



Notes from a **staff and parent meeting** where we discussed issues regarding Douglas school and how to make this a great year for our kids.



Otherwise known as

James Douglas Parent Advisory Council Meeting Minutes
September 22, 2003



Parents and Staff Who Came

Susan Stonier, Susan Rome, Laura Eusanio, Sylvia Jackson, Emmanuel Sayo, Sue Watkins, Lyn Jones, Simon Szeto, Alison Muth, Ruth Martens, Carolyn Morgan-Chan, Dean Methorst, Laura Carter, Judy Fong, Gwen Chong, Leonard Chong, Isabel Somerville, Barbara Claridge, Marie-Helene Humphries, Pam Biela, Craig O'Brian, Darren Shong, Kanwaljit Randhawa, Jan Sentell, Astrid Visscher

Chairperson's Report, Astrid Visscher

- Astrid welcomed us and everyone introduced themselves.
- We want to include as many families at the PAC meetings as possible so please let Astrid know if a daytime meeting would work better for you. Childcare is available now for the Monday 7:00 meetings.

Treasurer's Report, Simon Szeto

- The goal for fundraising this year is \$50,000. We made about \$23,000 last year from fundraising and received \$12,600 from gaming funds. Thank-you Fundraising Committee and everyone who helped!
- We hope the English and French grade 7's can play a leadership role in fundraising.
- The PAC asks teachers for a wish list each year.
- Last year PAC money was used for many things such as skating, rollerblading, agendas, Buddy performance, youth theatre, computers, paper and supplies, English and French grade 7 trips, scholarships, cooking with Jim and library resources.
- The Canadathon initiated by teachers was a great success and raised over \$5000. Thank-you teachers!
- Long-term fundraising goals were discussed, and include assessing our technology needs.
- We appreciate input from parents on fundraising needs and ideas. Let's all pitch in!

Principal's Report, Barbara Claridge

- Isabel Somerville, a teacher, mentioned that Linda O'Reilly, a VSB Learning Services Consultant is willing to give a talk to parents about helping kids develop studying skills. There was general agreement that this would be a great idea. She will give a talk next PAC meeting, Oct 20.
- The Main School has 640 students and 10 new teachers, with 1 still to be placed.
- The office has 2 clerical staff now, and 5½ student support workers. Thank-you to the PAC for a fourth Supervision Aide again this year.
- There was discussion about the first week of school, Social Responsibility Week, and how to make it smoother. A parent survey will be sent out for feedback.
- The Main School is having assemblies every other Monday highlighting Safety, Courtesy and Respect, and showcasing student talent and participation.
- The School Planning Council is made up of Astrid Visscher, Lori Fung, Lori Fontana, Pam Biela, Marie-Helene Humphries and Barbara Claridge. They have developed a School Growth Plan.
 1. Numeracy – looking at assessments, report cards and planning solutions
 2. Social Responsibility - adding Empathy and Caring for the Environment
 3. Literacy – in 3rd year now, good progress
- Communication between schools was discussed. We need to have the same information in both newsletters. For information on the PAC, Main School and Annex, please check the website Sue Watkins has set up for us (see next page).
- Douglas has lost almost a full Resource teacher position because district student numbers are down. Our staff will be stretched farther or will not be able to provide service in some areas.

- The limitations of the Fraser Institute scores were discussed. Douglas does not exclude many students from taking the government tests, whereas other schools do.
- A parent asked for evening availability for Parent Contact Day.

Vice-Principal's Report, Marie-Helene Humphries

- The Annex has 165 students, 2½ kindergarten classes. We lost 6 teachers but Mme Famina and Mme Janis are back. The Art and Music program has been cut.
- There are three new teachers: Christina Custer (K), Sylvianne Genest (gr.3) and Susanna Bose (LAC)
- The Annex and Main School are participating in the "Roots of Empathy" program where a mother and baby come into the classroom (Mme Corinne).
- Mme Nixon won \$1000 for Douglas from Grand and Toy.
- The first week of school seemed successful. A parent survey went out for feedback.
- School Planning Council goals for the Annex are:
 1. Social Responsibility, Empathy and Problem Solving
 2. Literacy

Vice-Principal, Pam Biela

- Pam has worked at Douglas 9 years as a counsellor and knows many of the children and families. We are very happy to have Pam as Vice-Principal of the Main School.

Sue Watkins

- The Douglas website is Douglas.aucountraire.net. It has newsletter info, forms, minutes etc.
- Traffic patrol needs more volunteers please.
- International Walk to School Day Oct 8.

Grade 7 French Trip

- SEVEC can provide funding for airfare if a twin school is involved. Quebec students would spend 5 days here. There are over 23 French grade 7 students this year.
- Fundraising was discussed. Suggestion to emphasize the English trip as well as the French trip.
- Suggestion to have parent Class Representatives to improve communication.
- Suggestion to give the PAC a more friendly, inviting image. 😊

Photographer

- Jan Sentell mentioned some Annex teachers had written a letter about the unprofessional behavior of the photographer. Astrid will talk to the photographer and monitor the Main School.

Fundraising

- Snack Shack will be Wednesdays at recess (Main School), Fridays at lunch (Annex).
- Purdy's chocolates, Poinsettias, Silent Auction and Dinner and flower baskets are planned.
- More ideas the merrier! Please contact La Nein Harrison, 604-327-8898 if you can help.
- A parent suggested Safeway coupon books for those who shop at Safeway anyways. They sell for \$20 and the PAC would keep \$8.

Thank-you to the youth who provided child-care for the evening.

**NEXT PAC MEETING OCTOBER 20,
7:00 Main School library
Linda O'Reilly will present "Homework Blues"
Helping our kids learn good study habits**