been giving us \$ -- new ownership at Cobs -- they are very supportive with donations, but no cheques thus far. Amy suggested that if we promote, ask them about it, it's more likely that they (and the Soap Exchange) will pay out. Erin: Soap Exchange does periodically pay out (usually yearly), but will follow up with Cobs. Cindy L observed that we may have decided to focus on their great donations rather than the payout -- Erin noted that it would be good to know their formal stance.
 - Expenses:
 - Again, comparisons with 19-20 actual, proposed 20-21 -- many lines similar to this year's projections, previous year's
 - Indoor learning less of a budget priority this year -- Makerspace, but not so much for tech refresh
 - Proposed deficit again this year of about \$5000 -- challenges of fewer activities/supporting what we can/keeping some money still in our accounts
 - Questions?
 - Amy asked for more details on the outdoor learning and playground amounts. Erin noted that PAC is not planning for anything in particular at the moment -- in the past, this amount has gone toward the garden, equipment, gaga ball pit. Tim added that a big part of the school growth plan involves outdoor learning -- this funding will help support that goal.
 - Tim also spoke briefly to the tech piece -- federal funding this year allowed us to purchase ChromeBooks, iPads to work with Apple TVs, and this week, we were approved tech packages for multipurpose room so that room can be used more diversely. We are doing well with tech at this time.

- Nicole reminded the group that this budget represents a ballpark, and we do always have the ability to vote in changes as needs change during the year. Nicole moved that we accept this as our PAC budget for the 2021-22 school year.
- **Motion passed -- budget approved.**

11. School Updates/Growth Plan

- Tim:
 - Staffing update: next year's staffing is complete, finished a couple of weeks ago -- interesting process! No major changes for Doncaster -- some postings going out next week, might be welcoming a few new teachers.
 - Our next Pro-D day is May 21, and we will be welcoming Dr. Linda O'Neil from UNBC via Zoom. She will be presenting 2 workshops: supporting children in compassionate learning activities (trauma-informed approach to Covid), also safe strategies for children from adversity -- aligns with our growth plan
 - Growth Plan:
 - Last year, when Cindy H & Tim arrived at Doncaster, they listened to the community, got a sense of where we are -- got the sense, right before we were slammed with the pandemic, that we wanted to look at outdoor learning as a goal. And then we were flung outdoors, so that actually worked well -- timing with indigenous and community gardens aligned, and we also have number of teachers who are passionate about outdoor learning. We now have a committee working on this growth plan, have discussed as a staff.
 - INQUIRY: how can outdoor education/outdoor learning impact students' social and emotional wellbeing, and academic success?
 - We thought of this because of everything that we are going through, importance of kids' mental health and vulnerabilities in pandemic -- what we'll be exploring.
 - Last Pro-D day, one of EAs set up a board with this question -- teachers are now posting quotes and experiences from their classes
 - A few other updates:
 - Outdoor areas: Tim and Chris met today, and Chris drew some of the potential stencils with chalk -- Tim has reached out to Facilities, and hopefully they will be able to meet with them on site when they do the painting. The gaga pit and covered area are ordered and paid for, and now we're just waiting for them to be installed.
 - Mural outside the library: classes voted on which book characters they would like to see in a mural. Bettina (EA and artist) has put together an amazing mural which will stretch all the way down that wall along the library, with all these different book characters and the Doncaster dragon, then a Shel Silverstein

poem woven in. She will start drawing it on the wall tomorrow -- it will be mounted on plywood and we can change them in and out over the years.

- Hot lunch: Subway way smoother than pizza -- thanks to all
- Grade 5 public speaking challenge: hoping this will be the first annual ... trophy? Students will give speeches in their classes, and two from each will be chosen. The speeches from the winners will be delivered in library in front of judges Cindy Harte and Breton Coons -- hopefully parents can zoom in as well -- then, crowning champion for year 1. Tim has done this at previous schools, and this is good and exciting competition, really gains momentum.
- Tim opened the floor to questions -- parents requested even more updates!.
 - iRide is coming -- school putting \$ toward that, also will be asking for a small contribution from Grade 4-5 parents. Events will be held in early June -- similar to CRD bike training previously.
 - Boost in morale amongst teachers this week -- vaccine appointments!!
 - Cindy H has been up in Courtenay with her mom, and is excited to return on the 24th for sure
- Parents very much appreciated Tim's updates, especially on school growth plan. Tim noted that Nicole can share the growth plan more broadly if parents are curious, or they can ask him directly. Robin will also attach a copy to this month's minutes.
- Amy asked Tim whether he had anything to share about the growth of the school population, changes in enrollment or flow? Tim: not really -- the Ministry has asked us to plan for a normal return to school, without two staggered starting/dismissal times, lunches. The district is also looking at going to common lunchtimes, schedules across schools for next year, partly to facilitate TTOCs. There are always families coming and going, but numbers for next year similar to this year -- waiting list for next year cleared but FRIM very full, English quite full -- 19 divisions again next year -- healthy community
- Nicole expressed gratitude for our school, our community -- supporting each other -- Katie spoke to this as well as a new parent, offered thanks to Tim.
- Tim: thanks to our neighbours and community as well -- staff is grateful to have a caring and supportive PAC, community

Next Meeting: TUESDAY, 1 June 2021, via Zoom

Nicole Woods adjourned the meeting at 8:21 pm