

DPAC MONTHLY MEETING: 2 OCTOBER 2019

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

In attendance:

Nicole Woods	Robin Grazley	Katia Dilkina
Cyndi Whaley	Adrienne White	Elena Schultz
Chelsea Laxton	Penelope Barillaro	Cindy Luchka
Marika Glickman		

Staff: Mrs. Cindy Harte, Mme Lara Kremler

1. Principal & Vice-Principal's Reports

French Cultural Presentation: Lara Kremler for French Immersion Teachers

- Lara: on behalf of French Immersion teachers, sharing some ideas about and asking for PAC support for a French cultural event this year (initiative headed by Sarah Harrison) -- all of the classes in school invited
- We have investigated and priced a few options, including the Maple Man & Les Cornouillers — also a dance in the gym for families. The price range seems to be \$600-1000 -- is PAC willing to contribute?
- Question from Nicole: does anyone do Carnival-themed stuff? Lara: not really -- we'd have to organize it ourselves. That could provide another possibility.
- also a theatre group, Theatre La Seizieme, from Quebec -- everyone invited, and kids not in French would be able to follow along. Some questions about their themes lately, though (\$968).
- Marika: would the culture be Quebecois, or France French? Lara: options so far are Quebecois. France connection is absent from the new curriculum — kids need to know, but not technically there anymore.
- Katia noted that we should check with Erin re: budget. Both French- and English-track parents present were in favour of supporting such an event.
- Marika and Cindy H both shared some ideas about winter/Carnaval themed events, possibly held over the week of Carnaval, which could involve food as well as dance or other cultural events.
- PAC exec would have to meet and approve adding this to the budget, but we agreed in principle to help pay for it.
- We will be in touch as teachers figure out options.

School Updates

- Cindy H: thank you to PAC for organizing & funding the grade 5 first aid presentation on Sept 26 -- kids got lots out of it, learned practical skills.

- Island Sexual Health -- body science for primaries -- their earliest available date is in March, which is fine -- all 4/5s will go at once, then 3s, 2s, and so on.
- Our school counselor is putting out a podcast series Monday mornings, called Coffee Talk — facilitate a group to get together and talk about mental health, well being. If there is demand, she also will offer evening sessions in her office or the multipurpose room. Coffee Talk starts Monday the 21st. Some parents did not recall getting this message — Cindy H will resend the email on Friday, with poster, as it may have been buried in the many messages which went out this past week.
- We had a Pro-D Day on Sept. 23, also class screening meetings with teachers -- this helps us as a school to set goals. This is the first year in the last 4 that we have needed to create a school growth plan. Staff helped identify where we need to go, and staff committee may be interested in working with admin on the guiding document.
 - Right now, 2 goals(literacy and numeracy as givens):
 - Mental wellbeing — how we can support everyone in the building so they can learn
 - Establishing a community of learners through collaboration for staff as well -- team approach. Staff are already doing things that foster those goals, so we need to document it. It is hard to collect data on these things beyond participation in programs, etc. Question from Katia: is program participation considered worse, or better? Cindy H: primary focus is knowledge base, strategies to self-care -- overall blanket ensures that everyone benefits.
- Update on projects:
 - School garden -- long process! We are still waiting for irrigation, fencing. The hookup for the portables is delaying irrigation, but Cindy H asked for the fencing in the meantime. Marni looked into it, and has said November for fencing — we will hope. Katia: thank you for following up, keeping this on district’s radar. Everyone is excited about seeing some action on this project! Cindy H voiced her respect for Marni — we know she will do what she can.
 - Magic Forest weed pull: was held today, but only one parent came to help the two people from HAT. Special thanks to that parent!
 - The planning that HAT envisions means the daphne [*daphne laureola*] doesn’t really need to be disturbed. Some present observed that the daphne was difficult to find. HAT has not sent details for the project to the district yet (still need to consult with school, kids).
 - A few parents noted that they or others who might have come were at work today. Wendy will take on the role of co-organizing cleanups with Mercedes -- timing will be rescheduled to 2-4 pm, or on a weekend.
 - Katia asked about the prospects for reopening the forest for class use. Cindy H: it is still officially closed until the daphne is gone. The district will send someone to reevaluate once we think the cleanup is done.
 - Cindy H noted that she still needs to figure out the parameters of Wendy’s role (i.e. x amount of hours for Doncaster) — she will connect with teachers/Melissa, who has done the parent engagement with HAT.

- New intermediate playground: Cindy H confirmed what we have heard previously, that a community build is a no because of the grant. If we are approved, PAC can contribute more funds to build more structures, but a portion of the grant is earmarked for the installation.
- two further things:
 - An official announcement is forthcoming about not bringing toys from home -- we will be enforcing that rule. We will have playground balls in each division and a bin of equipment to borrow -- tubs of smaller toys (sand toys, plastic animals, cars, etc.) Question from Nicole: what happens if kids sneak toys to school? Cindy H: once it's out there as a known expectation, staff/supervisors will be able to deal with that. There will be a couple of specific exceptions, which we will share with those kids as needed. Parents expressed support for this decision.
 - renaming the Cage -- the Dragon's Den? does it work in French? We might officially paint it, add lettering -- could put it out to the kids, and perhaps even create a mural on the wall. Those present expressed support for calling it the Dragon's Den. Marika noted that she might have a possibility re: the mural — will talk later about art start grants.

2. September 2019 Minutes to Approve -- motion to approve by Nicole Woods, seconded by Elena Schultz.

3. Back to School BBQ

- The BBQ was a successful event overall -- getting away from pre-orders worked well, but definitely some learning for next year.
- Consensus was that we needed more food options -- people waited a long time for Greek on the Street especially. Nicole: not just number of trucks, but the type -- Mr. Tubesteak went faster, in part due to their smaller menu. Next year we could have more of the same type of trucks to keep wait times more consistent.
- Nicole: this was the first time we have had food trucks at this event, and we didn't know how it would go -- important learning experience. As it turned out, lots of people did come, so next year we do need three trucks, and double the pizza.
- Cindy L suggested that next year we make sure the trucks know that everyone will want to eat at the same time -- the more prepared food, and the fewer menu options, the better. Nicole agreed, noting everyone is used to a limited menu at school events.
- Katia: thank you to parent organizers, and thank you Cindy H for all your help with organizing!
- **This year we ordered 15 pizzas -- note that we need 30 next year.**

4. Grade 5 First Aid

- thanks to Cindy L for organizing first aid training for grade 5s, held September 26

5. HAT Partnership and Garry Oak Meadow

- Weed pull was held this afternoon, and only one parent showed up.
- We will need to try again at a later date, wait for HAT to tell us when -- we need help from more people if we want the Magic Forest reopened.

- Consensus was that timing was a problem -- a number of parents who would have liked to help were at work or are otherwise busy during the day.
- Lara offered to help if the event was on a Saturday -- other teachers might too if it's held outside of work hours. Nicole suggested 2-4 pm might be worth trying, as many parents would be at the school for pickup. Katia noted that the weekend community cleanup hasn't been that well attended either, however.
- Cindy L thought we might need some clarity in advertising how many people we need. If we were to say we need 15 people, for example, parents might be more likely to come forward. Cindy H: Wendy (HAT) asked if class reps could drum up a person from each division. Robin mentioned that difficulty in finding class reps this year might make this harder.

6. Report from VCPAC Meeting Sept 24

- Elena: this was a very long meeting, and VCPAC probably did not get through the agenda that night
- Elena has looked after Doncaster's membership renewal -- thanks to VCPAC funding, which many PACs don't take advantage of, fees will not have to come from our budget
- BCTF presentation about upcoming bargaining, job action -- flyers from GVTA
- also handout for parent-teacher education evening with Jesse Miller from www.mediatedreality.com, next Tuesday (October 8) at Spectrum, discussing technology, youth, and social media. It is free, but need to register through EventBrite. Katia: the flyer doesn't say anything about targeted age -- is it aimed more at secondary students? Elena: no, it is open to any age, and the younger the better. Parents wondered about the similarity of this presentation to the White Hatter.
- VCPAC urged collaboration among neighbouring schools for parent education to make events cost-effective -- we have successfully collaborated with Braefoot in the past.
- A short discussion of our parent ed possibilities ensued. Mohapel (Royal Roads), Sarah Harrison's suggestion, covers similar topics to Jesse Miller -- Miller is similar to the White Hatter as well. This topic is on people's minds a lot -- but since parent ed on this topic is so widely available, is it worth our investing in something like that? Marika noted that Mohapel's presentation is more about the physiology of the brain, and others are more about dealing with social media. Nicole agreed that there might be value in having multiple angles on this topic. Katia felt that other PACs may agree to split costs due to the high level of interest as well.
- Cindy H offered to send out the poster, since we don't have all the reps' class lists completed yet.
- Lara noted that last year we were approached by someone from govt re: a presentation about media addiction (similar) -- aimed at kids as well as parents. Katia: that method (talking to kids as well as parents) is way more effective. Lara will try to find info and let Katia know.
- Carolyn from GVTA also spoke about the potential of upcoming strike action. if anyone from PAC is interested, they are more than willing to come and meet with us, explain things. Nobody wants job action; however, the contract is up, and a new collective agreement should have been made by now. Cindy H and Lara offered some clarification around the current situation with EAs as well, particularly problems with understaffing. A hiring fair for EAs will be happening soon.

7. Class Reps: Update

- Robin: we have run across some difficulties in organizing class reps this year, and at this stage, lists are not complete.
 - We still have 4 divisions without reps (3, 11, 17, and 18). Robin has spoken with Mrs. Pratt (11) and Ms. Montgomery (17), but they were not able to think of any parents who might be willing to take on the role. Thanks to Mrs. Pratt for offering to act as email rep for her own class if needed.
 - We have also had a couple of fairly significant miscommunications this year, where a rep has volunteered, but either the teacher or the PAC was not aware of that and made arrangements with another parent. This is unfortunate -- we need to think about a better way to organize reps so this is less likely to happen in future.
 - There is also some confusion about what class reps do.
 - Their primary role is to forward communications from PAC to families; some also organize a class gift for the teacher at holidays.
 - Robin suggested that we separate the info about volunteers for fun lunch from the class rep role, as she heard from a few parents who seemed to think they could not be class rep if they weren't available to help with fun lunch. Some reps stated that did not see a problem with the wording, as they hadn't thought this was part of the role. Cindy L noted that the references to fun lunch may have been added to the class rep info at a time when we were having trouble finding fun lunch volunteers -- we could look at changing it.
 - Katia noted that some teachers do ask the class rep to send out notices from them, e.g. to help find drivers for field trips.
 - Some parents mentioned that contact forms have not yet been sent out in some classes. Nicole has heard some confusion from new reps about how to compile class lists. Robin has sent out emails with instructions and links to the PAC website (with template form), and urged anyone who has questions to get in touch -- reps should have the information they need to get started, and know who to ask if they're not sure. Robin will follow up with reps.
 - Cindy H: at Torquay, PAC used reverse permission -- families were asked to opt out within a certain amount of time if they did not wish to receive PAC info, and emails were forwarded through the office using bcc
 - Katia: the class contact list is also valuable for organizing playdates. Cindy H: could add that to the form. We could also send out a google form with signups for activities, etc. -- co-op factor. Lara: do parents have to use gmail in order to access? No -- they can access through a shared link.
 - Consensus was that we can improve on how we organize class reps for next year -- reverse permission sounds like a good idea. Cindy H: the role has changed over the past 10 years as families' schedules change.

8. DPAC Donation Letter

- Glenn has been working on this -- same format as last year, where families are asked to make a one-time donation to support PAC activities. Our budget is public, but no one really looks at it -- this way, people get a better idea of where the money goes.

- When is a good time to send this letter? We need to wait for Erin to be able to accept e-transfers -- end of October? new year? Adrienne: can we use clickable link in an electronic version of the letter? Some debate followed about whether paper was more effective ... we agreed to start with an electronic version.
- Cindy L wondered whether it was too much to send it out at the end of October ... Have we had better success in the spring, when we have proven that we haven't asked for anything else in terms of fundraising? Nicole also wondered if the new year might be better, as we do need a lot of people to volunteer for the Craft Fair. Katia noted there were no tax implications, as we do not give receipts. Adrienne: in the fall, it seems like you are investing for the year. Lara: grade 5 parents may also not donate in the spring. Penelope agreed that in the fall, it seems more like operating funds for the year.
- Katia: let's get the letter out as soon as possible. In the future, we should make sure we are able to accept e-transfers even when Erin is away, as people do get nervous when e-transfers don't get accepted right away. Adrienne can also put donation info in the newsletter.

9. The Card Project

- Katia: Alexis is handling this again, the teachers are on board, and art is happening -- priority deadline is the 27th
- Cindy L: will Alexis do the Purdy's fundraiser again this year? Yes -- thanks, Alexis!

10. Emergency Supplies

- Replacement has not been dealt with yet due to the water situation. We could have individual bottles, as we have done in the past, but Katia and Hilda are not comfortable with this. Instead, we could purchase the 5 gallon jugs, but we need a way to dispense the water.
- Elena noted that there is a faucet that goes on top. Cindy H: we can buy one and use it on multiple jugs. Then we could use stackable cups, which don't expire, and neither will the pump -- only the jugs would have to be replaced. Cindy L noted that the jugs have a longer expiration date (2-3 years).
- We would have to purchase the jugs (deposit) and exchange them for refills -- water must be distilled. We could keep an expired jug for handwashing, etc., but not drinking.
- Katia: is there a standard volume for emergency supplies? 500 mL per child?
- Cindy L: the only advantage of the water bottle with the screw-on top is the ability to ration more easily over a long wait time. Katia felt that the cost of individual bottles (for the environment) is higher, though. Nicole pointed out that small cups might ration the water just as well, since kids would have to drink it in one shot.
- Parents present agreed that jugs with a tap and small cups were the preferred option -- Katia will arrange for purchase.

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

- Cyndi: events are happening next week -- the Celebration Station will be set up Monday morning. Every morning of the week, kids will get a sticker and we can submit the chart to CRD -- possibility of a prize. Tuesday right after school, there will be bike-powered music -- like the blender, but music. Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday we will continue tracking participation --

Friday, there will be some prizes for classes where kids participated, as well as draws for individualized prizes. Cindy H: there will be snacks at the check-in station Monday morning -- we are okay for volunteers.

- Cyndi will send Cindy info for email
- poster: extra bike storage in the courtyard for the event
- Nicole: we could use another bike rack at the school -- **let's add this to the agenda for the next meeting.** We could see if CRD would be willing to donate (but district would have to install) -- this is one of the prizes.

12. Thrifty Foods Family Run (Oct. 13)

- Adrienne created the group for the Fun Run -- they have not contacted Adrienne yet, so she has reached out to them. Sunday the 29th was the deadline for registration to have packages sent to the school. Adrienne needs to clarify who is the contact and what's happening with T-shirts -- hopefully they will get back to her soon. She will wait to put info in the newsletter.

13. Halloween Dance (Oct. 24)

- Marika: all is fine -- Carla put up the posters, but we still need to send out email to families. This email will go through the principal; Adrienne will also put info in the newsletter.
- Doing setup after 4 pm is fine -- last year, the afterschool care kids also helped.
- The dance will be held from 6-8 pm.
- We have told the DJ that we're asking kids for song requests, and he is on board. Katie will put together an email for parents to send in requests (kids' favourites?) -- public signup so kids can write it up.
- drinks? not everyone reads the emails ... should we have juice boxes for sale? juice boxes are favoured over bottled water. We should include in our message that people should bring a reusable container for water.
- We will order 35 pizzas -- just cheese, to keep it simple, and no gluten-free this time (gluten-free ones are not safe for celiac anyway).
- email from Katie: last year we had a number of kids running around in the halls ... could we close off the halls to prevent this? Cindy H: they will need washrooms outside the gym, so we can open halls from the gym to the office, then block off everything else. That will provide some quiet space but no room to roam. We can also lock the changerooms at the back of the gym.
- costume contest -- can we do it better this year? A short discussion followed, and parents agreed that we'll do a costume parade instead at 7 pm, with lights on. Cindy L suggested a draw for prizes for all kids who wear a costume (check the PAC closet for prizes).
- We revisited the idea of a pumpkin carving event (Hilda asked PAC about this idea last year). After a short discussion of pros and cons, we decided to leave it for this year -- there is a lot going on.

14. Craft Fair

- Katia: not much to say at this point. Things are on track. Katia & Nicole met today: Nicole will check on areas where we'll need lead volunteers. The kids' craft zone in the library in particular needs someone to take charge -- this won't take a lot of time. The kids' craft tables will have

parents with them, so less need for managing. Lead volunteer(s) could recruit additional volunteers as well, purchase what's needed, get it set up. Katia and Adrienne will talk about phrasing for the call in the newsletter.

15. Doncaster Wear

- Marika shared a mockup for Doncaster t-shirts/hoodies -- this version has the logo in white, with a little bit of black to pop, and then we could choose any colour for the shirts. People liked it.
- There are discount prices for large orders. Batches of 72 would be the most cost-effective. We discussed whether it would be best to order a batch in each of 3 colours, which could leave us sitting on unsold inventory, or ask families to preorder, which might prevent us from taking advantage of the discount. Consensus was that we could set up an online form to preorder, and top up to 72 if necessary; it might be good to have some additional shirts on hand.
- We hope to be ready to launch before Christmas.

16. Art Starts Grant

- Marika has been in touch with Renee Sala, who owns Crafty School of Art. If we are interested, Renee can write a grant proposal and potentially create a mural for the Dragon's Den (aka the Cage) -- deadline is Oct. 22 for May. This project could involve the entire school, or a few classes -- could be class projects, or contributions to mural, with a schoolwide theme (e.g. Magic Forest).
- Those present were excited about the idea of the mural, with a Magic Forest/dragon's den theme. Cindy H suggested this would be a lovely parting gift for the grade 5s -- parents agreed.
- Marika will be in touch with Renee.

17. Parent Education

- Katia and Fiona surveyed PAC attendees re: preferred topics for parent ed. We decided on:
 - numeracy (#1) -- Fiona to look into Nikki Lineham's availability
 - Mohapel
 - social inclusion (#3)

Next Meeting: WEDNESDAY, 6 November 2019

Katia Dilkina adjourned the meeting at 9:09 pm