

DPAC Meeting Minutes
Monday, January 10th, 2011

In attendance:

DPAC Executive: Sarah Holland (Heather Park), Don Sabo (Chair), Dennis Fudge (Spruceland), Chris Finke (Treasurer), Steve Shannon (Kelly Road)

DPAC Reps: Connie Kratt (Buckhorn), Jacqueline Dockray (ECHE), Colleen Smith (Beaverly), Michelle Rolfes (PGSS), Elena Thomas (LDB), Lori Muise (Nukko Lake), Ryan Clarke (Quinson), Kim Shannon (Hart Highlands), Marilyn Langlois (Elluminate), Jan Vander Zwan (Elluminate), Barbara (Elluminate).

Partner Groups: Emily Yurkowski (DSAC), Lois Boone (Trustee), Brian Pepper (Superintendent), Matt Pearce (PGDTA/VP), Anne Smith (PGPVPA).

1. Meeting called to order at 7:08 pm

2. Motion to adopt agenda – Elena Thomas (LDB), seconded by Ryan Clarke (Quinson). Carried

3. Adoption of December Minutes: changes – Connie was not in attendance, Adjournment was motioned by Steve Shannon. Motion to accept Minutes – Sarah Holland (HP), seconded by Michelle Rolfes (PGSS). Carried.

4. Motion to accept DPAC Secretary Resignation: Michelle Hourie has resigned as Secretary due to accepting employment with the District – conflict of interest. With thanks to Michelle for carrying out the job of Secretary for half the year, Jacqueline Dockray (ECHE) makes motion to accept resignation, seconded by Ryan Clarke (Quinson). Carried, with regrets.

Two positions are now open – Secretary and Director at Large. Duties of Secretary include taking minutes, keeping correspondence of Society, about 2 hours/month, must attend DPAC Executive meeting to form new agenda once a month.

Q: Elena Thomas (LDB) – what do you do if no one steps up?

A: Don Sabo (Chair) – Real problem

C: Sarah Holland (Exec) – Marilyn Langlois mentioned she might be interested. Marilyn is on Elluminate and states her interest if we are in a bind.

Nomination: Kin Shannon (Hart Highlands) nominates Marilyn Langlois for the position of Secretary, seconded by Sarah Holland (HP). Marilyn Langlois – accepts nomination and position.

Director at Large: many nominations made in the room – all turn them down except Michelle Rolfes (PGSS) – by acclamation, Michelle Rolfes is the Director at Large.

5. PAC Networking Topic: (Policy Committee) – Suggested that we form ad hoc committees when issues come up that require a great deal of attention, such as policy revisions. Too late for policy 5119, but the Transportation policy is up for revision and will be controversial due to Courtesy bussing being removed. All (unanimously) are in favour. Motion to strike an ad hoc committee that reviews policies – Elena Thomas (LDB), seconded by Jacqueline Dockray (ECHE). Carried.

Question for Lois Boone will be posed about the process that is followed now that policy 5119 consultation period is over by Jacqueline Dockray (ECHE).

Stakeholders arrive, 7:40 pm.

6. Reports:

(a) DPAC Chair Report – written report attached – president’s luncheon December 6th; attended and presented at Board Meeting December 7th – made point that Policy 5119 was not just an ECHE issue rather it is a district-wide issue particularly with the recent school closures; three copies of “A Guide to School Legislation in BC” purchased for just under \$160; Chris Finke and Don Sabo suffered insufferably filing DPAC info. etc. on January 3rd, 2011.

(b) Treasurer’s Report – written report attached - \$182.79 for snacks and drinks etc. will appear on next report; BCCPAC meeting – will receive a stipend from BCCPAC for flights and will be included in next report (he hopes).

(c) Superintendent’s Report - applauds cooperative relationships amongst stakeholders, feels there is little infighting (except, perhaps regarding the FSA).

(i) Regarding Kindergarten Registration - if an impasse is reached on January 12th at Policy and Governance Meeting, will revert to 2008 policy for registration. If Board reaches an impasse January 25th, will revert to the 2008 policy. The work of the Board is done at the January 25th meeting, and Policy and Governance revisions may change at meeting. Staff will guess at the outcome and will have press releases ready, but BP believes that none of their announcements will be correct, and they will have to make adjustments on the night. Registration will take place on Wednesday, February 2nd, 2011.

(ii) Transfer Process begins Monday, February 7th, 2011 and closes Friday, March 18th, 2011.

(iii) Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) – Will take place between January 17th and February 25th for Grades 4 and 7.

C. Dennis Fudge – The summaries from the Traditional School show improvement over 6 years. This is useful information.

C. Brian Pepper – see comment under School Ranking – drew attention to.

C. Don Sabo/Sarah Holland – There is a toolkit on the FSA available on the DPAC website

C. Brian Pepper – received an email from the Min. of Ed. at 4:56 pm today – there will be a roundtable discussion about the FSA and a different process may evolve from this discussion.

C. Don Sabo – the DPAC has taken the position that they do not agree with the Ranking of Schools that is done by the Fraser Institute based on FSA’s.

C. Dennis Fudge – believes the DPAC should have a position on FSA’s.

C. Don Sabo – there are no teachers at School Planning Councils and they therefore have no input. BCTF and Government cannot come to an agreement and there is a failure on both sides. Feels the responsibility for the FSA’s lies above the DPAC and that we should therefore not adopt a position. But pros and cons can be discussed.

C. Dennis Fudge - DPAC is here to improve the education of students and therefore we should discuss it.

C. Don Sabo – DPAC feels it should be left up to parent to decide and not the DPAC right now because it is a divisive issue, and each parent needs to make the decision that is right for own children and family.

Q. Don Sabo – are Home-schooled kids required to sit the FSA?

A. Brian Pepper – doesn't know and will look into it.

C. Don Sabo - We have a lot of power in the individual choices we make for the education of our kids.

C. Connie Kratt (Buckhorn) – FSA's are very stressful for kids. Her child was confused as to what to do. Grade 7's were saying one thing and very little guidance from teachers. Feels there needs to be more of a picture of who is in charge to remove the confusion for kids. Kids shouldn't have to worry about it. It creates concern about future exams.

C. Sarah Holland (HP) – searched on web and found out that participating home-schooled kids *may* take part in the FSA's.

C. Lori Muise (Nukko Lake) – PAC's could keep track of comments re: FSA's so a report can be made.

Six Year Completion Rate – Two promising trends in our district. 1) The gap between Aboriginal and All Students is narrowing, and 2) Male and Female transition rates are almost the same – different from provincial trends where females tend to do better than males. Means district is doing a better job at meeting the needs of each student.

(d) Trustee Report – Lyn Hall has been re-elected as Chair of the Board, Trish Bella is vice-chair, BCSTA rep is Valentine Crawford.

Made changes to inaugural meeting – eliminated reception, had a business meeting. Choir was excellent! Truman Spring, Special Education Principal, gave a presentation on the distance education technology that is being used to allow staff to meet more regularly with Special Ed. kids. Staff do not need to travel as often (eg McBride and Valemount).

Trustees continue to meet with partners. Liason trustee positions will be finalised at next Board Meeting. Lois will be remaining as Liason Trustee with DPAC.

Q. Jacqueline Dockray (ECHE) – what happens in the interim between the end of the public consultation process and the Board Meeting on January 25th?

A. Goal of Policy and Governance is to find an agreement with Stakeholders in crafting the policy. It then goes to the Board and they discuss it publicly at the Board Meeting on the 25th of January.

C. Don Tells stakeholders about filling our Secretary and Director at Large positions this evening.

(e) PGDTA Report – Matt Pearce – Is in agreement with Superintendent's comments about the relationship between teachers and Administration. Feels money is carefully spent. Would like class size and composition to improve, but money is being well spend under the circumstances.

FSA – Thinks the Ministry is prepared to go to a randomized sampling for the test. This means the Fraser Institute won't be able to use in the ranking of schools. Minister of Health (at the time) felt it was a destructive use for hospitals. Matt encourages parents to go to the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives website where there is a report on research conducted on how the Fraser Institute uses data – basically say that it is terrible. Peer-reviewed journals will not publish the Fraser Institute reports.

Q. Jacqueline Dockray (ECHE) – What should parents do if they don't want their kids to write the FSA?

A. Parents need to instruct their child and teachers will not pressure them.

C. Dennis Fudge (Spruceland) – it isn't a bad test.

C. Matt Pearce (PGDTA) – it is untimely and useless information.

C. Brian Pepper – If a child doesn't write the FSA it is just a missing data point. Percentage of those writing the test in the district is 93-95% .

(f) PGPVPA Report – Anne Smith – there is no report

(g) CUPE Report – Lorraine Proust not present.

(h) DSAC Report – Emily Yurkowsky – no report except to say that they asked their members a question regarding the reduction in Learning Assistants and how it was affecting them. The stronger students are being asked to help the weaker ones and they feel the stronger ones are being held back.

C. Dennis Fudge – perhaps they could approach the district for pay!

7. Committee Reports

(a) No December meeting – one next Tuesday and Chris will be there.

(b) Meeting cancelled – no report.

(c) Don – meeting January 12th, 2011.

(d) Cara will be here next meeting and will provide a report.

8. Announcements/New Business

(a) Discussion about recommending to district that they track how many students are being turned away from schools. What are the effects on students and families?

Q. Sarah Holland (HP) – Are calls regarding kids not getting in tracked?

A. Brian Pepper – No.

Q. Steve Shannon (Kelly Road) – Can kids in a catchment be turned away?

A. Brian Pepper – We try to fit them in as best we can.

C. Brian Pepper – If you want to recommend something you need to ask yourselves what is the data that is to be collected and for what purpose?

C. Don Sabo – There is a desire to move forward on this recommendation but needs to be discussed more.

(b) Sarah Holland (HP) – general assent was given over email for the purchase of the Guides. Motion made by Sarah Holland (HP) and seconded by Jacqueline Dockray (ECHE) and approved by membership for purchase of Guides (in order to formalize what was carried out via email). Three cost \$150.15. They are available to PAC's to sign out.

(c) NICA – Steve Shannon – is a group of charities and non-profit organizations with no power – about 85 members. They talk to the BC gaming people. To be a member you need to go to three meetings/year. The group made a stink when gaming funds went down (went down to \$10/child – should be \$40/child). PAC’s receive funding from gaming so this affects us. It is another avenue for having a voice and is non-partisan. Steve is recommending we become a member. Steve Shannon makes motion to support the recommendation, Chris seconded. Carried.

(e) Request for a DPAC rep to sit on Calendar Committee. Dennis volunteers. Meeting date January 14th at 3:30 pm in afternoon. Sarah will attend with Dennis.

9. Other Business – none.

10. Executive Meeting – January 30th, 2011

11. Jacqueline Dockray (ECHE) – Motion to adjourn, Michelle Rolfes (PGSS) seconds. Meeting Adjourned at 9:30 – ish pm.