

September 29, 2008 Gordon PAC Meeting

Attendance: Charlotte French, Eva Ziduliak, Jennifer Sears, David Evans, Margaret Davidson, David Smith, Reuben ford, Elke Porter, Martina Heuwieser, Mark Townsend, Mariko Townsend, Amir Javidan, Suzanne MacMillan, Rachel Hartman, Molly chan, Janet McCarron, Maria Papathanasion, Donna Kobas, Thomasina Burgess, Avril Bain, Lisa Chambers, Joanne Roland, Eva Sereda, Ralph Kaisers, Chris Shirley, Carla Shirley, Michael Cannon, Mark Rutledge, Deborah Muggli, Kristine Chapman, Noreen Morris, Jane McDougal, Heather Young, Martina Brekar, Steven Pope, David Ascher, Emily Pickett, Niki Blakely, Stephanie Wasserman, Ramona LeBlanc, Jane Pike, Ingrid Sulston, Paul Pavlidis (secretary).

Approval of May 2008 Minutes: Motion: Lisa Chambers, Second: Thomasina Burgess.

Community team guest: Les King gave an overview of the programs and what the community team does. Asked for parents to suggest programs such as sport or other activities (dance, chess, active sports), by the end of October. Bring suggestions to Noreen Morris.

We welcomed new parents. Everybody (new and “veterans”) quickly introduced themselves – we had a great turnout!

PAC meeting secretary – Will be a rotating job, there are enough volunteers for everyone to do one PAC meeting in the year. Thank you! Elke Porter will be secretary for the October meeting.

Website update - Paul Pavlidis reported that ~\$120--\$150 is needed to renew the web site hosting. Emily moved. David second. Passed unanimously after some discussion about whether switching hosting providers would be worthwhile. It was decided to stick with Dreamhost for now, given the time needed to switch providers, and the payment date fast approaching.

Call for class reps – Class reps are needed: Need 2 per class, have about 1 per class now.

Book fair competition – Children’s authors, posted around the school by Mary Locke. If lots of kids go, we get a free author – saves \$500. Event is on October 5. Sign up sheet for car pooling posted in the main hallway of the school.

Parent education speakers – Ingrid Sulston is looking for suggestions for speakers at PAC meetings. One or two for the whole year would be nice. A number of suggestions were made.

Financial business:

Teacher gifts – PAC has traditionally given \$100 each semester to each teacher to spend on extra supplies at their discretion. We should try to approve the fall at October PAC meeting, if parents agree we should do that this year. Kristine Chapman moves, David Ascher seconded.

We gave them a total of \$4000 last year. Comment that parents already pay \$25 for basic supplies – Margaret Davidson and Noreen Morris explained that this is for “special” things that aren’t supplied, for example watercolour paints. It was mentioned that we *need to discuss with teachers about how to do fundraising* a conversation to be continued from last year. This was tabled for a later meeting. Margaret suggested that we form a committee to talk with a committee of teachers on the subject, rather than having a larger discussion at a PAC meeting.

Target amount for Direct Donation – Diana buys grocery cards at a discount (Safeway, Progressive Fundraising). We sell them back to parents at face value. The discount goes into PACs fundraising coffers. You need to commit to buying cards. The more we buy the bigger the discount. If we buy \$4,000 to get a higher discount 6%. We are looking to buy \$4,000. Motion: Emily, Heather seconded.

Direct donation drive: To replace entertainment books and gift wrap sales, which made \$2500 last year. Every dollar of a direct donation goes to the school, and it is much less time consuming, so it is much more efficient. Megan Abele has offered to write the fundraising letter. She wanted to

know what a reasonable target amount is – obviously at least \$2500. The money is spent on things like computers, AV equipment, gym equipment, author visits, books. Suggestion to ask \$50 per family. Suggestion that there is no set limit, but that we visually show what items we can get as the money comes in. The teachers have a wish list of items that might be purchased from Direct Donation money. The gaming grant should be used for some of these items first. Donna and Thomasina volunteered to start a fundraising committee.

DPAC representative: Emily offered to be our rep. Nobody has served from Gordon last year. Three times a year for general reps, twice a month for executive. Charlotte moved to nominate Emily, Nicki seconded, Passed unanimously.

Recent class placements discussion – Margaret opened: I spoke to all the children and honestly told them what was going on. The context for our school: in the Spring you try to predict the kid numbers for the Fall. In the first week we were close. In the second week, three things happened. Lost some kindergarten kids to French immersion at other schools. Some students from our own FI dropped out, and kids on wait list were in English classes. We had parents phoning looking for a school. Then their own neighborhood gets the space back and they leave. As a small school we were forced to lost 0.5 FTE. Number of kids is pretty similar to last year. 380 vs. ~375. Currently only spaces are in grade 7. Vice principal position also in question – the school board took back some of her time. The magic number for VPs is 400.

Charlotte: I have notes taken from discussions with Margaret, details will be on the web site. Ingrid and I wrote a letter to the associate superintendent (Lynn Green), also visited the school board. The letter was critical of the timing.

Open discussion for about 15 minutes.

Ingrid and Charlotte will be meeting with Lynn Green this week.

Gordon School renewal committee update

Representatives from Strathcona and Queen Mary were invited. Jane from Queen Mary came.

Z Smith to help bring new people up to speed. See FAQ on web site. Every school that was going through upgrades was losing capabilities. This is due to provincial rules that the VSB was following. Seeking solutions, this eventually led to a meeting with Gordon Campbell, and a pitch to the city council. The idea of having multi-use schools as community centres dates at least back to the 1920s but standards were lost. Suggestion to change the standards for school size would be too expensive, so Campbell agreed a pilot project would be appropriate. Ingrid and Z drew up a list of schools, list was not used. Chris Kelly was asked what schools he would do: Queen Mary and Strathcona, due to historic preservation – they seemed to think this was about heritage, and included Gordon.

A memorandum of understanding between the school board and the ministry is supposedly being circulated in draft form, about how the pilot project will be structured. Other cities use a separate commission, which is something that could come out of the pilot project.

The money is \$30 million for three schools, not necessarily equally distributed. Topping up seismic upgrade money, to pay for other capabilities. Project money – including capital costs, planning, preprocess. Originally ~\$18 million.

Question: Playground chatter is “take the money and run” – Answer (Z): No, that wasn’t what was asked for. The money isn’t a check for Gordon. We are waiting to find out about the memorandum of understanding. Emily: New process has to be invented. Charlotte: they are still trying to figure out who is leading this. Timeline for serious work on memorandum in October.