

Executive Board Report – for March 6, 2017

Media

CKPG – February 22nd – Reporting Student Learning

Vista Radio – March 1st – Lunch hour and Parking

School District

February 22nd – Ministry Open House and Engagement on Student Reporting (Gillian Burnett and Sarah Holland)

February 27th – Presidents Table Meeting (Gillian Burnett)

February 28th – School Board Meeting (Gillian Burnett and Sarah Holland)

(Draft of) Presentation to Board - February 28th

Good evening, I'm Gillian Burnett, presenting on behalf of the District Parent Advisory Council. Tonight I'd like to draw your attention to two areas that have generated a growing concern amongst parents.

The first is the structure, timing and supervision at lunch hour. This is a misnomer, our lunch "hour" has been reduced to a 15 minute race to wash, collect our lunch, consume it as quick as possible, and clean up so we can get outside for 30 minutes of activity. Society has placed a great deal of attention on eating healthy, balanced meals and many parents try to provide their children with just such a lunch. Imagine then what it's like to have most of that nutritious food return home at the end of the day? This happens more frequently than we'd like to admit. Our students are finding it difficult to eat their lunches in the allocated time and those that do manage, have probably eaten far too quickly than is recommended for our health.

And who is responsible for supervising this eating contest? In many elementary schools we have intermediate students supervising the primary students while they eat. These students do not appear to receive any training or education on what to do if a child is choking or what to look for in terms of an allergic reaction. Not only does this pose a risk for the primary students, but what affect will something like this have on the intermediate student? This happened on their watch and they weren't prepared to deal with it.

And then there is the 30 minutes of unstructured activity. Many parents are questioning whether the 30 minutes is enough.

The second area concerns the congestion and chaos around schools in the morning and afternoon when drop off and pick-up occur. We joked that at a previous PAC Café we almost

formed a coalition of parents for parking, but this year I've been asked to start a conversation about setting up meetings with the suggested title "Asphalt and Assholes". This problem is not going away.

While much of the problem could be alleviated if everyone behaved in a respectful and courteous manner, it is important to look at what is realistic to change. There are not many schools that escape this horrendous phenomenon twice a day, but it is more prevalent at schools offering a choice program. These programs enroll students from the entire district and transportation is not provided. Parents are left driving their kids, and the schools were not designed for that much traffic. With the changes to bylaws and bicycle lanes, the issue is causing even more tensions.

We would like to arrange with you for some sessions to look at possible workable solutions, and that this be looked at as a district wide problem, rather than simply looking at each school in isolation. We would like to invite PACs from affected schools – such as Spruceland, Ecole Lac des Bois, Polaris Montessori, to name a few – in addition to people from the district, municipality, ICBC, and anyone else who may be able to assist with this.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this evening. I'm confident that by working together we can find ways to address these parent concerns.