

James Douglas Parent Advisory Meeting
February 16, 2004



Parents and Staff Who Came

Alison Muth, Joyce Spencer, Dayle Giesbrecht, Laura Eusanio, Sue Watkins, Simon Szeto, Astrid Visscher, Lyn Jones, Laura Guzman, Ita Leiva, Clara Hesson, Tom Ng, Judy Fong, Kanwaljit Randhawa, Barbara Claridge, Pam Biela, Isabel Somerville, Ruth Martens

Business Arising from Last Meeting

Quebec Trip

- Astrid read a letter from a parent about the Quebec trip, rising costs and fundraising.
- A suggestion was made to have a meeting for all parents of French Immersion students to provide information about the Quebec trip and what parents want to do about fundraising for it or change the trip.
- Some of the costs for the trip include approximately \$800 per student for airfare, an outdoor camp, transportation while in Quebec and teachers' substitutes.

Snack Shack

- A small survey about the Snack Shack went out with January's newsletter but it was not clear to everyone what it was. Astrid has received letters and calls from parents about what is sold.
- Changes have been made to provide more nutritious options that parents find more acceptable. Fruit, crackers and other items have been added.
- It is hard on the parents who are volunteering and offering their time doing Snack Shack if people complain but don't help. We appreciate parents who are working hard for the school.
- A parent offered to try an experiment: removing some of the controversial items and having some home-baked snacks such as cookies from Sept-Dec, and then evaluate.
- Parents who were doing the Snack Shack at the Annex will be organizing regular Bake Sales.

Photos

- Everyone Astrid talked to about different photo companies recommended the company we currently have because it takes no extra work for teachers or secretaries and because parents get to see the proofs before ordering. The photographer responded very positively to the complaints Astrid outlined and agreed to make changes. We will try the same company for one more year.

Chairperson's Report

- An informal survey went out from the staff committee regarding the Modified School Day. The proposal is to end school at 12:00 noon on Fridays which means starting school earlier (8:40) and going to 3:00 every day except Friday. Based on the responses from this informal survey, the staff committee may put the proposal to the to the PAC for a vote. If this goes to a vote and does not pass, Douglas school would go back to the standard 9:00-3:00 day and we would not longer have the 2:10 dismissal on Wednesdays. The Boys' and Girls' Club and Spare Time have said they will not be able to open at 12:00 on Fridays to provide care. Please return your surveys to the office.
- Families and Schools for Seismic Safety, www.fsssbc.org, are still looking for a parent liaison.
- Save Our Schools, www.vancouversos.ca, has a petition for parents to sign and hand in to the school office. They have listed the minimum requirements that a school needs and want to tell our provincial government that we cannot accept anything less. Endorsement of this document is important.

Treasurer's Report and Fundraising Report

- The additional \$2000 from the gaming commission will be sent to Douglas.
- Spring Fling Dinner and Silent Auction Feb 18. About 110 tickets were sold.

- Please drop off your bags of useable clothing and household goods for the **Big Brother's clothing drive March 8-9** at the Main School gym or Annex office.
- There will be a **Scholastic Book Fair March 8-9** at the Main School during parent-teacher interviews. If we sell over \$2500, we get 70% of that returned to us as books.
- **Lots of volunteers are needed for the Carnival June 12.** The more helpers the more activities we can offer. Please call the office if you can help in any way. (604-713-4817)

Quebec Parent Group

- Airline tickets were bought for \$575 this year.
- French Immersion parents are having a **Raffle for a cash prize** and other prizes. On **March 25th** every student will get a book of tickets to sell, and 2 packs to grade 7 students.

Vice-Principal's Report, Annex

- Madame Marie-Helene injured her foot, and was not able to attend.
- There are 66 students registered for kindergarten, and 4 for grade 1.
- A gate will be made on the 61st Ave. side of the playground.

Principal's Report

- 50 are registered for kindergarten, which is more than other years.
- Because of a grant, there is a Transition program available this year for students going to Thompson and Churchill. 4 multicultural workers (Chinese, Vietnamese, Hindi-Punjabi and Spanish) are available to help make a smooth transition to high school. The program will involve food and answering questions.
- School Planning Council has identified Math as a priority.
- Students identified a stranger on the grounds and reported that he had a knife. As of this date there has not been another sighting. The increased police alert will continue until Feb. 20th.
- There was discussion about security and locking all the doors except the Main door and doors for the students in the portables.
- A suggestion for children to use walkie-talkies when going from the portables to the washrooms was well-received. We would need **4 sets of walkie-talkies. If anybody can donate a pair please call the office.** Dayle is looking into stores possibly donating some.

Vice-Principal, Main School

- There are serious safety concerns regarding the corner store. Parents are being asked not to allow their children to go to the store unsupervised at lunchtime due to safety concerns. Students are going off school grounds (if they have a note from home) and carrying back extremely hot water and noodles. The school cannot ensure the safety of or be responsible for students off the grounds.
- Barbara and Pam would prefer hot noodles to be sold at school, in one place, so kids don't have to cross the street and wouldn't carry hot water around. We need **volunteers to offer 30 minutes of their time to heat water and sell noodles at lunch.** If 20 parents offered to help, they would only have to come in once a month. Please contact the office or Tracy at 604-432-6761.
- Parent Information Workshop possibilities include Internet safety, LAC teachers' presentation, and Math, how to help your kids (and you) think mathematically and make sense of numbers.

Next PAC meeting is Monday, March 23

7:00 Main School

Childcare is provided

For more information check out our website, www.douglas.aucontraire.net