

# Executive Board Report – for February 1, 2016

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## Executive Meeting

Held Friday, January 29<sup>th</sup>. Topics discussed include district budget and consultation process, transportation, rural committee recommendations, calendar committee, staffing changes at board office, BCCPAC resolutions & resolutions meeting, BCCPAC conference, FoodSafe, PAC Café, current issues with sextortion and social media safety workshop.

## Media

- Citizen regarding possible fee for busing
- Opinion 250 regarding Matt Pearce

## Policy and Governance – January 13, 2016

Discussion around Safer Schools policies, motion from September 24, 2013, and how to proceed. Some discussion as to prioritization of policies to be reviewed.

## Calendar Committee Information

As in previous years, a committee is being convened to provide input regarding the district calendar.

Two meetings are planned – Thursday, February 11, and Thursday, March 31. Both meetings will start at 3:30 and take place in the Parsnip Room here in the central administration office.

Again as in previous years, partner groups are each invited to have two representatives on the committee. We request that the same two people attend both meetings, for continuity.

### Meeting #1 -- February 11th at 3:30 p.m.

- Welcome and Introductions
- Review of the Calendar Regulation and Ministry Information Bulletin
- Committee Mandate
- Changes to 2016-2017 calendar (for information and to make public for a minimum of 30 days)
- Review DRAFT calendar for 2017-2018 (for discussion and to make public for input)

### Meeting #2 -- March 31 at 3:30 p.m.

- Welcome
- Check in
- submission of feedback sent to calendar input email address (calendar@sd57.bc.ca)
- submission of feedback gathered by partner groups
- Review consultation timeline (posted February 5 to March 31st)
- Submission to the Board of Education (April 5th?) to receive the update to the 2016-2017 calendar for approval of the 2017-2018 calendar

## **(Draft of) Presentation to Board – January 26, 2016**

I'm Sarah Holland, representing DPAC, the district parent advisory council. I have two major items to address tonight.

1 - You're going to be talking about a motion to implement a \$100 rider fee for busing students.

The goal of this motion is to bring in additional revenue – presumably after the cost of collection - of \$263,000. On a total budget of about \$140 million dollars, that's 0.2% of your total budget. For the district, that's kind of the equivalent of checking the sofa cushions for spare change. However, for families, an additional \$100 to \$300 a year for school expenses is sizeable. This fee would have a much greater impact on individual families, than it will on the school district budget. It would also likely further promote the inequities between our rural and urban populations, by making more costly for our remote and rural families to access public education.

DPAC cannot support this fee.

We suspect, however, that you are already aware of this, and that bringing in an additional \$263,000 is important enough to the district this year to implement this, even with the multiple issues inherent in such a fee.

And that concerns us greatly, for what this may mean for the rest of the budget. When communicating with parents, we've noted that in large part, this fee would be a result of provincially mandated reductions. You may well be faced with not making a "good" choice, when it comes to this fee, but making a "least bad" choice. If this fee does eventually pass, DPAC would like to see some "least bad" guidelines - to start with, that consideration be given to payment plans, that the language in the hardship policy of "The process must always...respect an individual's privacy and dignity and adhere to strict principles of confidentiality and fairness." be strictly followed, and that individual schools and/or their PACs not have to fund hardship fees, but rather that be covered by the transportation department. We'd also like to see more public consultation for the budgeting cycle, which we have requested for a couple of years now.

And consultation brings us to item #2. Going back to the November board meeting, the board did pass a motion to add DPAC to the rural consultation committee, after the first meetings had already been held. I'm pleased that we were considered an actual partner group in that respect. At that meeting, some board members tried to combine having rural representation with having parent representation, by mandating that DPAC could only send a rural parent to the committee. As an independent partner group, we have internal processes for external committee representation. Please trust us to send appropriate representation. Your goal of trying to have rural representation was laudable, but the attempted implementation was the issue – please respect your partner group internal processes.

You have your own processes for governance, and the board's governance job is critical. It entails setting policies, budgets, strategic planning (& making strategic plans public in a timely manner!), hiring senior staff, approving administrative objectives, monitoring performance, and consultation.

It's critical that consultation be done well - it's rather pointless else wise, except for amusement value, or an evening out. We would suggest that some guidelines or policies be set for the consultation process. Publicize consultations with multiple methods. Publicize it enough in advance to be able to find childcare, if required. Allow enough time for schools to get out information without additional workload – many have scheduled monthly newsletters, for example. Tell people what it's about. Times of day and locations need to be convenient for as many people as possible. If you find that something has not been adequately publicized, reschedule it. Setting guidelines for how public input is sought would be useful, to ensure this input is valid and worth all our time, expense, and energy. Implementation of this isn't your job, but it is your responsibility to ensure that it's done.

Lastly, our district is fortunate to have many special and dedicated people working with our children. We have lost a very special one, with Matt Pearce's untimely death. Our DPAC, this district, our community, and his family and friends will all feel this loss, and miss him very much.