

Walter Moberly PAC meeting

Tuesday, January 21, 2014

Commenced 7:00pm, Moberly Library

Parent Attendees: Manjit Shergill, Namtez Sohal, Mitch Magureanu, Jeya Kumar, Teresa Thandi, Kulwinder Joshi, Scott Huang, Paramjit Lalli, Sharon (member at large) & Sodhi Bagri, Ha Duong, Bayant Bagri, May Yu, Gurchet C., Paul Thandi (co-chair/Treasurer), Diane Blue (co-chair). Secretary: vacant

Patti Plottel, Principal & Henry Au, Vice Principal

1. Welcome

Welcome all parent attendees and introductions of Principal and Vice Principal and PAC executives

2. PAC Chair's Report (Diane Blue)

None prepared for this meeting; current bank balances of both Vancity accounts

3. Old Business

a. PAC reps for each classroom

Job descriptions of PAC representatives will be created by Patti Plottel/Henry Au and PAC Co-chairs Diane Blue & Paul Thandi; with emphasis of the roles in helping build community and strong relationship between parents and teachers. The aim is to have 26 PAC classroom reps however 3 PAC reps for intermediate, primary and kindergarten grades would be sufficient at this early infancy of PAC classroom rep development.

b. Playground update/plans

VSB changed the schedule of removal of playground at back of the school ("intermediate playground") – original VSB schedule for playground removal was summer 2013, then VSB communicated that removal date was undetermined, but a recent review of the deteriorating condition bumped the removal up to summer 2014.

In the meantime Patti has contacted two recommended local playground companies, Habitat and Henderson, both with a good reputation and designs playgrounds that use less plastic and more metal. Habitat (1 plan) and Henderson (2 different plans) drawings were circulated for review by the PAC.

Brief overview of the playground plans:

Henderson's plan: \$32,000 without "space ball" which relies on a supervised installation by parent volunteers to build/assemble the playground on site.

Habitat's plans of \$39,000 plus installation and \$46,000 with "space ball" (a roped-dome climbing structure that is very popular and very safe piece of equipment).

The cost of this new intermediate playground will be installed and paid for in phases, with the initial fundraising goal of \$20,000.

It was discussed that staff-initiated/administered annual spell-a-thon fundraiser raises about \$6,000 however it is highly labour-intensive for teachers/staff. An appeal to the PAC was made for parents to get involved with fundraising for the playground which is one of many expensive equipment/supplies that is not paid for by the school board/government.

The selection process of the new playground will use the same structure as the previous “primary playground” (front of school) with the PAC shortlisting 2 playgrounds which will be presented to the students for a vote on the final playground design. Parents agreed that this is a good plan as it would be more straight-forward for the intermediate students to choose/vote.

Parent questions: Q. Would there be a possibility of “mixing and matching” pieces of equipment from different companies. A. It was felt that mixing equipment from 2 different companies would be more difficult but changing pieces of equipment from same vendor is possible. Q. Can we add slides and swings? A. These pieces of equipment are not a good use of space as there are safety rules around space minimum space requirements for swings. Q. Why is the primary slide fenced off? A. Henderson has been contacted to repair the “primary” playground plastic slide as there is a crack in it.

Fundraising with a chosen playground plan would make for a more successful fundraising event as there would be a specific and purposeful goal/target/amount. Different ideas for fundraising were discussed, two major ideas were a Moberly Carnival and Moberly Float for the Vaisaki Parade. Each would require much work and commitment from parent volunteers.

A parent suggestion was to enter a Moberly School Float for the upcoming April 12, 2014 Vancouver Vaisaki Parade (Saturday of Easter long weekend) which may help raise upwards of \$8-\$10K in donations and increase Moberly Elementary’s exposure within the community. Other details discussed were to have students walk the parade route with donation bins. A number of parents have experience in entering floats or volunteering/contributing to making a float (eg truck driver and trailer) with a suggestion of having engaging classrooms in decorating the trailer or parents/students contributing in making signs and banners for display along parade route. Due to the limited timing, several parents in attendance have taken-on the initiative to contact the Temple to make a Float application and handling the details and logistics of building a Float with possible donated building materials from suppliers/vendors and borrowed truck and trailer from a parent or contacts.

Moberly Carnival – a suggested timing of the Carnival would be in the Fall (2014-2015) as there should be time spaced out between the fundraising events. The Carnival would be a one-day themed fundraising event.

Both events would provide great exposure for Moberly in the community.

Other Fundraising ideas: Previously discussed after-school Movie has not happened yet the lead organizer has been away sick – see Henry’s Report in section 5 for rescheduled date and details.

4. Principal/VP’s Report (Patti Plottel & Henry Au)

a. Review of school website

Patti navigated the website on the smartboard: brief overview of student assembly meeting and pro-D days, the newsletter is available in PDF download, the incoming Kindergarten registration deadline is end of January for in-catchment applications, PAC page (with PAC meeting schedule) and Staff directory listing. There was a call to parents to relay the Kindergarten registration deadline to family and community members as late applications may result in not getting into your catchment school and being waitlisted. Cross-catchment application period is February 15 to end of March 1st. Q. Is the process “first come-first serve”? A. It is highly dependent on the individual school and program as some programs are filled using a lottery system, some based on fit based on student profile, first priority is siblings, etc.

b. Student Council projects (Henry Au)

Moberly has an active student council. Student council continues to showing growth in areas of running meetings. They have planned 2 events for February – selling Valentines Day cookies to students (fundraiser for student council – cookie for \$0.50). The second project is anti-bullying day (Pink Day, Feb 26). They will repeat the activity from last year, which is compliments and candy kisses. The Student Council felt it was a “good thing to do, be kind and appreciate others.” With compliments and candy kisses, students from grades K to 7 are given age appropriate tasks; written compliments are given to fellow students/teachers and students personally deliver the compliment to the recipient. The compliments are then handed over to Student Council for a Hershey’s Kiss reward and an entry in a draw for a small prize. In the past students “got more from the compliments than the Hershey’s Kisses”. A third student council project is scheduled for March (week before Spring Break), a family pancake fundraiser - \$2.50 for a pancake breakfast and in the past the Student Council has made \$150 to fund Council activities.

c. It’s All About Reading (Patti Plottel/Henry Au)

A School Goal was to improve reading scores for this year. Reading instructions for intermediate grades was 45 minutes a day and teachers are working on reading with students are grouped by reading level. Teachers are given targeted instructions to improve reading (it is a highly structured program). As students make progress the school is finding more and more students are not requiring the structure and moving on from the Program. At the start of the Program, 80% of students were reading below their grade level and there has been a huge improved in the last term and half. The \$15 workbook fee that parents paid for was for this Program. It was felt that the students are being sent off to high school better prepared. Another Program “Books For Me” where books come are delivered to Moberly once a month for students to choose and keep. Patti urged parents to sit down and read with their children, even if they are intermediate grades; the books from “Books For Me” goes home to be added to your personal library. John Oliver Secondary has another book program as well to help improve literacy.

d. After school programs (Patti Plottel/Henry Au)

Brief overview:

Y-ball once a week; an awesome afterschool program (primary students do reading and arts and craft); intramural sports for intermediate (3 basketball teams, and Punjabi & Chinese language classes and special needs program).

A reminder to Parents, if children are not involved with an afterschool program, they should go home after 3:20pm. However, if they go home and receive your permission to return to school, then feel free to send them back to school.

e. Pro-D day this month (Jan 31)

Teachers have two activities during professional day - reading and examining professional practice and how children learn. Approximately 14-16 teachers will be staying after school over the next week and half to be introduced to these new methodologies; then on January 31st all staff will learn these methodologies which will then be implemented in the classroom.

5. Henry's Report

Fundraiser and After School Programs

Thursday, March 6th will be the first after-school movie. It will start around 3:30pm in the large gym; attendees should bring a big pillow to lie on and rental of popcorn machine. A second movie event will be scheduled before end of school year and suggestions will be taken from students for more movie dates.

Attention to Grade 7 parents – Very important information sheets will be distributed for students to bring home. These sheets are registration for high school course selection and school information and very important deadlines that parents should note. Please feel free to call Henry to discuss the information. Grade 7 teachers have gone to the local high schools to get information and timelines. Students and teachers are excited about graduating. Grad sweatshirts are on sale for \$45 and approximately 45 orders have been received out of 65 grads.

It was reported that the student body “has a very positive vibe, very few issues of discipline or incidents in the office”. Playgrounds play an important part of the positive interaction – in Henry's previous schools, he felt the students did not know what to do when there was no playground and it created many issues.

Next PAC meeting – Tuesday, February 18, 2014 at 9 am in the school library

Meeting adjourned 8pm