



2125 Keating X Rd.
Saanichton BC
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May 2008

Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils Saanich Around the District

Board trustee Peter Garnham reported that 3 new Principalships have been appointed.

Wendy MacDonald Individual Learning Centre (ILC)
Kal Russell Sidney Elementary
Kevin White South Island Distance Education (SIDES)

Congratulations to these appointees. We wish you all the best in your new assignments!

Peter also reported that The Minister of Education Shirley Bond met with Superintendents and Board Chairs from all around the province of BC and discussed the plans for future to include strong start expansion, increase support for first nations, a new early learning agency and a strengthening of relationships in public education. Peter also advised that a report from the joint task force for sale of Sansbury School was presented to the Board at their meeting on May 7th outlining various options. This report will be going forward to the North Saanich Council for consideration.

Assistant Superintendent Nancy MacDonald reported that Vice Principal positions will be coming up shortly to replace some vacancies due to recent Principal appointments. She also said Saanich schools are working on implementation strategies for the new Ministry requirements for Physical Activity – that is 15 mins per day for Kindergarten students, 30 mins per day for grades 1 through 9, 150 mins per week for grades 10-12. Their goal is to have the least amount of impact on parents and current curriculum. Board staff are also working on the Community Literacy Plan for submission to Ministry in mid-May. Finally, a task force will start work on the French Immersion Programs in September 2008 discussing issues such as teacher recruitment and declining enrollment.

The Non-instructional days (Po-D) for 2008/09 are now set, however, the Board has asked parents for input on handling of NID days in future years. Please take a few moments in your next PAC meeting to discuss this issue and give your feedback to the following questions –

1. Would parents prefer to have one 4-day weekend to handle NID days required, or two 3-day weekends?
2. Do you prefer Fridays, all Mondays or combination?
3. Should the Board avoid the creation of a 3-day school week in any circumstances?
4. Is there a current need to improve communication about the purpose and rationale for professional development?
5. In what ways are PAC members involved in the planning and organization of school-based Professional Development Days?

You can email your answer via email directly to nancy_macdonald@sd63.bc.ca or through your COPACS representative to report at June 5th COPACS meeting.

Saanich Report on Appreciative Inquiry Sessions

The AI inquiry sessions have been completed and a preliminary report is posted on the school district website at www.sd63.bc.ca. This is by no means the end of this process, rather it is the beginning of strategic planning for Saanich's public education system.

COPACS would like to thank all of the educators, parents, community members and students who were able to participate in these important discussions. It was inspiring and exciting to be part of this process.

Keep checking the website for future updates on the vision plan for Saanich and all the latest news.

Saanich Approves Budget for 2008-09

We are pleased to advise you that Saanich Board of Education has approved their 2008-09 budget with minimal impact to classrooms. In doing so they have used up all but \$236,810 of surplus reserves which means they will face a larger shortfall in 2009/10. The approved budget increases the expenditures in instruction to 85.75% of the total budget and reduces the percentage of budget spent on administration, operations, maintenance and transportation.

Thank you to everyone who provided feedback through the Budget Advisory Process.

Around the Province

The BCCPAC Annual General Meeting took place in Richmond on May 3rd and 4th, 2008. Resolutions brought forward from member PACs and DPACs from around the Province were discussed and a new BCCPAC Board was formed via elections that took place.

Congratulations to newly elected officers below:

President	Ron Broda
2 nd Vice-President	Laurey-Anne Roodenburg
Director	Suzette Miler

In addition to Minister Shirley Bond's opening comments, there were presentations on the status of the BCCPAC governance audit that is ongoing, many interactive workshops and a wealth of exhibitor booths to visit.

Among the resolutions carried were Provincial funding for DPACs, Limits on term of office for School Trustees, Construction guidelines for occupied schools, Parental involvement in schools, and a stronger anaphylaxis protocol in schools. A full report is available from your COPACS representative and will be posted shortly on the BCCPAC website at www.bccpac.bc.ca.

COPACS Clips – May 2008

Highlights of May Meeting & Other News

Our Education Directions Rep Shauna Benson reported on April 29th meeting of the committee. In addition to setting the Non Instructional Days for 2008/09 school year, items for discussion included:

Presentation from Chair MaryLynne Rimer on recent workshop she attended entitled "Through the Green Glass" given by youth on environmental issues. The use of energy by our school facilities was an important topic at this symposium and our Board expressed the need for us to recognize these values that students are now expressing.

Treasurer Pam Irvine represented COPACS at a meeting of the Professional Growth Council. At this meeting a group of about 30 teachers from around the district discussed various methods of teaching around literacy. Pam learned the term "Screenagers", describing kids who spend a lot of time on computers. Students were studied and findings show some fundamental differences in the way they read. We read in a 'Z' pattern from left to right, 'screenagers' learn in an 'F' pattern, across the top down the left hand sides and across the middle. This means they process information differently so they learn differently.

Saanichton and McTavish elementary schools will be spending their final days in their existing buildings and preparing to move to new Kelset Elementary School in September. Both schools have special ceremonies planned and everyone is invited to attend. Saanichton will hold theirs on May 15th and McTavish on May 22nd – both from 4:00 to 7:00 pm. We wish all the students and staff well as they move into their new school!

BCCPAC Governance Audit Survey – BCCPAC Members still have an opportunity to participate in the governance audit survey that was emailed to PACs directly from BCCPAC on April 17th. The survey will close automatically on May 23rd. It is available on the "Members Only" website and you will need your PAC login and password information to access it.

A new revised edition of Speaking Up! A parent guide to advocating for students in public schools was launched at the recent BCCPAC Spring Conference and AGM. Speaking Up includes tear-out self help guides: Problem Solving and Meeting Survival as well as new information of fairness in decision making, provincial appeals, apologies and dealing with bullying. A copy of the new guide will be sent to each member PAC in the coming days and more copies are available for order through their website at www.bccpac.bc.ca

A reminder to parents that new provincial regulations take effect on July 1, 2008 requiring Booster Seats for children up to 9 years of age. A booster seat will be required in all vehicles in BC until the child reaches their ninth birthday or a height of four feet nine inches. These booster seats are now needed when parents take children on field trips. More information is available on the BCAA Traffic Safety Foundation website at <http://www.tsfbcaa.com>

Mark your Calendars Now for the 4th Annual South Vancouver Island Parent Conference happening on February 7th, 2009 at Spectrum School. Saanich, Victoria and Sooke District PACs are already at work planning special presentations and workshops for this event. If you have any topics you would like to see on the schedule, contact Cathy Barber at fbarber@shaw.ca or 216-2892

PAC Action Items

Non Instructional Days

Please spend some time talking to parents in your school community about their answers to the questions on Pro-D or Non Instructional Days as outlined on page 1. Send your feedback to the Board or through COPACS – it is vital to how they will be handled in the coming years.

30 Mins of Daily Physical Activity Requirement

- The new government guidelines require all students from grade 6-9 to have 30 minutes of daily physical activity, but not necessarily physical education instruction
- The Board would like feedback on what kind of drop in activities PAC members would like to see and would be able to volunteer for. These drop in activities could be run during lunch time to enhance physical activity opportunities offered throughout the day. School administrators would welcome this type of purposeful volunteering that requires a reasonable time commitment for the volunteers.
- What do PAC members think of making intramural sport mandatory at lunch time in our schools?

We appreciate your feedback on this important topic. Please send your comments to any of the COPACS executive listed below.

School Fund Raising Ideas

Is your PAC struggling to find new fundraising ideas due to the new Healthy Schools Fund raising Guidelines? COPACS has resources available for you that were collected at the recent BCCPAC Conference. Resources are available to you. If you were not able to pick up your school package at May COPACS meeting, contact Barb Lund at balund@shaw.ca or by phone at 658-6795 and she will get a package to you.

There are many new fund ideas including gardening items, candles, calendars, and lots of healthy food choices.

Dates to Remember

May 15 Saanichton School closure celebrations
May 22 McTavish School Closure celebrations
June 5 COPACS General Meeting @DRC 7:00 pm
June 11 Public Board Meeting – 8:00 pm

COPACS Executive 2008-2009

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