

# Executive Board Report – for June 6, 2016

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## Executive Meeting

Held June 5<sup>th</sup>. Discussion of director position, scheduling for 2016/17 school year, superintendent / assistant superintendent hiring, budget, executive responsibilities, and more.

## Media

Opinion 250 news regarding DPAC election (Sarah Holland).

Vista Radio regarding DPAC election (Sarah Holland).

## Draft Meeting schedule for 2016/17

- September 12 (second Monday)
- October 3
- November 7
- December 5
- January 9 (second Monday)
- February 6
- March 6
- April 3
- May 8 (second Monday, double check BCCPAC AGM)
- June 5

## SD57 EdSC - DPAC minutes May 09 2016, Steve Shannon

### 1. Accept minutes

- yup

### 2. City of Prince George- 2020 or 2022 BC Summer Games Bid

- House in schools will cost, work out with city in letter of understanding
- Recommend to board

### 3. Edgewood Elementary – Sanitary Sewer and Parking Lot Upgrade Project

- Coordinated timeline with city street work
- \$230K recommend to board

### 4. Radon Screening

- Share with committee BCCPAC passing Radon Resolution
- Recommend to board \$29.5K from Surplus for Agenda Option 1
- 200 Radon Screening kits to be distributed to every SD57 property in August then recovered in November with results provided by Christmas
- Results to be compared with 1994 screening which did not include outlying communities
- Radon levels are reduced by upgrading HVAC systems which SD57 has been doing anyway in recent years.

Next Meeting June 13 2016

## **Policy and Governance Committee, May 11, 2016, Sarah Holland**

Decision not to move definitions from policies to a separate policy document. Discussion on word choice in sexual harassment policy, bus conduct, and 3541 student transportation. Student transportation policy has been on policy's to do list since 2014, when policy 5119 was revised.

## **(Draft of) Presentation to Board – May 17, 2016**

I'm Sarah Holland, and I'm the former chair of the DPAC, the district parent advisory council.

I'm very pleased to say that (a) we have term limits for our positions, (b) I came to my term limit as chair, and (c) we have a new chair of DPAC, Gillian Burnett.

Unfortunately, Gillian couldn't be here tonight, and neither could our new vice-chair, Mike Gagel.

As I have yet to find a new hobby for my evenings, and I'm still on the DPAC executive as the treasurer, I'm therefore delivering this update to you.

You may find it of interest to meet with our terrific volunteers on our executive at some point – we remain very interested in meeting with you.

We had several delegates attend the BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils AGM in Kelowna, and I'm pleased to say that all of the resolutions we brought forward passed – capacity adjustments, ensuring BCCPAC materials for parents remain accessible, and radon testing. There was an interesting one regarding gifted learners:

“that BCCPAC advocate for appropriate funding for programs and resources for learners with asynchronous development / gifted learners. This term was new to many of us, and refers to “uneven intellectual, physical, and emotional development. In average children, development of these areas progresses at about the same rate, in sync. However, in gifted children, the development is out of "sync." They do not progress at the same rate.” It was interesting to discuss the needs of these students, who often get left out of special needs discussions.

Another resolution of interest: “that BCCPAC call on all BC Boards of Education to fully implement all aspects of the Parent Portal contained within the new MyEducation BC Student Information System with suitable security protocols.” There was a lot of discussion as to ways to get information out from schools to parents, and this was seen as one opportunity. This is an area in this district that there is some scope for improvement in.

There were two resolutions that Prince George had a hand in amending, that I thought I'd mention to you:

“that BCCPAC advocate that the downloaded cost increases, such as negotiated wage settlements, energy rate increases, and medical services premium increases, be fully funded as additional increases to current operating funding.” This motion had come forward referring only to the economic stability mandate.

“that BCCPAC write to the Ministers of Finance and Education for the immediate investment back to the operating budget of the \$29 million in savings for the 2015/16 and the \$54 million for 2016/17 collected under the mandated “Administrated Savings Plan”. The original motion called for this to go back to classroom funding, not to the operating budget – which rather bought into the idea of there being room to make cuts in administrative matters. That may be true in some districts; we emphatically made the point it's not true everywhere.

As always, it was good to be from Prince George, and to be able to talk about how our DPAC and district typically work together. I'm not saying that there's not room for improvement, but there many districts with much more room for improvement.

We'll now be able to also speak to the superintendent hiring competition, as that has been a impressive process.

In some cases, we discussed our various board's fiscal competence and lobbying activities, and various opinions were heard.

Districts are not going to get enough money from the Ministry of Education to do everything they want to do, or everything they need to do. I am unsure if that is ever the situation, in any jurisdiction worldwide. It is the responsibility

of the locally elected officials to make financial decisions in the best interests of the students of their district – the absolute centre of all educational and financial decisions, as the report in here says.

The annual budget in the agenda package shows the high level numbers. From what's presented here, it's impossible to determine the specific decisions - or the hard work, fiscal prudence, angst, vexation, and frustration that we know it represents. Understanding of school district budgeting is not something that fits well into a few pieces of paper. We look forward to the presentation tonight, while still hoping to get out of here at a reasonable hour.

We also look forward to finding out more about the aboriginal enhancement agreement.

Thank you for listening.

## **(Draft of) Presentation to Board – May 31, 2016**

I'm Gillian Burnett presenting on behalf of the district parent advisory council.

In keeping with what DPAC has historically commented on in May, I have a few things to say regarding the fees and deposits. We are pleased to see that Policy 5101 – Financial Hardship is referenced in this document as we too are "...committed to ensuring that no student is denied an opportunity to participate in a course, class, or program because of financial hardship."

In the fees and deposits document, field trips are described as optional. However, according to your policy, there is a difference between field trips that are curricular, co-curricular or extra-curricular - "Co-curricular" means of or pertaining to activities that, while not required, are intended to enhance the prescribed learning outcomes outlined by the Ministry of Education (e.g. field trips, band concerts, debating clubs, etc.). No student is denied access to curricular or co-curricular activities because of financial hardship. Should students be "...expected to reimburse the school for costs associated with field trips...", your policy requires that students and parents must also be informed "...that fees will not be a barrier to student participation..."

Although there has been some improvement in communication about Policy 5101, more is needed. At the very least, we need to include a statement that explains that fees will not be a barrier on **all** communications regarding fees and deposits. This should include every newsletter and permission slip that references or requests the fees and deposits.

Parents are interested in education and most specifically with what is happening in their children's schools. When talking with parents, it becomes clear that there is an inconsistent level of information shared across the district. Some administrators attend all PAC meetings and communicate about school budgets, organization, professional development, recent assessments and more, but in other schools that is not the case. As we wait to find out how the BC ED Plan will address parent engagement and access to information, perhaps we could work on creating some basic guidelines about what information should be shared with parents.

Parents also want the opportunity to provide input into their child's school. We once had a legislated process for parent input through school planning councils. These were controversial, and have been removed from the School Act – but nothing exists to replace this process for parents. Again, we wait in the hopes that the BC Ed Plan will provide a new mechanism for input.

Speaking of communication, we are wondering what the next steps are for the Strategic Plan as we do have some issues with it at this point. We'd like to know when and how this will proceed.

I'll note that the ministry released information regarding curriculum, graduation requirements and assessments last week. The Q and A available on the district's website may answer some questions, but DPAC would be more than willing to work with the district to put on any public information sessions regarding the changes. Some parents and members of the public may want more information than what is currently available.

In a more recent ministry release, more money! It's nice to have a bit more for the budget. It looks like some of the sustained lobbying from our various groups may have been heard by the government.

Lastly, our new Executive looks forward to meeting the new members of the senior team and an opportunity to meet with the board. Thank you for this opportunity to speak with you, and we look forward to more conversation and consultation.