

James Douglas Parent Advisory Meeting
May 17, 2004



Parents – Carolyn Morgan-Chan, Patricia Quon, Simon Szeto, Tracy Shudo, Lori Fontano, Dayle Giesbrecht, Laura Eusanio, Darren Shong, Paul Girone, Katherine Cook, Sue Watkins, Ruth Martens, Astrid Visscher
Staff – Isabel Somerville, Kathryn Buchan, Barbara Claridge, Marie-Helene Humphries, Pam Biela

Teacher-Librarian, Kathryn Buchan

- Kathryn gave an excellent presentation about the importance of a quality school library and the role of a teacher-librarian. A teacher-librarian plans and teaches cooperatively with the classroom teacher.
- Kathryn expressed thanks for the Scholastic Book Fair which allowed her to buy some books.
- Kathryn is focussing on developing students’ “information literacy”, problem-solving and researching.
- Currently we rely on volunteers for repairing and shelving books. We can always use more volunteers!
- Kathryn wants to continue to weed out old books and wants to buy new books needed by teachers to support the curriculum. She is hoping for funds from the PAC for necessary books. Thank-you, Kathryn!

Chairperson’s Report

- **Next PAC meeting, June 21, will be the Annual General Meeting where we will elect a new PAC Executive.** Standing for PAC are: Simon Szeto for Chair, Ruth Martens for Secretary and Sue Watkins for Member at Large. The Chair and Treasurer positions will be vacant and need to be filled, but all positions are available for nominations.
- The Executive positions are: Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, and 2 other positions which would be a Member At Large position for chairing a committee such as the Fundraising Committee or for other responsibilities such as maintaining the website.
- To nominate someone, that person has to agree to be available to serve in the position and attend all PAC meetings. Write the person’s name and phone number on a paper and put it in the PAC box at the Annex or Main School, or email Astrid at avisscher@shaw.ca
- **If you want to vote, you must attend the June 21 PAC in person, no proxy votes.**
- Astrid asked for feedback about Family Groups. This was an area of discussion at the recent SPC meeting. One suggestion was to have the students return to their teacher from last year. Marie-Helene Humphries, Vice-principal, stated that next year the Annex students will be with their own classroom teacher in the mornings, and with their Family Group in the afternoons of the first week.
- Barbara will be discussing with teachers how to make the first week smoother at the Main School.
- The VSB received a proposal from Telus, which may significantly impact our school:
 - Telus wants to put a WIC box (Walk-In Cabinet) on Douglas property. Telus will give Douglas a \$3000 one-time gift and pay lease fees to the VSB. Telus wants us to have a meeting with staff and parents by June 21 and they will present their plan.
 - Discussion included concerns about radiation possibility, safety issues and the need for any Telus employees on school property to have a criminal record check.
 - Astrid will contact Nootka school which also was given the same proposal and Adrienne Montani, our liaison trustee.
 - All parents present agreed to give Astrid the authority to hire Milt Bowling, a consultant, if needed to do research for us. Milt was a parent at Douglas who was instrumental in preventing a cellular tower from being put on our school grounds in 1997.
 - It was the consensus of all parents at the PAC meeting that they were against having a WIC on school property until further research could be obtained. More information to come.

Fundraising Report

- Noodle sales are popular. Parents sell hot noodle soup at lunch to keep children from going off school property and buying it at the corner store. For next year Tracy is willing to buy the supplies, but needs parents to help pour hot water at lunchtime, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Please phone the office if you can help one Tuesday or Wed per month, 604-713-4817.

- The committee for the **Carnival, Saturday June 12**, is doing an outstanding job planning. There will be a climbing wall, pony rides, bouncy castle, music, food and more. **20 more people are needed to help.** Please call either school office.
- Flower baskets made \$640. Thank-you everyone who helped and bought baskets.

Principal's Report

- The Main School is down slightly in support staff for September and will likely lose 1 class.
- Midsummer's Night Dream will be performed by students June 1.
- From the School Planning Council, the goals for Douglas continue to be: Numeracy, Literacy and Social Responsibility.
- 60% of the Douglas community voted regarding the Modified Week. Results were 52% no, 48% yes.
- Parents at the PAC meeting stated how upset they were about a letter that went out from the PAC. The Modified Week proposal had not been discussed at the previous PAC meeting. It was felt that the PAC should be neutral and the letter should have presented both sides. The majority of parents at this meeting felt that the PAC's job is to represent all parents.
- Astrid noted that the PAC does represent all families and was not giving its opinion but passing on information and concerns received from parents. The PAC received many emails and letters from parents concerned with the proposal. The PAC presented their concerns by printing one letter as representative of what was being heard by the "no" side since only the "yes" side was being presented. The request to put out this letter was given at the big meeting in the library.
- Many parents in attendance felt that the letter was unclear, unfair and offensive to teachers and many parents and has put the PAC in a negative light. Other parents had taken offense to the rational put out by the school.
- A parent at the PAC meeting clarified that at the meeting in the library some parents asked for the reasons for the "no" side to be distributed to balance the "yes" information. Barbara Claridge, Principal, said the school couldn't do that, but if a parent were to write something the PAC could print it.
- Astrid and Simon mentioned that the voting process was flawed and Astrid has written to the Board. We need a better forum to discuss both sides fairly.
- A school can't vote again on a Modified Week for 5 years. The Associate Superintendent, Mr. Gary Little, is looking at developing a new policy on voting procedures.
- The majority of parents at this PAC meeting did not agree with the letter and wanted the PAC Executive to apologize for having put it out. The Executive declined. Some of the parents at the meeting wanted it noted that they wanted to apologize to all staff and parents for the letter.

Vice-Principal's Report

- The Annex will have a Music and Art teacher one day/week next year.
- 50 Kindergarten students are registered, with a waiting list of 35, and a waiting list of 6 for grade 1.
- We are in the very early stages of a request for the Annex to be a single-track K-7 French Immersion school. There will be a meeting with Gary Little, Barbara and Marie-Helene in June. They would like to hear from the PAC and individual parents whether parents think this is a good idea.
- It was suggested that French Immersion parents meet early next Fall to discuss both the single-track idea and the French Quebec trip and fundraising.

The following info was going to be presented but wasn't because of lack of time:

- Speed bumps will be installed on Brigadoon Street to help slow down traffic.

<p>Next PAC Meeting June 21 7:00 Main School Staff Room Vote for the PAC Executive Childcare is provided</p>
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