

Gordon Elementary PAC meeting October 27th 2008. 6:45pm-8:45pm

1. Attendees: Deborah Muggli-Mason, Caz Taylor, Deborah Kopelow, Reuben Ford, Thomasina Burgess, Eva Sereda, Donna Kobas, Eva Zladulak, Helen Sawchuck, Lisa Chambers, Elke Porter (secretary), Ingrid Sulston, Charlotte French, Gail Johnson, Diana McHardy Schmidt, Chris Shirley, Dan Graves, Margaret Davidson, Noreen Morris, Heather Young, Anna Johnson.

2. Approve September minutes. Moved by Thomasina, seconded by Heather.

3. The role of PAC – discussion

- a. school events and jobs involving PAC – handout
- b. the purpose of PAC

-suggestion – have a stand or bulletin board at the Welcome BarBQ
-comment: social communication between people (not just fundraising)
-suggestion: have balloons, colour, present it in a fun way
-comment: good opportunity for people to sign up as class reps or other reps
-comment: all parents are members of PAC and may not know it
-suggestion: set up a bulletin board at the Christmas stand (raffle box)
-comment: need more marketing, fun image, “fun-raising”
-comment: people may fear commitment – need to know they can just come and help when they can, rather than having to sign up and over-commit
-comment: volunteer sheets worked great
-comment: when we vote on something only the parents at the meeting get to vote – questions: should we change this and do it in a way that allows all parents to vote?
-comment: people who don’t attend the meeting won’t hear the discussions prior to voting.
-comment: parents may get information, but should only vote at the meeting.
-question: is it possible to vote by proxy? Current constitution says “No”.
-comment: concerns should be addressed without having to show up at a meeting.
-question: should we change the day of the PAC meeting so that parents who can’t make Mondays can attend. comments that this was tried and it made no difference to the turnout. Best to stick to one day so that parents know when to expect the meetings.

- c. Parent volunteers in classrooms

-comment: some parents have asked to volunteer in classrooms and are not needed. The need for parent volunteers is very teacher dependent.
-comment: parents can volunteer in any classroom, not just their own child’s classroom
-comment: some parents might want to be in their child’s classroom
-response from Margaret: parents can volunteer in so many ways in the school
-response from Noreen: parents can volunteer time, talents, treasure – Japanese Tea time, ask at the office if you have time.
-suggestion: communications office at events on online so people can get involved even when they can’t attend meetings.

4. Safe Arrival.

There are now enough parents to run this program, but it is a skeletal crew, and needs backups. It just means staying 15 or 30 minutes, checking the list, phone anyone not there.

5. Parent reps

Division 2 has no rep yet, suggestions were made to follow up on.
Division 3 needs one more rep

6. Cyberbullying worksop

Tomorrow at 7 to 8:30pm at Eric Hamber.

7. SPC (school planning council)

Next PAC we vote in the new SPC. The committee is made up of parent reps (one from PAC exec) and school administration.

8. Beautification committee

Elke Porter has volunteered to start this committee. Current interests are moving the trophy case into the main hallway, extending the garden where the tyre swings used to be, fixing the sign in the butterfly garden, fixing up the girl's bathroom.

-response: Margaret has shown the school board and the health officials the state of the bathrooms, but they say they are fine.

-comment: be careful with the garden, as people have used bushes to store alcohol, use it as a washroom, and other inappropriate uses.

-suggestion: 2 divisions own a square garden and can work on it together.

9. Summary of school activities by Margaret

- a. student council is excited about helping children in other countries, and organized the Unicef fundraiser (though the timing was not perfect with the Direct Donation Campaign).
- b. Student council come up with fun ideas like the Halloween dance, primary during the day, and the older students later on.
- c. Halloween parade.
- d. Neighbourhood action – helping keep Vancouver clean
- e. World action – Unicef fundraiser.

Volleyball has 4 teams. Wednesday, football at Bayview.

Sustainability conference – some ideas have come up and Margaret will put them in the newsletter.

Noon hour leaders are being trained by the School Community team.

Arts and crafts happens every Wednesday afternoon in the kindergarten room. 12:15-1:15pm. Parents please donate art supplies, and your help in running it would be welcome.

We got an extra 0.2FTE, to support classes with children with special needs.

10. Projected budget

Anna (Treasurer) walked us through the table of expenditures (hand out with last year's budget).

Teacher gifts, \$100 per class, approved (motion made last month).

Halloween security – one guy isn't enough and he was hiding. Try Genesis company. Lisa offered to call other schools in the neighbourhood to see what they do. Thomasina offered to call security companies and get prices.

Grocery cards – loan of 4K to program approved (motion made last month).

Author visits. Heather made a motion, to be approved next month, to spend up to \$2K on author visits. Thomasina seconded.

Music and fine arts presentations: Heather made a motion, to be approved next month, to spend up to \$2K on music and fine arts presentations. Helen seconded.

Direct Drive: \$7620 raised. The money will benefit every classroom. The teachers wish list will be looked at by the Direct Donation Committee. Question: should the committee come back to PAC with their proposal for spending? Yes.

Kindergarten teacher (Anke) needs supplies: long term kindergarten teacher left, leaving the classroom empty. Proposal to give Anke money to help get supplies. Offer from Eva to go bargain hunting for her for toys. If PAC buys supplies, they should stay in the school. Vote: should we give her \$200 on top of her \$100 gift? Approved.

11. Lice

Report by Charlotte French. At least 4 classrooms have had lice; some children more than once.

Feels like the whole school is full of lice.

Public health nurse associated with Gordon has not been able to be contacted by parents.

Margaret will talk to the children about lice. It is in every school and it is a higher incidence this year.

Parents and children need to be educated.

Children's story book about lice in a teacher's hair and the principal who combed it out who fell in love with her and they got married.

Privacy issues – need permission to check heads.

Can't send one child a letter and not another. Kids all know who has it and do their best.

Some parents have not been straightforward about having lice and won't admit it.

It is more contagious than a cold. Children start itching and scratching.

Lice is not considered a disease, only a nuisance. You have to treat it with toxic chemicals and wash all your bedding. Check for a minimum of 4 weeks. Still have lice in the school.

-suggestions: put on a similar/workshop on how to identify a louse.

In the UK, Friday you check through your child's hair every week.

-suggestion: need permission to check children's hair and Margaret will send a letter home to the whole school.

Diana will send Ingrid information to put on the website about natural healthy ways of getting rid of lice.

Charlotte expressed her feelings of getting mild flak on not sending her daughter to school with lice.

People may not report it because they don't know it is there. Some parents are in denial.

Letter home to parents will include a list of parents willing to check hair and permission slips or emails.

But it may lull you into a false sense of complacency.

Lice move fast, and the nits are very close to the head.

Jennifer, Heather, Diana, Eva know how to check.

13. FSA

Should we use the Nov PAC meeting to discuss this issue between parents and teachers without doing it over the heads of children. FSA is testing of children in grades 4 and 7. Fraser Institute uses it to rank schools, but teachers don't like it, because how good a school is depends on so many factors. Parents can opt out. Students shouldn't have to study for this test. Test is in February.

-suggestion: Nov PAC will be used to discuss this issue

14. VSB all Candidates debate

-slide show by Dan Graves

-Vision Vancouver, COPE (Coalition Of Progressive Electors) and NPA (Non-Partisan Association). COPE and vision are working together this time. 19 people are running for 9 positions. NPA has 8 candidates and there are 2 independents. Elected on a three year term. Each candidate was introduced individually, with photo. Trustees should vigorously defend public institutions. Need to be responsive to needs at a local level. Trustees we don't want have a lack of knowledge of public education.

If your name begins with A,B or C you may just be elected.

Voter turn out was poor in 2005 and the vote split.

Teachers elected candidates that they would support. Mainly the vision and COPE candidates.

SCC – school consultative committee (used to be PAC)

Potential trustees should show up at the meetings.

Urge your friends and family to vote.