

I was honoured to be able to attend this event on behalf of DPAC for SD57. Despite a partisan beginning in the Minister of Education's speech, I felt that attending was worthwhile because of the helpful information shared and connections made. Everyone sat at round tables and we were encouraged to switch up where we sat so that we would meet more parents. We could each ask questions and many were answered from the floor as well as from prepared cards.

Minister Fleming had a wide ranging speech. A focus of Budget 2018 will be Early Childhood Education and capital projects including seismic upgrades. Improvements are hoping to be made in Aboriginal Education, special needs support and generally supporting vulnerable learners. Sea-to-Sky District has graduation parity between Aboriginal and non-aboriginal students, so we may be interested in seeing what they are doing to make that happen. He hopes that the excellent 2015 results of BC student's testing compared to world-wide figures will not mean we rest on our laurels, as he warned that we are in danger of slipping behind if we don't change how we educated, although he felt that the new curriculum's project-based learning is a step in the right direction.

Next up was BCCPAC President Jen Menzi who asked for help in deciding how to spend \$200G left-over after funding the Summit from the budget given from gov't. They are also hoping to develop a way to quickly poll members on issues of concern across the province, and a poll was taken there that showed most felt the government should pay for playgrounds rather than make parents raise funds for them.

Renzo Del Negro, CEO of BCPSEA (Labour Relations and Bargaining Agent) spent a deal of time trying to educate us on how an agreement is reached. He spoke of the need to bargain for all 60 districts while keeping in mind the interest of the government and that even then, the agreement is worked out differently in each district due to the complex web of grandfathered-in provisions. I heard a few people surprised that the BCTF doesn't bargain for your child's best interest, they bargain for teacher's working conditions, and that in the current model there is little incentive for teachers to not strike. He is hoping to refresh the process with common goals for all 60 districts, is concerned that the settlement of the court case does nothing to reflect the new direction in the curriculum which focuses on innovation and flexibility. Of particular interest to me was his answer to a similar question that was brought up at the DPAC meeting by Kim regarding the transfer of teacher out of a class leaving students without a full time teacher. He said this needs to be brought to the attention of the Trustees (?, Board?) who should bring it to the ministry. He ended his talk encouraging parents to support the 365 platform (which I believe is the Family Ed Portal?) as the unions will want to restrict it, but it is an essential tool for parents to get insight into what happens in class.

Other speakers: one spoke on scholarships (not all get claimed), the my ed webpage, Rick Hansen Foundation shared that they have a classroom-ready resources that fit the new curriculum, SOGI, and Worksafe BC spoke. The ADM of Learning (Jennifer McCrea) spoke on specific funding for CYIC (foster kids) and realizing that those kids need more than just what MCFD can provide and so are working on providing more care for them, improving the worsening AB outcomes, and then, ironically, on trying to get away from labelling.

The Deputy Minister of Education focused on the need for change to change to keep up with the changing economy and job market, pleaded with parents to get their children to take the FSA's as they are vital to early detection of children who struggle and allow for early intervention. He stressed that parents need to be more concerned about the results of education-are your children being adequately prepared for the world?- rather than on buildings.

A parent, Rob Peregoodoff, currently Director of Learning Services Director at Sauder School of Business (google him) encouraged parents to allow teachers to experiment with using technology to enhance learning in the classroom.

I have more notes, and would be happy to answer questions.

I came away encouraged to see so many involved and concerned parents, although it was somewhat disconcerting that the sea of faces was mostly white and that barely over half of the DPACs sent delegates despite all expenses paid.