

**David Thompson Secondary PAC
Meeting Minutes
October 22nd, 2019**

Attendance: 18 parents; 1 administrator, 1 teacher, 2 guests;

Called to order at 7:00 pm by PAC president Jiehma Chow.

Approval of September minutes:

Motion to accept: [] moved, [] seconded; Approved

Ms. Reddy's Staff Liaison Update:

- VESTA created generic letter template that parents can send to their MLAs to share about teacher support during contract talks – see Ms Reddy or Jiehma for copy of letter; can modify letter to suit personal preference
- Negotiations between BCTF and BCPC (on behalf of government) have resumed again re class size and composition, funding for education and special education; Per student funding in BC is less than any other province; salary of teachers in BC one of the lowest in the country (BC teachers' salary ranked 12th out of 13 provinces), while cost of living is highest;

Special Guest: Kayo Devcic from SACY (Youth Prevention & Engagement Worker)

- Tel: 604 267 3970 SACY Main line: 604 713 5899
- kayo.devcic@vch.ca www.vsb.bc.ca/sacy
- Substance intervention program
- Youth engagement, classroom education, Hunger Bites
- Looking at student needs and interests, peer education, understand what helps/what hinders youth; coping skills for stress;
- Counselling, mental health/wellness, substance use and abuse (vaping/drugs/alcohol/cannabis)
- Collab between Vancouver Coastal Health and VSB
- Building bridges between parents and youth; connection before direction/redirection
- ABC of youth – what drives people to do something **[need for autonomy (be an individual), to belong (social/peers), competency in something]**; the younger they are to start substance use, the more likely they will become addicted; need to belong/social connections/ build relationships; what other ways that youth can find ways to belong? It's how other sees themselves and how the individual sees themselves;
- Vaping becoming a national crisis
- DT community doing a good job in bringing awareness to students
- See SACY website for information and resources for parents
- **SACY workshop (Capacity Café) on Thursday, November 21st, 2019 at Killarney Secondary School (for parents at Killarney and DT); Thursday, 6:00-8:45pm at Killarney Secondary School. To reserve a seat: contact Sumeet Ghuman via email: Sumeet.ghuman@vch.ca**

- Parent Q: Is there an established channel for communications for students to report information to the office/teacher anonymously? Students may be afraid to report because they do not want to get into trouble with the offender and get bullied by them; keep each other accountable; allow and empower students to speak up/report information without any backfire;
- Mr. Lopez – there is provincial-wide ERASE Bullying website tool where kids can make anonymous reports there; DT experience – kids are wonderful and will come tell Mr. Lopez/ administrator/ teacher/ counsellor; kids know that when they come to us, we will keep it confidential and will not reveal who told/where information came from;
- Will take information/harassment seriously and will follow up with reports;
- What's great about this community is that kids really care, take accountability seriously, they want to make sure we are a safe community; when kids see something, they will come tell an adult, which is great; part of that is the connections that teachers, counsellors, administrators are making with all the students;
- Student who can't get through a class without vaping is showing signs that s/he is addicted and needs help; place to provide support for these kids;

Special Guest: Patrick Wong

(Multicultural School Liaison Worker for Chinese Community at DT)

- VSB staff; language-based support worker
- Facilitate connection/bridging and communication between school (E.g. Resource Teacher) and parents
- Throughout Vancouver School Board, there are 21 Multicultural Liaison Workers who speak 6 different languages: Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean, Filipino, Vietnamese, Punjabi, and other south Asia languages.
- <https://www.vsb.bc.ca/site/nwc/support-Services/mclw/Pages/default.aspx>
- Please find other Multicultural Liaison workers on this website and other useful resources for new comers
- <https://www.vsb.bc.ca/schools/david-thompson/Guidance-and-Support/Multicultural-Liaison-Workers/Pages/default.aspx>
- ***Parents can also find the same information through DT's school website***
- ***New families, please come to the office. Someone here will be able to help you or direct you to the right location to find resources.***

Principal's update/October Recap – Mr. Lopez:

- DT clubs day signup run by student council
- UBC presentation for Grade 11 and 12 students
- Grade 8 rep student council election
- Student Council BBQ
- Had fire drill and lockdown drill @ school
- Grad committee election (9 Grade 12s)
- Photo-retake day
- NFL Had Grade 8 breakfast

- Career life connections interviews (Grade 12s) – mock interview with an adult in the building;
- Great Shakeout Earthquake drill
- Odyssey Parent Nite (Odyssey coordinator - Susan Paul)
- Voting for the election
- DT Camping Trip at Alice Lake: video
- Starting September, 2020, Grade 8 & 9 students will have no grade, instead get proficiency skills level 1, 2, 3, 4;
- Grades 10s, 11s and 12s will still get percentages;
- Report card system will change from 3 report card, one midterm and one parent-teacher meeting to 2 report cards (January and June), 2 midterm reports (one in fall and one in spring) and one parent-teacher meeting – not official yet, but will likely be happening
- US has a system called the SAT; chances are, going forward, universities will have their own entrance exams;
- Right now, optional interim period for teachers; some teachers will send them out; we hope most of them do; all sent home via email

Q & A:

Is it possible for the school or PAC to arrange community event to recognize other cultures such as Indian culture or other cultures?

- Canada is recognized as a multicultural country. The government and the schools always try their best to recognize all the cultures, the parents and the students who come from different backgrounds are also encouraged to organize events to bring awareness of their cultures. It doesn't have to be something big, even a hand-made pamphlet (then make copies) to introduce the culture would be helpful. Parents can also participate in PAC meeting to discuss about the details if they have some ideas.
- Possible to have a Multicultural Day or for PAC to have a multicultural potluck dinner for families?
- Perhaps possibility for school board to recognize the different cultural events/dates/celebrations to bring awareness to the students and parents in the school community?
- We can do it if there are parents who are willing to volunteer their time to take this on;

How can Grades 7 and 8 children's parents get more information about DT?

- DT tried to organize information night for grade 7 parents, unfortunately due to low attendance, DT had to cancel it.
- When students enter into Grade 8, the New Face Student Leaders walk with and support students; focus more at the student level;
- If Grade 8 parents want more information and support, they are welcome to connect with PAC, school counselors (email on website), administrators, School Liaison worker (Patrick), etc.

What kind of help is available if the teens are struggling with their studying in school?

- The students who struggle can always ask the teachers to help them; there is also tutorial time before the exam; there is a homework club that any student can sign in; Grade 11 & 12 students also provide tutor services. One parent recommended Smartcookies tutor services on Fraser Street, which charges \$27/hr.
<https://www.smartkookietutorials.com/>
- There is tutorial time after school

When does PAC meeting happen?

- November 19th, January 21st, February 18th, April 21st, May 19th. Meetings start at 7:00pm in the library.
- Also posted on DT school website, under Families--Parents Advisory Council.
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Can parents sign up the clubs for their teens?

- Unfortunately, clubs run and participate by the students, the students have to be willing to attend the clubs
- Students need to take the initiative themselves to sign themselves up
- If parents want to know information, they need to ask their child or find out through PAC

Mission of PAC?

- Support for parents; liaison between school and parents
- Help distribute/allocate gaming funds for student use in the school via teacher-sponsored clubs and events (sports, arts, band, etc.)
- Gateway to know more about what is happening at the school
- As part of journeying with child's schooling, you can participate in different aspects of school experience – volunteering to bring guest speakers in, fundraising,
- Mobilize parents to do greater things for students to impact the community
- *Most important thing that PAC does is that it tries to engage the community; great way to say that parents are welcome in the school;*
- If you are interested in helping out, you are welcome to help out with PAC or be a part of the PAC executive

Is it possible to send the reminder email a week or so early, so parents can arrange their time better to attend the meeting?

- PAC and the school will try their best to work on that. But the parents are also encouraged to find out the date ahead of time and mark them down on the calendar.

Is it possible to put meeting agenda on website?

- Because PAC members are all volunteers, it's hard to give the promise the agenda would be available ahead of the time.

How can parents get report card for their teens?

- Family portal is a website parents use to get their teenager's report card. Students should have the password and share them with the parents. If they are not doing that, parents are welcome to contact the counselors to get their own password.

<https://www.myeducation.gov.bc.ca/aspen/logon.do>

What is the role of the home room teacher?

- Home room teacher (HRT) is the teacher students have for their first week of the school; they give out go card and emergency message to parents; they also could call the school together for different reasons; they collect school fees, but they don't teach students.

What is school counselor's role?

- Counselors communicate with parents; also help students with their difficulties;
- Great source of support for both students and parents; see website for email to set up
- There is also career life connections 12, capstone projects, course planning, etc. – administration and guidance counsellors will be walking with students every step of the way to guide them in what they need to complete at each grade level;

What is summer school for?

- Summer school is not an obligation; it's a place to make up for failed course or to take extra courses;

Meeting Adjourned: 9:20pm

Next Meeting: Tuesday, November 19th, 2019 at 7pm in the library