

# Executive Board Report – for February 2, 2015

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## Executive Meeting

Board executive meeting held after PAC Café. Discussion involved debrief of PAC Café, holding conference in October and a speaker in April, possible BCCPAC resolutions, grant requests, parents for parking

## Request from Williams Lake DPAC

I am the SD#27 DPAC Chair. I met a few Prince George PAC and DPAC Representatives at the BCCPAC Fall Conference in Nanaimo. I attended the conference with Christine Dymont who also knows several parents from your area.

The reason I am contacting you is to see if you are interested in piggy-backing/sharing costs to bring Gary Anaka, the Brain Coach who spoke at the conference, to our area. I have looked at his website and dates available and he is quite busy until June. I was wondering if you would consider having him come mid-September.

Personally, I would love for him to do at least 2 sessions in Williams Lake (maybe more depending on cost). One for students during the day and one in the evening for parents and teachers. If the cost allows, I would have him speak at a few schools.

I hope your group will consider joining in with us on bringing this amazing speaker to the Northern Interior. Once you have a chance to discuss it and decide, please let me know so we can move forward at this end. I am contacting Quesnel as well to see if they are interested in having him speak there and to share the costs.

*Confirmed interested in discussing this further*

I just heard back from Gary Anaka and he is very interested in coming through our area to do some workshops. He is tentatively booked now for the week of September 21 - 25, 2015 but would like some confirmation by February 16. If you are still considering participating, we would love to work with you.

Here is some of the basic info about when he comes up:

- He only does up to 3 workshops per day
- Depending on where your grade 7's are - he finds that grade 5, 6, 7 or 4, 5, 6 tends to be the best target audience for his workshop
- He does do a primary workshop as well, grades 2, 3, 4 (or 2, 3)
- He encourages making sure the High school principal(s) are on board before booking the Teenage Brain workshop but it is a good one to have

For evening he says he has a few options:

- a) Teenage Brain just for Parents
- b) Teenage Brain for parents and students in grades 8-12
- c) Brain Wellness targeted more for the parent

COST: \$1050/day + travel and accommodations

If possible, please get back to me by February 15th letting me know if you are interested or not.

## Media

No media.

## Post event PAC Café Survey Responses

4 responses to a post-event survey have been received so far. 2 rated the event Excellent, and 2 rated it Very Good.

What did you like about PAC Cafe?

- I got a few ideas to bring back to our PAC. The food was great! Everybody was friendly!
- the discussion and generation of ideas through other's experiences
- good location, great food, comfortable atmosphere
- A good group, lively conversation and useful topics

What did you dislike about PAC Cafe?

- It would be nice to see more reps from other schools.
- felt it was a little pressed for time
- Nothing

How did you hear about this event?

- email from DPAC
- PAC meeting
- through DPAC email
- PAC meeting, from DPAC rep

What sort of events or activities would you like DPAC to hold in the future? Any specific speakers or topics?

- ??
- cant think of anything specific right now
- I don't know

Do you have any other comments, questions, or concerns?

- You all did a great job! Thank you!
- I did like that it was on a Saturday and appreciate DPAC organizing the event
- Just a big thank you to the organizers and other participants!

## Presentation to Board – January 27, 2015

My name is Sarah Holland, and I'm the chair of the District Parent Advisory Council. To this new board – welcome! We have high expectations for you, in your service to our children. We have high expectations for you when it comes to transparency, as well.

As you know, boards of education define their community's visions for the future of public education, and translate those visions into action through your decisions. Public education decisions affect real people in real ways. There should be a firm understanding that items considered in private session are done only for appropriate reasons, and that resulting recommendations or decisions will be brought back to the public vision whenever possible.

During the election, I had noticed that several trustees had responded to questions about transparency with comments about how people can always contact them for information, as they make their phone or email address public. That is not transparency. That is accessibility, or communication. Transparency also means openness, and accountability – ease of access for others to see what actions are performed, and what decisions are made, not just for people who know who you are.

We note that the board representatives to schools has now been made public in this board book. At a recent DPAC meeting, we were discussing this, and some PAC representatives were unaware that they had a board representative. We do encourage you to get in touch with the PACs at each school – get a hold of the PAC chair, and ask if you can attend a PAC meeting at some point.

As some background, the District Parent Advisory Council has three main responsibilities:

- Our legislative function, through the School Act, is to advise the district on any matter relating to education, and to be the collective voice of parents. This is the area that you would most often see us doing.
- We also have the goal of assisting PACs, in forming, maintaining and developing PACs in schools – we assist with the 40 PACs in the PG school district.
- Additionally, we communicate with parents on educational matters and district policies, and provide leadership in developing and understanding rights and responsibilities of parents in the district. We are one of the larger partner groups, but we don't have a direct route of communication with our members.

With our goal of assisting PACs, we recently held a PAC Café event for PAC volunteers, a discussion session for common issues and concerns, such as volunteers, fundraising, principals, and the purpose of PACs. Some parents were commenting they're finding school budgets to be tighter – and our DPAC comment was that we may just see some more of that in the future.

Another common concern turned out to be parking. In fact, we nearly had a Coalition of Parents for Parking form in that very room – there was a lot of energy about that topic. This may seem trivial to you – it's not about education, the Superintendent's report on achievement does not even go near the topic of parking. However, to many of our parents, that morning mess is what they see of the school. It is both a safety concern and an element of school design that says to parents they're not welcome at the school.

Philosophically, DPAC does believe in parents being welcomed into schools, as something that is important for our education system – having us all work together. DPAC looks forward to working together with this board. We welcome you, thank you for your time, and your ongoing support. And we look forward to working with all of our partner groups for the benefit of our children.