

DPAC MONTHLY MEETING: 5 SEPTEMBER 2019

Katia Dilkina called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

In attendance:

Erin Prescott	Robin Grazley	Katia Dilkina
Mercedes Schmidt	Nicole Woods	Cyndi Whaley
Adrienne White	Elena Schultz	Nicole Normand
Elizabeth Corry	Linda Rehaume	Andrea Kearney
Chelsea Laxton	Kabir Hosein	Dayna Mottishaw
Colleen Liang	Christy Hammond	Ji-Hung Suh
Erin Long	Rudy Sung	Tara Arnell
Chris Shortt	Kim Koscik	Hannah Nette
Gillian Moxham	JungHee Kim	Joe McNally
Penelope Barillaro	Alison Hamer	Cindy Luchka
Melissa Miller	Natalie Bowes	Ligin Zhao
Marika Glickman	Greg Jury	

Staff: Mrs. Cindy Harte, Mr. Tim McCreesh, Mme Helena Ewald

1. Introductions

- Robin asked parents who were willing to act as class reps to indicate that on the attendance sheet or come forward after the meeting. Katia spoke briefly about the role and directed parents to [information](#) on the DPAC website. Nicole W and Katia encouraged new parents, especially in Kindergarten, to get involved -- being class rep is a great way to get to know other families.

2. Principal & Vice-Principal's Reports

School Updates

- Cindy H: keeping things low-key tonight -- we are hoping for info about how Doncaster runs from a parent perspective, about key events through the year, and how we can support each other with school goals.
- class switches happened today -- mostly a smooth transition (although some tears). We are currently full. Brenna and the staff created class lists already, coming into this year -- some tweaks, but a good basis to work from.
- This is a warm building full of lovely people -- we had a staff meeting yesterday and Tuesday, gathering info about where we are going, school goals, meeting needs of kids in diverse

population. There will be more to come, but for tonight: what does PAC have in mind, how can we support that? Tim concurred.

- The school currently has 19 divisions, with 419 children; a couple of spaces are available in grade 4/5 FRIM, but not much else -- projection for future years must be taken into account.

- Katia asked for an update on the childcare portables and how this affects space in the school. Cindy H noted that they are not our property, strictly for preschool/childcare. Katia: does this free space in the school building? Cindy H: not really -- the multipurpose room is not classroom suitable, and the gym/library allocation is provisional until the gym divider is in (scheduled for installation Sept. 23).

- Katia: from our perspective, the main ongoing project is the replacement of the intermediate playground. One structure has been removed, and the rest need to be replaced. Last year we had been looking at our current funds and began fundraising for the last portion, and then we were presented with the opportunity of government funding for an inclusive playground. We are first on the list, but have not necessarily been approved. Elena remembered that we would be notified about approval in March. Katia noted that we will need to apply in January for a grant for the rubber flooring. Katia will talk with Cindy H and Tim, and potentially the playground committee, in future.

- Katia: the primary playground was replaced not that long ago -- Cindy L had a leadership role in that project. At that time she created a proposal for the intermediate side, and the current playground committee built on that. Now that we may not be solely responsible for funding, that composition may change, but we understood we may have some say about contents within inclusive parameters.

- The grant is for \$100 000, but half of it goes to rubber cover unless we receive the flooring grant.

- Cindy H: it would be nice to use community base to install -- Torquay saved money on installation with the BCAA playground. Hopefully we can also put money toward the structures rather than muscle. Parents agreed. Katia noted that we had been cautioned about this in the past, due to red tape at the district level. Cindy H: yes, but the district does have some flexibility around this, and it is possible. Cindy H and parents agreed to push in that direction.

3. June 2019 Minutes to Approve -- motion to approve by Elena Schultz, seconded by Nicole Woods.

4. Upcoming Events

- Katia provided a rundown of upcoming PAC events for the school year:
 - **BBQ/Meet the Teacher Sept. 19:**
 - Between 5-5:30 pm, parents can visit their children's classrooms, meet their teachers, then come outside for food and socializing. This event does require a bit of planning -- usually we preorder food, but this year we are going to have food trucks.

- Erin P: Mercedes and I looked into food trucks -- Mr Tubesteak; also Greek on the Street -- possibly a third one? Mercedes: I ruled out the risotto one as it was very expensive and they were not willing to offer us any kind of deal. Camosun is too busy, but might be available in a future year. Erin P: a small portion of the profits comes back to us in donation. Katia: benefits all around -- people who don't want to buy food can bring a picnic, and those who do won't need to preorder.
 - Erin: arrangements? I will not be here on the 19th, so we will need a couple of volunteers to be point people on the day -- confirm menu, where the trucks are going to be exactly, and be there to show them where to park, make sure they have what they'll need. Mercedes offered to do posters. Cindy H volunteered to be point on the day, as did Nicole W.
 - Marika suggested Fresh Coast as a third possibility -- Erin offered to call them. Mercedes: three trucks might be better, as we could have 600 people and lines may be very long.
 - Cindy H: another idea -- at Torquay, parents ordered pizza to relieve some of the food truck lineups. Grade 5 leadership kids sold it pizza by the slice -- approximately 15 pizzas, at \$3 a slice -- another option to consider to make sure people are fed. Lots of enthusiasm for this idea -- Cindy H & Tim will talk to grade 5 teachers and get kids to sign up.
- October:
 - **Halloween Dance, Oct. 24** (night before Pro-D day), put together by two or three organizers the last few years. Thanks to Marika and Katie for volunteering to organize again this year! This is a family social event, rather than a fundraiser -- held in the gym, DJ Daddy Mack, cash concession, families come in costume. It is lots of fun, and usually packed!
 - November:
 - **Craft Fair, Nov. 23** -- this is one of biggest craft fairs in Victoria. We have tables throughout the hallways and gym -- full shortly after registration opened, and 20 vendors on the waitlist. This event makes about \$6000 every year -- mostly in vendor fees, but we also have a bake sale (organized by Mercedes) which parents stock and staff, which makes \$1000. The last couple of years we've had kids' craft tables, but we hear that the Scholastic Book Fair will be back this year, so likely there will not be space in the library. Cindy H suggested setting up the kids' tables in the multipurpose room. Katia: YES! We will check how many tables will fit. People are already asking about kids' tables.
 - This is our major fundraiser, but it requires a lot of work, coordination, and support from parents on the day of the event: baking, setup, concession, bake sale, raffle ... We need lots of people on hand from 10-3, then cleanup. It is a lot of work, but it is worth it to be able to spend on things for our school/kids.

- December:
 - **Movie Night mid-December** -- Nicole W will probably organize again this year. Similar to the dance, not a fundraiser but a family event -- concession is open just because people like to have snacks during a movie. Families come in their PJs, get comfy, and watch a movie.
- Fewer events in winter/spring ...
 - **Bingo Night end of February**: Mercedes: we'll talk about that later ... everyone comes together to play bingo, and it is amazing -- volunteers get prizes from community, also parents providing donations from their businesses -- pizza/sushi -- NOT Pizza Hut this year! It is our best attended event of the year -- very laid back, Heather will call for us again ... put it on your calendar!
 - year-end picnic in June
- Katia: spring is open if people have events they would like to plan. Last year we did board game night -- we'd just have to look at dates. The school started Board Game Club at lunchtime last year, which inspired us -- lots of fun.
- Mercedes: over the past 4 years, we have been trying to create community events rather than focus on fundraising -- if we make money, that's great, but we want this to be easy for families, inexpensive, and straightforward volunteering. Those are the themes if you're thinking of events: LESS ASK = better attended.
- Elizabeth: Fun Day -- organized by the school -- apparently some of the children did not think it was fun last year. Basically, the inflatables were missed when Games 2 U went out of business. Staffing is the key (i.e. parents/teachers did not have to supervise). Nicole W: who provides inflatables at other events? Cindy L: liability -- whoever we hire would need to have staff and the proper insurance. Nicole W will check on who's providing the inflatables and the staff at other community events (Ribfest?).
- Katia: Cindy and Tim, if you have ideas about events from your past schools, please let us know! Cindy H: at Torquay, the Spring Fair had the inflatables, rather than Fun Day. Cindy L noted that kids who were disappointed may have been comparing with Fun Day in previous years ... for kids who remember the hamster balls, last year was kind of old school. Parents were mixed on whether there was something to be said for that.
- Katia was intrigued by the idea of a Spring Fair -- not much in March/April/May, so could be possible ... it would be a matter of making it happen.

5. Parents 4 Climate

- Robin: Natalie Buchmann contacted me about this initiative -- Parents 4 Climate is organizing a series of events for the week of Sept. 20-27, including a teach-in to be held on the Pro-D day, Sept. 23. Can we put a notice in the newsletter?
- Katia: Margo received an email from another parent (Jen Grant) about this as well -- Katia will put her in touch with Natalie.

- Parents agreed to put a notice in the newsletter. Robin will forward the letter from Parents 4 Climate to Adrienne.

6. Emergency Supplies

- Robin: we need a volunteer to fill in for Natalie Buchmann this year on the emergency supplies purchase -- Hilda has a list, and then a parent volunteer goes to Costco and is reimbursed.
- Cindy L: before any purchases are made, we need to have a broader discussion about the emergency bins. One has a hole, is corroded -- we can't store food in there if it's vulnerable to weather/rodent issues.
- Cindy H and Hilda chatted about this issue briefly -- some schools have gone to a crate model, but they are pricey. First, we need to check on repair or alternate storage possibility (e.g. moving food supplies to bins that aren't compromised). Erin P: emergency supply storage is a necessity, so seems odd that PAC would pay for it -- Cindy H agreed.
- Cindy L: they will also be moving those bins anyway to extend the parking lot
- Consensus: if we can shuffle the supplies for this year, great -- Katia/Cindy L will check in with Cindy H/Hilda. The granola bars & water get distributed at Fun Day.

7. Walk and Wheel to School Week (Oct. 7-11)

- Erin P: Cyndi W has signed us up with CRD, we'll get some promotional materials for that. Bike to Work/School week is in May, but Sept/Oct is a great time to promote walking/wheeling to school.
- Cyndi W: there is a \$500 grant, but we would need to write a blurb on what we'd spend on -- some questions there? Consensus was to say prizes/hospitality.
- Elizabeth: when? Cyndi W: weeklong event. Tim: at Macaulay, there was a board, and kids got to put up stickers to tallying walking/wheeling. Cindy H: other schools have closed the parking lot and got parents to commit to walking/wheeling that way -- we could borrow ideas from them (Sir James Douglas). Erin P: it can be whatever people want it to be. I am not around that week -- Cyndi W is leading. If others are interested in being involved, we can call for volunteers in the newsletter as well
- Melissa asked about bike safety training. Erin P noted that the problem is getting organizations to provide it -- we can ask CRD, however. Elizabeth: Central Middle School held a day of bike instruction, fixing, etc. last year -- provided by someone else with their own funding -- can investigate.
- Cindy H has experience with [iRide](#), an organization with its own funding. There are roll out charges. They come for 4 days straight, teach safety and offer checks, then obstacle course, etc. -- could talk to someone who might be interested in working on this for a portion of the school, since logistics are difficult with so many students. Cyndi W and Cindy H will talk; Erin P is interested as well. Similar to the bike rodeo (through Saanich Police, but they don't do it anymore).

- Marika asked about the Fun Run -- Thanksgiving Thrifty's one. Katia: can talk to Katie? Notice of this should go in the newsletter so we can sign up a Doncaster team. The school that has the biggest team wins \$1000. Lots of families at our school already run, so good signups.
- Marika: also, school logo t-shirts/hoodies -- would love to have those available. A short discussion followed. Cindy L: orders usually done every two years, but the last round was very expensive and they didn't sell well -- we needed to find better options. Marika had a contact, and will look into it again. Cindy L noted it would be great if we can organize it before Christmas.
- Also, the Card Project: Katia provided a brief explanation for new parents. Helena confirmed that we usually start early, with teachers organizing the artwork in the fall. The person who does it was not taking orders last year, so it never happened -- we can check and see whether this is an option for this year. Katia will contact Alexis and see if she is interested in doing it again -- Christy may be interested in helping as well. Cindy L will email the Card Project person, since she has communicated with her before, and see whether she is accepting orders again, and we will go from there.

8. Craft Fair

- Discussed earlier -- Katia and Nicole need to confirm some practical things

9. HAT Partnership and Garry Oak Area

- Melissa: HAT partnership -- ongoing process. Last year, we applied to their Green Spots program for the "Magic Forest" -- they have been involved in the restoration of Garry oak ecosystems around the city. At the end of June, we were moved to the go list from the waitlist -- met with Brenna, but didn't establish anything. Recently Melissa and Cindy H met with Wendy, the coordinator, on next steps -- teachers keen on getting involved, create a vision, and talk to kids to see how they would like to use the space. The goal is mulching in October, planting week of Nov. 11 -- they like to hold an opening ceremony, then classes remove invasive species and plant native plants.
- Melissa provided a quick recap on the Magic Forest restoration and community cleanups. This will be more established through the Green Spots program, working with curriculum. Melissa put together the proposal; she & Cindy H will work together to identify keen teachers, and parent involvement is encouraged as well. Cindy H added that they would like to identify some areas which would be used for learning.
- Melissa: session in October to figure out what's possible. HAT put forward \$1000, and they ask PACs to match (which we have budgeted). There is a proposal which needs to go to the district -- Melissa will write it, but needs to work with Cindy H and teachers to create vision. Likely we will need to be some fences to protect plantings.
- If anyone else wants to get involved, please talk to Melissa
- Mercedes asked whether we need to organize another community cleanup. Melissa hasn't noticed a lot of garbage accumulating over the summer, but it may be in hidden areas. Mercedes will work on a date.

- Marika brought up the need for a shade shelter near the primary playground or a gazebo by the Magic Forest, which could be a teaching area/shelter. Katia: school district approval has been a barrier. However, possibly it could be combined with intermediate playground installation? Cyndi W suggested additional trees near the primary playground. Katia noted that Facilities discourages this, because of the constant maintenance required.
- Erin P: if the garden is going ahead in a similar area, may also be coordinated with that.
- Katia reiterated that while the gazebo idea is great, it would have to be approved by the school district, leave space for the track in spring, etc. -- it is hard to imagine at this point given all the other things that need to go in. We should keep it in mind, but may have to wait and think first.

- Cindy H: Brenna gave us an overview of school garden, but not sure what we're waiting for? It will be a low priority if district install, but can find out more details. Katia: irrigation/fencing was supposed to happen before the end of the last school year, not sure what's happening. Cindy H will check in with Abigail. Erin P confirmed that we have received grant money and given PAC money to the district for this project already.

- Elizabeth: what is happening to courtyard? At some point, wasn't there a proposal to create a learning space there? Katia: that was to be secondary to the garden -- later in the process. Cindy H: it is an awesome space, needs a little TLC.

10. Grade 5 First Aid

- Cindy L is okay to organize this again -- would need to meet with Cindy H about interest, etc.
- mainly for grade 5s, provides a few hours of first aid training. Christy noted that this is valuable for lunch monitors. Last year it took place close to the end of September.
- Cindy L and Cindy H will talk.

11. Final Items

- Katia: parent education:
 - Fiona, our parent education coordinator, will be in touch with Cindy H about applying for the parent ed grant.
 - Fiona also wants to know if people have ideas -- last year we had the White Hatter (every two years). Katia stated that PAC is happy to support parent ed events beyond the \$250 grant -- please email us with ideas! Cindy H and Tim also invited to share ideas.
 - Last year Island Sexual Health came in to support teachers in grade 4 & 5 on curriculum, and present a parent ed component. Please, let's keep bringing them back every year. They are very inexpensive. They are happy to come back again this year, they do work with curriculum, and if teachers are open to it we would like to have them offer sessions with every grade. They are also willing to come in at different times to match up with when teachers choose to present these aspects of curriculum. Nicole N pointed out that offering sessions at different times of the year generated a lot of questions, back and forth information on the playground -- worth passing that feedback on to the teachers.

Melissa noted that content was well described during the parent ed session. Katia will follow up with Cindy H re: Island Sexual Health. Jana organized the sessions last year.

- Cindy H suggested Nikki Lineham on new math. She is very popular, so we would have to check on availability. She has a p/t position at Cedar Hill, which would help with transition to middle school -- seamless ideas. She would talk to parents and potentially do workshops with the kids, teachers as well. There was enthusiasm for this idea.
- Katia mentioned that we have had partnerships with other schools as well, to combine funds and increase attendance -- we have partnered with Braefoot before. Oaklands also had a session on anxiety which several parents said was excellent.
- Cindy H also suggested Sheepdog Protection on safety -- a few parents were familiar with them.

- Date/times for the PAC meeting -- is Thursday still good? Some of the regular attendees would prefer not to meet Thursdays. It was agreed that **starting in October, PAC meetings will be held the first Wednesday of the month, still at 7 pm.**

- Question from Cindy H: how does the PAC newsletter work? A: Adrienne gets it to Margo early in the week after the meeting, the principal approves it, then it is distributed by email. Cindy H noted that she prefers to do weekly updates and spend time in classrooms rather than put time into a monthly newsletter -- fine with parents.

- Elizabeth offered a welcome to both Cindy H and Tim, thanking them for their input tonight and stating that we look forward to working with them!

- Katia: reminder: please make a note on sign-in sheet if you want to be a class rep, or talk to Robin

- any questions? feel free to email us dpac.doncaster@gmail.com

- Question from Tara: I am a leader with Navy Cadets (9-12) -- can we present to our child's class or similar? Katia suggested asking their teacher -- Cindy H also suggested this might be suitable for a Celebration of Learning Assembly -- maybe Remembrance Day?

Next Meeting: WEDNESDAY, 2 October 2019

Katia Dilkina adjourned the meeting at 8:27 pm