

There were several long, complex discussions at this meeting. I did my best to condense everything and represent everyone's opinions fairly. If something seems unclear or inaccurate, please let me know. Ruth Martens, PAC secretary 439-7758

James Douglas Parent Advisory Meeting
January 19, 2004

Parents and Staff Who Came

Susan Watkins, Carolyn Morgan-Chan, Laura and Darren Eusanio, Lyn Jones, Ita Leiva, Tom Ng, Judy Fong, Simon Szeto, Marie-Helene Humphries, Tracy Shudo, Barbara Claridge, Isabel Somerville, Pam Biela, Surinder Dhadli, Ruth Martens

Welcome

Simon Szeto, Treasurer, welcomed everyone and passed along Astrid's regrets since she could not attend.

Minutes

- The correct website for Families for School Seismic Safety is www.fsssbc.org

Chairperson's Report

- The photographer will stay the same for 2 main reasons:
 - The administration and payment procedure is easier and takes less Douglas' staff time than the other companies looked at.
 - The current company provides 2 proofs for parents to choose from, and other companies require payment up front before seeing the proofs.
 - Astrid will talk to the photographer again about her conduct and the need for her to bring more assistants. Grade 7 students might help out.
- The hot lunch proposal from 2 Annex parents, discussed last meeting, was not intended to replace the existing hot lunch program, but would be in addition. However, the new proposal was too difficult because of legal and union issues. Barbara talked to the Associate Superintendent and a VSB lawyer and found there would have to be an open bid process.

Treasurer's Report

- Bottle drives (Nov and Jan) \$350
- Purdy's \$754.14
- Big Brothers (Annex and Main) \$1944
- Glo sticks \$120
- Entertainment books \$1015
- Family photos \$475
- There is no news yet about the \$3000 that Douglas should have received from gaming funds last Fall.
- Soup labels, Douglas received 8 basketballs, 8 volleyballs
- Poinsettias \$150.15
- Snack Shack \$376.28
- Hot dog and pizza days (Sep-Dec) \$2574.46
- Grade 7's recycling \$878.05
- Scholastic book fair (Annex and Main) \$2340

Quebec Parent Group Report

- Parents were disappointed that funding from SEVEC was denied.
- This year the cost per child is the same as last year, \$1800. Last year, because of good fundraising, \$600 was returned to each family for a total cost of \$1200 per child.
- The total requests for bursaries come to \$3200 this year.
- \$3000 has been raised for the French trip so far (according to the formula where the English and French trips both receive 35% of the total school funds raised.)
- There was much discussion about parents' participation in fundraising.
- Some people present felt that if parents want to receive a bursary they should help out in fundraising.
- One suggestion was if families participate in fundraising throughout the years at Douglas they would receive some sort of credit towards the trips.

- One comment was that some parents don't seem to volunteer at school at all and that some accountability be shown before grade 7 for helping out in the school community. Parents and students should show social responsibility in this area, since we all benefit from the hard work of those who do.
- The school cannot income-test who needs a bursary and who doesn't. Credits and formulas for participation would be complicated and hard to enforce, and confidentiality is important.
- Another comment was that a formula may not work, but there should at least be a limit on what percentage of the funds raised can go towards bursaries.
- Suggestion that a question be added to the bursary application form about how much time parents have donated over the years.
- How would we communicate the need and expectation to volunteer to each parent especially with our multicultural community?
- It has happened that students who chose not to go on the French trip went on the English trip instead.
- It was noted that maybe the Quebec trip is too expensive and needs to be rethought.
- It was suggested for people to come up with specific formulas or motions for a vote next meeting. Please forward all suggestions and motions to Astrid before Feb.16. (phone 325-1010) or avisscher@shaw.ca

Principal's Report, Barbara Claridge

- Snow day was confusing, but thank-you parents for your cooperation in picking up your children. The emergency contact numbers need to be updated.
- "Learning Through the Arts" will be held at the Main School (grades 4 and 6) and at the Annex. This program teaches academic subjects such as science through the arts. More info next meeting.
- VSB budget process for 2004/05 is starting. A parent representative will attend.
- Douglas is a dual-track system, both English and French. Statistics show that French Immersion students are not retained as much and there is less community involvement with a dual-track system compared with a single-track. A proposal is in the very early stages to make the Annex a single-track French Immersion Centre. This would mean enlarging the Annex.

Vice-Principal's Report, Marie-Helene Humphries

- "Learning Through the Arts" for French Immersion will be for Kindergarten and grades 2,4 and 6.
- "Roots of Empathy" is very successful, with grade 1 students expressing themselves in French.
- Request for a parent committee for input on choosing a playground structure.

Vice-Principal's Report, Pam Biela

- This Pro-D day staff will be looking in detail at the Numeracy (Math) curriculum for each grade, strengths and weaknesses, and how it can be better taught.
- Pam passed on a message that maybe there could be other selections at the Snack Shack such as crackers.
- A parent mentioned that there was no communication about what was being sold and did not like the unhealthy selections, and that some problems with borrowing and stealing money are occurring.
- Another comment was that the Snack Shack is only once a week at recess, and that it is a significant fundraiser. If the Snack Shack was to be stopped, then the people who don't like it should participate and come up with another fundraiser.
- There is a willingness to try selling healthier items but from past history when that was tried, those items didn't sell. Also the healthier choices cost more resulting in less profit.
- Please no \$20 or \$50 dollar bills at school.

- **Dinner and Silent Auction Feb 18, 6:00**, featuring pastas, salad and bread rolls. Please have your forms in by Feb 4. Items donated for the auction can be dropped off at the Main or Annex offices. Volunteers are needed to help set up at 4:00, and help clean up.



Many hands make light work!

**Next PAC meeting is Monday, Feb 16
7:00 Main School**