



The Confederation of Parents' Advisory Councils of Saanich

Meeting Minutes

Individual Learning Centre, 1649 Mt Newton Cross Rd, Saanichton, BC

October 10, 2019, 7 – 9 pm

Attendees

COPACS Executive

- **Monique Hiltz**, *President*
- **James Taylor**, *Vice President 1*
- **Ceilidh Fear**, *Vice President 2*
- **Kelly Hoffmann** *incumbent COPACS Treasurer; and voting member for Stelly's Secondary School*
- **Craig Morton**, *newly approved Treasurer*
- **Phil Molloy** *Recording Secretary; and voting member for Keating Elementary School*

Education Partners

- **Dave Eberwein**, *Superintendent, Saanich District School Board Office (SBO)*
- **Jason Reid**, *SBO*
- **Victoria Martin**, *Saanich School District Board of Education Trustee (Board)*
- **Nola Silzer**, *Board*
- **Don Peterson**, *Saanich Teachers' Association (STA)*
- **Dean Coates**, *Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)*

School PAC Representatives (Voting Members)

- **Shu Franey**, *Bayside Middle School*
- **Alayne Brygadyr-McCoy** *(on behalf of Lisa Gunderson), Royal Oak Middle School*
- **Liz Keating**, *Kelset Elementary School*
- **Jen Verscheure**, *North Saanich Middle School*
- **Reet Dangerfield and Leanne Turple**, *Lochside Elementary*

Additional (Non-voting) Attendees

- **Megan Misovic** *(Presenter; Parent)*
- **Judy Beinder** *(Saanichton Village Association)*

1 Introduction and Territorial Acknowledgement

James Taylor welcomed attendees and recognized that the meeting was taking place on the unceded land of the Coast Salish Peoples and the traditional territory of the WSÁNEĆ peoples, whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day. James also lead a brief round of introductions.

1 Presentation on Right-of-Way Trails and Promotion of Active Transportation by Megan Misovic

Megan presented a concept to improve connectivity between Keating, Tanner Ridge, Brentwood Bay and Saanichton villages via the development of existing (but currently unmaintained) right-of-ways (ROWs) into maintained, navigable pathways for use by walkers, cyclists etc. The explicit intent of these pathways would be for safe *transportation* among these villages, using active means (as opposed to their use for exercise or transportation among locations using a motorized vehicle). Such an initiative would thereby also promote safe means for active transportation for children to get to/from school. Megan covered the broader context for this plan – to contribute to reduction in local carbon emissions and promote active access to schools – and explored the potential for this work to tie-in with parallel initiatives by the SBO, COPACS and individual school PACs. The presentation yielded a discussion of how Megan’s initiative could link with those of the SBO and schools.

Several suggestions were made, including:

- Contacting each PAC individually
- Contacting each Principal individually
- COPACS potentially offering a formal letter of support and helping with outreach and promotion via social media
- Connecting with the Bayside Middle Schools Climate Action Club (via Seana White and Cindy Lister)
- Exploring parallels with Lochside’s recent (2018/2019) analysis of safe routes to school
- Contacting the chair of the CRD (Colin Plant)
- Contacting Elizabeth May
- Exploring tie-ins with Stellys group (which is similar to Claremont Schools Institute for Global Solutions)
- Follow-up with the SBO’s Finance, Facilities and Technology committee to further explore links with the School District and potential funding opportunities.

The group expressed their appreciation to Megan for presenting to COPACS and, more generally, for her leadership on this initiative.

2 Reports from our Education Partners

2.1 *Canadian Union of Public Employees (Dean Coates)*

At a recent general membership meeting, a motion was approved to donate to secondary schools to install rainbow crosswalks in front of each school to promote support for LGBTQ2+ students

2.2 *School Teachers’ Association (Don Peterson)*

- STA to connect with CUPE re rainbow crosswalks as they (the STA) are also working on a similar initiative.
- The STA recently had a general meeting and ratified all bargaining objectives
- Don expressed the STA’s support for their CUPE colleagues and endorsed their initiative for pay equity with Victoria and Sooke. He also recognized and discussed the daily shortages of

Education Assistants (EAs) and the implications for these shortages (e.g. students have been asked not to attend school when an EA is unavailable).

2.3 Saanich District School Board Office (Dave Eberwein, Jason Reid)

- Dave Eberwein welcomed attendees to the 2019-2020 school year
- Enrolment and facilities:
 - Enrolment is up, particularly in the South Zone¹. The SBO had forecasted an increase of 35 full-time equivalent students (FTE). Actual enrolment was up more than this with much of the growth in elementary schools. The main driver for this growth is immigration across all elementary-school years, not just entry Kindergarten.
 - On one hand, the increase in enrolment is good because funding received by the school district is done a per-capita basis: more enrolment means more funding. This helps the school district pay for many costs that are, themselves, unrelated to the numbers of students (e.g. facilities and infrastructure, which are needed regardless of student numbers)
 - On the other hand, managing the capacity requirements of increased enrolment is challenging. The SBO were surprised by the level of growth as it departed from historic trends. E.g. Prospect Lake Kindergarten has had 35-40 students; this year, it has 61. Everyone has been accommodated this year; however, the SBO is working to ensure there is still room moving forwards.
 - Short-term solutions include the use of modular classrooms (three in the South Zone) and expansions of Cordova Bay and Prospect Lake schools. Already added a classroom at Cordova Bay by converting computer lab, and one at Kelset by converting childcare back to classroom and relocating childcare. Growth was also seen in the North Zone, so increased capacity will also be needed there too
 - Longer term solutions involve a school boundary review, focusing on the South Zone and addressing other issues, with the goal of better aligning schools' capacity with the population of their catchment areas
- Review of funding model:
 - Review of funding formula is ongoing by the Provincial Ministry with a planned implementation of the new model in September 2020.
 - The Ministry has undertaken lots of work, and public consultation.
 - The panel made several recommendations and are looking at very significant changes.
 - The British Columbia Confederation of Parents' Advisory Councils (BCCPAC) has been heavily involved in the process.
 - Currently the School District does not know what the implications are for them – that is, they do not know if the new funding model will result in more, less, or similar funding in the future.
- Review of District Policy
 - Being done for several reasons:

¹ The SBO divides the district into South, Central and North Zones. South: Claremont Secondary, which is fed by Royal Oak, Cordova Bay, Lochside and Prospect Lake; Central: Stelly's Secondary, which is fed by Bayside, Keating and Brentwood; North: Parkland, which is fed by North Saanich, Kelset, Sidney and Deep Cove. See the [School District Map](#) for more details.

1. A review hadn't been done that for many years
 2. There are currently 111 policies and procedures, which are complex and challenging to understand and connect together
- The goals of the review are: better categorization; few separate policies and procedures; easier to understand documents; better alignment across policies.
 - In addition to the revised policies, two supporting outputs are expected: a policy handbook and a procedures manual
 - The process has been ongoing since April 2019, is being led by a Policy Committee, and is expected to continue for several more months
- Ongoing negotiations:
 - The SBO expressed hope that negotiations will soon resolve on an agreement and thanked the PACs for their patience.
 - The SBO explained that there are two levels of negotiations for teachers: provincial and local. The news we see on the negotiations is generally focused on Provincial discussions, for which the mediators' report is expected in mid-November. Local negotiations have been completed and are moving towards ratification, which usually occurs when Provincial discussions are complete
 - Policy 1100 meeting
 - The SBO will host an annual Policy 1100 meeting on November 7th at 7pm, at Bayside School, in the multipurpose room.
 - The focus will be in indigenous education, continuing the theme of the recent professional development day in September.
 - The meeting's agenda will be based on "Everyone's journey towards reconciliation"
 - All parents are encouraged to attend
 - There will be presentations; music; and songs.
 - James Taylor explained that Policy 1100 codifies the importance of parents' voices to the board and School District. The meeting will be a chance for the PACs to meet up with one another and network with school district, board etc.

2.1 Saanich District Board of Trustees (Victoria Martin; Nola Silzer)

- The Board thanked attendees for their effort in making these meetings
- Re Negotiations, the Board echoed the SBO's hope that bargaining will be successful locally and provincially, and recognized the interdependency among CUPE, the STA and other stakeholders in the school system. Ultimately, the Board wants everyone to be appropriately paid and happy in their jobs
- The next Board AGM is scheduled for November 4th, where they will be voting on election of a new Chair and Vice-Chair. COPACS will be represented at the table
- The Board recognized that COPACS is generally well represented at Board meetings and thanked COPACS and the PACs for their ongoing advocacy

3 Approval of Agenda

Edit to Agenda requested by James Taylor: add "BCCPAC" to new Business.

Motion to approve amended agenda proposed by Leanne Turple; seconded by Craig Morton. Result: Amended Agenda approved.

4 Approval of Last Meeting's Minutes

Motion to approve last meeting's minutes proposed by Kelly Hoffmann; Seconded by Monique Hiltz. Result: Minutes approved.

5 Update from Executive

5.1 Treasurer (Kelly Hoffmann)

5.1.1 Approval of new budget

Kelly Hoffmann tabled a budget for the 2019-2020 school year for approval by attendees. The budget summary is attached to these notes. The budget covers both the General Savings and Gaming Accounts.

Motion to adopt the budget proposed by James Taylor; Seconded by Monique Hiltz. Voting by members was unanimous. The new budget was approved and adopted.

5.2 Election of New Treasurer

Kelly Hoffmann notified the Executive of her intention to step down as Treasurer. Per the COPACS Constitution concerning mid-term vacancies (Section 8), an election of the new Treasurer was held.

Craig Morton was nominated as the new Treasurer and a vote was conducted. All votes were for his nomination (no votes opposed).

Result: Craig Morton replaces Kelly Hoffmann as the COPACS Treasurer

Kelly will ensure all relevant information regarding the Treasurer position is passed on to Craig.

COPACS recognizes, greatly appreciates, and thanks Kelly Hoffmann for her services as Treasurer.

James Taylor requested that PAC Representatives ask their PACs if they would like a workshop for their Treasurers (or any other Executive position), which COPACS could provide or support.

5.3 President's/Vice-Presidents'

5.3.1 Policy review

James attended the School District's policy review meeting. He feels the revisions should be fine, although the process is lots of work. He reassured attendees that COPACS will review any revisions made and will provide feedback to the School District. He communicated that the Policy Committee will make changes made available for review and recommended PACs pay particular attention to appeals, concerns, complaints.

5.3.2 Negotiations

CUPE (which includes, tradesfolk; secretarial; janitorial staff; EAs) are embargoing. The main point of concern is the EAs. The concern for COPACS is that EA absences affect the children and parents. For example, parents are being asked not to bring kids to school because of insufficient EA availability. James requested that if PAC representatives hear of this or similar situations happening at their schools, to direct parents to COPACS, as we may be able to support and advocate for them.

James provided a brief history of the relationship between CUPE, the School District as a background context for the negotiations.

5.3.3 Finance and Facilities Meeting

James also attended this meeting. Last school year, the School District had budgeted \$x for EAs but were unable to spend it all: they had \$200,000 left at the end of the year because they could not find EAs to work. James asked them: what is the current situation and how would they deal with a similar scenario moving forwards? He is expecting a formal reply at the next meeting as this is a very acute concern in our School District (a view reinforced by the experience of other attendees at the meeting).

6 Old Business

6.1 *Remaining Exec positions open*

- First Nations Coordinator
- Emergency Preparedness Coordinator: trying to have a central person who can help coordinate and support other PACs Emergency Preparedness positions. If your PACs need help

James Taylor asked PAC Representatives to enquire with their PAC groups to see if anyone has an interested in taking on these roles.

7 New Business

7.1 *COPACS 101*

James Taylor provided a brief explanation of the various levels of parental involvement from the School up to the Provincial Minister of Education, all of which are legislated by the *BC Schools Act*. School PACs work by bringing parents' voices to bear on the functioning and running of each school, via liaison with the school's Administration. However, some issues that concern parents go beyond the purview of the Principal, and have an effect district-wide. District Parents' Advisory Councils (DPAC), which is what COPACS is, provide a forum through which parents can voice their concerns and have an influence across the district. In turn, some issues are felt Province-wide, and are the purview of the Ministry of Education itself. Here, the BCCPAC offers a means of contact to the Minister. COPACS – as a District PAC – has a vote in the BCCPAC and, as such, provide a conduit for parents from the school PAC level all the way up to the Provincial level. COPACS also serves as a conduit of information coming from the Provincial level down to each individual school.

7.2 *BCCPAC Annual General Meeting*

This meeting is usually scheduled for the Spring. All PACs can attend and vote at this meeting, meaning they can pass motions. In turn, the BCCPAC then takes these motions to the Minister. COPACS can support up to two individuals per PAC to attend, by covering membership fees.

7.3 *Middle School Assessment and Reporting Changes*

- Carley Hunter – Director of Instructional Support with the School District – recently spoke to James Taylor about changes pending to the methods for assessment and reporting for middle schools. Carley will be presenting at the next COPACS meeting. She will discuss the proposed changes, the rationale for these changes and provide an opportunity for parents to ask

questions. This presentation is an opportunity for parents to understand how and why the middle school curriculum is changing in an effort to modernize the education system.

7.4 District PAC Leadership Summit

- BCCPAC has a fall summit for executives from all DPACs. This year the meeting is in Richmond, from November 15th- 16th. The summit provides an opportunity for DPACs to get an idea of the broad issues going on at the Provincial level
- James Taylor will be attending for COPACS and will debrief following the event

7.5 South Island Distant Education School (SIDES)

- James Taylor wanted discuss SIDES because they are part of our School District, but because they are a distant education school, we rarely interact with them
- They are currently trying to rebuild their PAC
- If they need support, it would be good for them to be able to connect with other PACs

8 Next Meeting

November 14th, 7-9 pm

9 Adjournment

Motion to adjourn proposed by Phil Molloy; seconded by James Taylor.

Result: Meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm.