

# Executive Board Report – for December 7, 2015

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## Executive Meeting – Held November 22, 2015

Discussion on rural committee and (lack of) DPAC representation, as noticed in the agenda for the November 24<sup>th</sup> board meeting. Discussion on radon, effectiveness of meetings, methods of getting in touch with parents.

### Media

- None

### Rural committee

After DPAC presentation at school board meeting November 24<sup>th</sup>, school board added DPAC to the representative partner groups on the committee. The board debated whether or not to specify that this be a rural parent or not, motion failed by 3-4. After sending an email out to executive and all listed as DPAC reps, had a volunteer Sarah Foot, a parent from Edgewood Elementary who grew up in Hixon. Sarah has been able to attend committee meetings in McBride, Valemount, Glenview, and Pineview.

The board allocated up to \$20,000 for Stormy Lake Consulting. The questions that are being asked by the third party consultant at meetings include:

- Three words that describe rural ed currently in SD 57?
- Why is rural ed important?
- What don't they "get" about rural ed?
- What is similar and different between rural and urban ed?
- What would you stop, continue, start doing with rural ed?
- Three words to describe rural ed in the future?

It is unclear exactly how the locations and method of communication with prospective attendees were decided on.

## DPAC Chair Meeting – November 7, 2015

Desired outcomes:

- Rights of DPACs to be articulated and mandated
- Improved dissemination of information to parents
- Orientation and ongoing leadership training for DPAC leaders
- School districts to be advised of their responsibilities with respect to their DPACs
- Direct, stable funding of DPACs

Discussion of characteristics of high functioning DPACs.

## Education Services - DPAC minutes November 09 2015

### 1. Accept minutes

### 2. MyEdBC Update

- Letter from Fujitsu management apologizing to School Boards for system performance when over 230,000 students were entered into the system in September.
- There will be a Parent/student portal possibly as soon as the 2016-17 school year.
- District training pretty much complete and system performance is improving

### 3. Energy and Sustainable Conservation

#### Carbon Neutral Action Report

- ~\$165K for Carbon Tax on Fuel
- ~\$160K for Carbon Offsets purchased
- Emissions to purchase Offsets for are going down every year but cost of utilities has been rising so its becoming a challenge to find more conservation. Lighting and HVAC systems can only be upgraded once.

#### Energy & Sustainable Conservation Update

- ~\$320K from Carbon Neutral Capital Plan received for the Lac Des Bois Boiler replacement
- Many energy saving Infrastructure projects, from Outside LED Lighting to Custodian Hot water tank replacement
- BCHydro and FortisBC Energy initiative involvement. ~\$100K from FortisBC for various projects
- SD57 is now part of the new Shared Services BC Education Marketplace meaning gas is now purchased direct from Shell, down to about \$1 per gigajoule.

### 4. Preliminary Enrolment

- 2015-16 total enrolment up 74 to 12,728. Highest since the 2012-13 year at 12,977

### 5. Service Delivery Update

- A few Phase 1 items are working and saving money - Legal, BCEd Marketplace, Custodial Supplies
- A few more phase 1 items are in the near future - IT Services, Support & Wellness training
- Phase 2 items are now into planning but not seen as beneficial to SD57 - Transportation, Facilities Management, Payroll HR

## Policy and Governance – November 4, 2015

Whistleblower policy postponed indefinitely.

Discussion as to what the meaning of the motion was about Safer Schools policies (first referred to committee by board September 24, 2013).

## **(Draft of) Presentation to Board – November 24, 2015**

I'm Sarah Holland, from the district parent advisory council.

I had mentioned at the last board meeting that I'd bring back some information from the recent DPAC chair conference, held in Burnaby. It was very interesting to speak with DPACs across the province, and see how they work within their districts.

Some of the commonalities:

We all wanted a dependable and effective communications method between DPACs, PACs, and parents – one that works. It's not just us that have this problem.

We discussed core purposes - advocacy, assisting PACs and parents, and encouraging parent involvement. We talked about educating, informing, and empowering parents, to be true partners in the education of their children.

We talked about the value of partnerships, with our partner groups, and acting together. We discussed building leadership, succession planning, and finding those parents who like attending meetings. We talked about exhausted parent volunteers, and how to avoid people taking on too much.

We talked about the difficulties in receiving timely and complete information from districts, and how meaningful consultation with boards is both essential and difficult. We talked about possible changes to legislation to assist with meaningful consultation.

One item of concern voiced by many seemed to be receiving simple respect from their boards – parents should be a valued and included partner group, and aren't in some districts.

I had said at the meeting that I felt our district did many things well, and that we felt our participation as a partner group was valued. Of course, that was before I read the terms of reference on the ad hoc committee on rural education, which has representation from many different partner groups – but ignores parents, for the sake of expedience. We note these areas of our district are as integral to DPAC as they are to the district. We must have missed these terms when originally brought forward, and likewise haven't seen anything mentioned when it comes to trying to promote these meetings to parents.

Moving forward, we're not sure where you're at when it comes to the strategic plan, the sustainability process, or the long range facilities plan. However, if you do intend to make any changes for the end of this year, then you are out of time to receive meaningful consultation input prior to any changes.

There was a recent article about some changes in Central Okanagan about catchment changes. The options they're looking at came after eight months of public consultation, including meetings with a focus group that went back and forth between the school board and the local parent advisory committees at each school. Their secretary treasurer was quoted as saying: "It's been a very robust consultation and I think there has been some really good discussion. It's not far off the staff recommendation the last time around but it's a better fit. The parents have had the opportunity to talk about it and understand the process and realize that this is the best of all the options that are available. This really does limit the immediate disruption for the kids but sets us up for the future."

The Comox Valley district has in their long range facilities plan a timeline, in which they note that changes that would be made for September 2016 would need to start the process by October 2015. Their document also recommends that an external consultant be engaged to manage the consultation process, to improve accountability and responsiveness, while providing relief to already busy senior leaders.

Lastly, I'll also note that DPAC is interested in discussing more about radon testing in schools. It was noted that at a previous board meeting, from ed services, stating that the previous testing had not found any issues. Given that the previous testing was conducted in 1990, some 27 years before Health Canada lowered their guidelines for acceptable levels of radon from 800 to 200 becquerels per cubic metre, there was concern that the previous results may not still be valid. Parents were very interested in pursuing this subject further.

Thank you for your time.