

Van Tech PAC Meeting Minutes

Minutes; December 1, 2020, Via Zoom

Upcoming meeting dates on the [website](#).

PAC Executive: Amy Chuang (Chair), Sharon Henderson (Treasurer), Kyla Epstein (Secretary)

Attendees: ~30 Van Tech Parents/Family Members

Guests: Robert Moro (Principal), Angela Bigioli (Teacher Rep)

1. Welcome & Introductions (Amy Chuang)
 - Land acknowledgement to honour the territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh

2. Chair Remarks, General Announcements, & Acknowledgements (Amy Chuang)
 - Welcome!
 - We don't typically do fundraising; our primary source of funding is the gaming grant
 - Always open to new ideas; please don't hesitate to reach out to us at chairvt@gmail.com

3. Special Guest: VSB Trustee Liaison (Trustee Estrellita Gonzalez)
 - Thank you for inviting me to join you; love engaging with parent communities
 - Trustees here to serve and as connection to the Board
 - Half way through current term (2018-22)
 - Liaison for VT and feeder schools
 - Trustees have three core parts – advocacy, stewards, governance
 - Assigned committee work – I am on Policy Committee; Chair of Personnel Committee, on Finance Committee
 - Also have civic engagement through City of Vancouver committees – Food policy, Renters Advisory, Heritage
 - Have had to narrow focus because of COVID on Long Range Facilities Plan (LRFP) and Anti-Racism work
 - Hope to have LRFP complete in January; want to see a 100 vision
 - Engaged with public in the Spring (online) and then 2nd online in the Fall
 - Working with Stakeholder groups – Unions, DPAC, etc.
 - I have a child at Eric Hamber (Gr 12); co-parent
 - Became a Trustee because been through journey as a parent; have corporate background in HR/marketing
 - Have own business – wellness centre
 - Question: Can you provide an overview of the Anti-Racism strategy?
 - Everything starts with training
 - Having all staff have a base knowledge

- Ultimately about kids feeling safe
- Saw great work out of SOGI
- Same thing applies now to anti-racism work needed
- Living in times where hope to see big changes in equality and equity
- Important to have in schools and make sure students know we are taking steps; intent on hearing their voices
- Listening and taking action; involves many people
- Takes a village – input from stakeholders, staff, students – really want to hear what students have to say
- Question: How many high schools in your group?
 - Have 3 – PW; VT; David Thompson and then 8-10 feeder schools
 - Probably have about 23 schools
 - Doable right now b/c of remote roles
 - Just became VSB Vice Chair so will see how that goes
 - Fortunate b/c can make own school
- Question: VPD SLO review?
 - Had RFP come in last night – review the program, how it works, actual engagement with children, get input on feelings around the program, wanted group that can be culturally sensitive from the audience and not coming from a policing background; review of program so trustees can make an educated decision; heard from some folks that wanted to just do away from the program but also heard from students who benefits from the program; felt was trustee that want to make educated decision
 - Go for the review and take info and make decisions
 - Report should come late Feb and then decision in Spring
- Question: Anti-Racism plan – timeline and plan to engage students?
 - Training piece already started; over 8000 employees
 - Don't know exact timeline
 - Hiring of Diversity support teacher position
 - Opportunities for students
 - Working with VDSC
 - Many parts
 - Can send a link to the strategic plan
 - A plan is just a plan and then needs to be ongoing
 - Ongoing like SOGI
 - Foundation to our values
 - Learning as a District; don't necessarily have expertise in-house
- Question: When will a decision on what the class schedule might be for next Sept happen? e.g. 4 semester model. Will the ability to switch to all in-person be built in? If it becomes safe for all in person classes
 - Still working on Q2-Q4 of this year

- Staff are busy dealing with current school year
- Next school year decisions will be made after Spring break
- Nothing is the same because of COVID
- Fair to say once we get a handle on 2nd half of this year it will help us with next year
- Really depends on the course of the virus
- Feel the lack of clarity as a parent myself
- Hope to give kids a sense of ceremony for those graduating
- Staff have worked so hard
- Question: Is there a possibility that there will be more in-person classes in Q3 or Q4? And when would those decisions be made?
 - Have had delegations come to committee meetings
 - Some folks wanting more F2F and some wanting extension to Option 4
 - Trying to make sure people are comfortable in sending their kids to school
 - Hard for some parents
 - Worry about mental health of children
 - Clear that province wants kids to be in school
 - Need balance of safety for kids and teachers
 - Asked a lot about masks; made decision to encourage masks
- Question: The ministry of education had said that there would be funds provided from the federal and provincial governments to support remote learning. what have those funds gone to? as a parent with an immune compromised child we have had very little support and have had to find online courses from Burnaby and North Vancouver for online French immersion courses.
 - Hearing that
 - Would like to see more synchronous delivery for those that are remote
 - Don't have anything definitive outlined
 - Fortunate to receive provincial and federal funds
 - Certain funds were designated – e.g. masks, sanitizer, etc.
 - Make sure to spend and keep things
- Thank you so much
- Appreciate you as parents being involved
- Lot of work to do
- Passionate about food program
- Hoping to see a National Food Program – seeing momentum on that
- Encourage parents to reach out and get involved
 - Go to vsb.bc.ca
 - You can get contact info on how to reach Trustees
 - See meeting agendas – when click on them you can watch them live
 - Meetings are recorded
 - Encourage parents to watch and see what goes on

- Also have committee meetings – can watch those
- You can speak as a Delegate and speak to a topic on the agenda
- Done a better job to get folks able to watch and see what is happening
- Feel free to email me or on social media

4. Treasurer's Report (Sharon Henderson)

- Ended last year with about \$19K and then got another \$31K at beginning of the year
- Have approved \$750 so far; sitting at over \$49K
- Higher than usual because didn't spend part of last year's due to pandemic
- Received various requests this year
 - [See document](#) for overview of requests and funding recommendations
 - First group of requests we are putting forward with full recommendation for support
- Question: How much money is available compared to how much we are considering requests for?
 - Usually have \$30K total and allocate \$10K in May, \$10K in October, \$10K
 - Last year we didn't have much spending and some that was allocated didn't get spent
 - Right now proposing \$14K allocations which is a bit higher than we usually do at once but we have more money than normal
- Additional information from staff:
 - Athletics info – In years past - athletics used to get a lump sum amount from admin to run the program every January; the process changed so that athletics runs based on athletic fees and if more funding is needed, the AD would communicate the details with admin and money would be released; lack of athletic fees this year and trying to upgrade our equipment (some not in working order and needed as soon as competition returns).
 - DSP info – music therapy that DSP students look forward on Tuesday with Terry; these classes provide them with a variety of positive opportunities such as enhancing their confidence and social interactions with their peers; It also provides the students in class with a multi-sensory experience which is great for students who have a variety of sensory needs and strengths.
- Question: Is Outdoor Ed curricular or extra-curricular?
 - For this ski equipment; will be used for the course but equipment will also be used for ski club
 - Time to get things ready for when clubs can happen again

Motion to approve \$13,850 funding for the requests as outlined in the circulated document and summarized here: Drama Dept (\$600); Library (\$5,000); Student Council (\$500); FemmInAction (\$400); Math Contest Club (\$800); Athletics - Volleyball pole safety padding (\$2300); Athletics - Score clock (\$2200); Outdoor Education (\$400); Special Education (\$900); and Here4Peers (\$750)

Moved (Amy); Seconded (Shahira); Carried

- Still four pending items – want to have some discussions before recommending them; we will take them as separate discussions and motions
 - [See document](#) for overview of requests and funding recommendations
- Yearbook request
 - Yearbook is a curricular course but also a club
 - Inclined to support it
 - Staff info / Amount of time working on this that happens outside class is significant
 - Discussion around the motion and how to protect from loss of equipment in the future; want to ensure that students can use the cameras and a deposit isn't a barrier to use so looking into creative options

Motion to fund the Yearbook for cameras for \$1000

Moved (Amy); Second (Sharon); Carried

- E-sports team/club request
 - Originally requested \$1000 for registration and branded items
 - Original request was for multiple branded items
 - We went back and suggested one branded item per kid
 - That makes it \$800

Motion to fund the E-sports for registration and materials for \$800

Moved (Amy); Second (Sharon); Carried

- Athletics request for \$3000 for scholarships and awards; trophies & plaques
 - Usually have athletic fees but none coming in this year since no teams
 - They still want to recognize students who are graduating this year even if no teams this year
 - We don't think we should have to fund in the future but given the pandemic and them needing support we recommend it for this one time
 - Correction to document: makes it look like 'coaches' would get scholarships; scholarships would be for the students

Motion to fund the Athletics request for \$3000

Moved (Amy); Second (Sharon); Carried

- Athletics request for year-end banquet

- We spoke to the Department and suggested tabling to March and then see how things are at that time and revisit
- We can fund at that time if needed
- General consensus to wait until we know if the banquet can be held

5. DPAC Announcements (Amanda Hillis, DPAC Vice Chair)

- <http://vancouverdpac.org/>
 - You can sign up for the DPAC newsletter online and we post to social media
- Busy month
- One meeting coming up
- Some parents coming to talk about current learning model
- Survey out for parents about how finding the current program
- VSB also has a survey out now
- Two you can fill out!
- Responding to the Long Range Facilities Plan as well
- You can attend our meetings as well – links on website

6. Teacher Rep Report (Angela Bigioli)

- Athletics
 - running skills clinics where all interested students have the opportunity to participate in volleyball, badminton, soccer and cross country running but no competition.
 - Approx. 160 students participating this season
 - January will see a new set of clinics and athletics will continue to offer as many as we can until we are given permission to resume normal activities with teams that compete against other schools.
 - Programs have been limited due to the inability of our community coaches to return to coaching in our facilities.
 - Sign up – info will go in the Student Hub and also posted to VT Athletics IG
- Music
 - Seamstress/tailors or anyone that can sew are NEEDED - sewing band specific face masks!
 - Music will pay for fabric and thread etc. from the music department and supply them with the pattern.
 - Email eariegert@vsb.bc.ca
- Christmas Hampers
 - Gr. 12 counsellor Mr. Van, Murray Anderson and his LRP group, Leadership 11/12 students and student council have kicked off this year's Christmas Hampers that will be delivered to over 100+ Van Tech families that are in need.
 - Video link for families - <https://youtu.be/w9RaZr3znYI>
 - <https://vsb.schoolcashionline.com/Fee/Details/1869/196/false/true>
- Breakfast club – modified from previous years

- Running with Leadership student volunteers Monday – Friday from 8:15 – 8:35 in the Talishop
- A quick take and go (milk, smoothies, granola/nutrigrain bars, cracker and low sugar cookie snacks)
- Varies between 30 – 50 students per day

7. Principal's Report (Robert Moro)

- Great to see you all here; school counts on you and appreciate support with the funds allocated tonight
- Last Friday – entire staff in District attended an Indigenous-focused learning; guest speaker and student panel (including 3 VT students); shared challenges with racism
 - VT staff met as Departments and discuss; collated responses to guiding questions and will share with staff community
 - Hoping to address our School Code of Conduct and School Growth Plan
 - Hope to build in goal of anti-racism
 - Working with some teachers to help shape this plan
 - Will come to parents for feedback as well
- Current timetable
 - Launched a student survey on Monday about how it's going for them
 - Survey that District has put together
 - Hoping to use feedback for Q3/Q4 and maybe into next September
 - Has been some adjustments in Q2 – some other schools running a pilot
 - We do 2 week rotations
 - Some are trying out weekly rotations between remote & F2F
 - VT hoping to see how those schools do and see if any changes needed for Q3/Q4
- Student Council
 - Started videotaping sessions and post them on Teams
 - Tech Talk Tuesdays
 - Used to be daily announcements – now weekly video clips
 - Covering things like clubs, trivia, student forum, etc.
 - They also host Kahoot Fridays for some prizes and fun
- Food
 - Trustee Gonzalez talked about food
 - Shifted to hot lunches (from bagged); still pre-packaged
- Hamper Drive
 - Please support
 - Also drive for socks, blankets, etc.
 - Drop location outside school
 - To support homeless folks
- Some planning for next school year
 - Looking at articulation; connecting with grade 7s

- Course selection starts at end of January

Q&A: Principal's Report

- Q: What's happening with the [Leadership & Resiliency Program](#)?
 - A: Right now it is a Vancouver Coastal Health program; VSB provides facilities and access to students but funded by VCH
 - Right now it is about seeing if VCH is going to fund or look for alternative sources
 - Program helps build self-esteem and social skills
 - Discussed with our Director of Instruction; they will approach associate superintendent to talk to VCH
 - We offered to provide any support we can – information needed to show benefit of program
 - Without ongoing funding, it will be over this year
- Q: Concerns about kids hanging out around the school; close together, no masks...anything being done?
 - A: Concern we have as well
 - We go out there as much as we can to move students along and get on with their day
 - I was on today's Tech Talk video and encouraged students not to do this
 - Not much we can do at this point; open to ideas
 - Some kids are in cohorts
- Q: Are you saying kids in the same school cohort are allowed to hang out?
 - A: Technically use but have doubts that kids outside are in the same cohort always
 - Need to keep reminding them of risks they are taking
 - Encouraging masks and providing if don't have
 - Once leave school grounds it's about getting them the right information
- Q: Child in Gr 8, French Immersion; Q1 was ok, Q2 – her remote learning time is very close in time with end of F2F class; can't get home in time for the 10:40 start of remote; Not same experience if misses and watches recording
 - A: Teachers were told to do it during flex period; always going to be an issue with travel time
 - Other option is for student to stay at school and use the area provided
 - Have student check in with Gr. 8 Vice Principal and see if can troubleshoot
- What hearing is that COVID not transmitting inside schools
 - Positive cases seem to be coming from community contact
- Q: Will students have any opportunity to tweak their class times in 3rd and 4th quarter with a counsellor for any conflicts?
 - A: If need course changes that can be accommodated then counsellors can do it; not impossible
 - Various reasons may need a course change

- Q: Did VT consider going to weekly rotation for remote/F2F
 - A: Staff discussed and there were pros and cons
 - Primarily didn't change because of rise in cases; 14 days remote added extra level of safety; not perfect but helps
 - Also teachers had already designed lessons to the 2-week rotation
 - Decided to wait and see how
- Q: is there any extra supports happening at VT or by VT for student's mental health right now? And extra tech support?
 - A. For tech – have issued devices if needed and have tech space if needed
 - Mental health support continues through our counsellors
 - Also learning hub for extra drop-in help for school work; with proper protocols
- Q: Are counsellors seeing more help needed?
 - A. Anecdotally yes, seeing more anxious and stressed students
 - Some teachers find connecting better with smaller class sizes
 - Some students like having only two courses to focus on
 - Some teachers also have added stress themselves
- Q. Remote rotation quality seems to range a lot
 - A. Seeing variations
 - Some teachers learning about the tools and how to use them
 - Making adjustments to see what works
 - Getting better as time goes on
 - Teachers motivated
- Q. How much is the library open/is it open for studying or just taking out books?
 - A. Operating as usual just with lower capacity for number of students who can be in the space
 - Have protocols in place

8. Wrap Up & Adjournment (Amy Chuang)

- Please contact the Van Tech teachers and staff if your young person is struggling
- Please send us topics you'd like to discuss: chairvt@gmail.com

Next Meeting: January 26, 2021, 7pm, Zoom