

HENRY HUDSON PAC MEETING

Date & Time: November 7, 2012 6:30 pm

Location: Henry Hudson Library

In attendance: Parents (approximately 20), Principal Adams. A full list of attendees is available from the PAC Chair upon request. For privacy reasons, a full list is not posted on the web site.

1. **Approval of Minutes.**

 A motion to approve the minutes from the October 9, 2012 PAC meeting was moved by Jerry and seconded by Wendy. Motion passed.

2. **PAC Chair Report – Robert**

a. Choir Update. Robert reported on the choir, on behalf of his wife, Catherine, who is the choir director. There are 50 students registered in choir this term, and it is going very well. The Hudson choir will have a performance on December 19 at the school.

b. Acknowledgement of Halloween Volunteers. With tremendous gratitude, Robert acknowledged the tireless efforts of Sandra R. and Susan S. who once again invested many hours in putting on the Halloween pumpkin carving evening and the haunted house. This is Sandra's last year of organizing these events, but she and Susan has been doing this for about a decade now. Robert also acknowledged Andre, Barry, Simon, and Branka, and all the other volunteers who helped out. By all accounts, the haunted house was wonderfully spooky, and the pumpkin carving event was a hit, too!

3. **PAC Secretary Report – Christine**

a. Christine reported that the book drive which was organized by Chantal at the end of October was very successful, in that a wide assortment of books, games and DVDs were donated by Hudson families. With the help of additional volunteers, Chantal will be going through all the items donated, and grouping them either into items of potential interest for the Hudson library, or items to be sold at the Winter Fair. Ms. Nikon will then go through the former group of items and select which items will be kept for the library and classrooms. The remaining items from Ms. Nikon's review will also be sold at either the Winter Fair or future events.

- b. Christine mentioned that there will be a Scholastic Book Fair at the school from November 19 to 22 at 8:30-9:00 am, 12:10-12:45 pm and 3:00-3:30 pm. This fair is being organized by Ms. Armitage and she will need volunteers to assist at the cash desk, on the floor, and with set-up and take-down. A reminder will be sent out in the weekly reminders.

4. PAC Treasurer Report – Dana

- a. Hot Lunch. The hot lunches have been going well, and we are 2 months in now.
- b. Winter Fair Planning. The Winter Fair is scheduled to take place on December 7 from 3:00 to 7:00 pm. The Fair is open not only to the Hudson community, but also to our neighbours. It is a fun social event for kids and adults alike. The format has been changed a bit this year in that there will be booth managers for the different stations to maintain more order at the Fair than in past years. The stations being planned for this year include the Kids Only Shoppe, String Pull, Gift Tables, Poinsettias, Concession, Book Sales, Guess the Candy, Cake Walk, Magic Show, Pick-a-Present, and a Local Artist. Donations for various stations will be solicited via a take-home notice and the weekly reminder system.
- c. Status of Technology Fund. The question of whether any specifics were available in terms of how we are going to spend the \$10,000 which has been budgeted for the purchase of technology for the school. Mr. Adams responded by saying that the \$10,000 budget is a huge, generous amount from the PAC, and he and the teachers are very grateful for this, especially putting this amount in the context of the fact that the VSB gives the school \$20,000 to pay for everything else that is needed during the school year. The staff has a wish list, but they are still in the process of deciding on a long-term strategic approach to improving the technological capabilities of the school in a way that will enhance the learning environment for the students. Until this long-term strategy has been confirmed, the staff will not be able to specify what tools they want/need in the classroom. Each smart board costs around \$4,000-\$5,000, so the staff wants to make sure there isn't cheaper technology out there that would do the same job as the smart boards. It may take a couple of more months until this is sorted out. Mr. Adams mentioned that David Livingstone Elementary is a model school in Vancouver that has pioneered the use of smart board technology. Incidentally, the husband of a teacher here at Hudson is a teacher at Livingstone. Perhaps a teacher from Livingstone could come to speak at a PAC meeting here to tell us a bit about what the use of this technology looks like?

d. Grad Students' Trip.

At the last PAC meeting it was mentioned that going forward, every grade 7 class will go on a grad trip, instead of the former model where every second year, the grade 6 and grade 7 classes would go on a trip. However, it has come to light that this change is not desired by the grade 6s and 7s. The treasurers do not have enough information on this issue, so perhaps the grade 7 parents should strike a committee to decide what will occur this year and then advise the PAC.

e. Contingency Fund.

There is \$3100.00 in a blue chip GIC at BMO that needs to be rolled over. The treasurers want to know whether they should roll it over in the same vehicle, which is a short term GIC which we can pull out at any time and only lose the interest.

A motion to roll over the GIC into the same vehicle was moved by Robert and seconded by Wendy. Motion passed.

f. Expenditures.

So far in this school year, here is the list of expenditures:

- \$1800 to the school for supplies - \$100 to each of 15 divisions and 3 resource teachers
- \$300 to the cross country team for bus rental
- \$1200 for the purchase of Handwriting Without Tears books
- \$300 for Halloween decorations for the Haunted House

g. Hip Hop Dance Program.

The hip hop lessons have begun, and the school presentations will take place on Thursday, November 15. In order to ease congestion in the gym, this year's performances will be split into two sittings (1:00 p.m. for the primary students, 2:00 p.m. for the intermediate students).

5. Principal's Report – Mr. Adams

- a. Hudson Field. The Hudson field is a swamp and is unusable for the students during a large portion of the school year. Mr. Adams will request someone from VSB to come to assess the drainage situation and see what they can do for us.

- b. Musical Instruments in Girls' Changing Room. These instruments were moved from the Art Room and seemingly just dumped in the changing room. Mr. Adams advised that all our storage areas are significantly overcrowded; the instruments are only part of a larger problem. There is very little storage for a school this size, and it is very difficult to get rid of things. First priority is to lighten the amount of stuff being stored. Mr. Adams and Jas have already made some decisions about things to get rid of. None of the teachers need or want the instruments for class. Half of these instruments have already been loaned out to other schools. One parent queried whether the instruments could be sold with proceeds going to the school.

- c. Inclement Weather Policy. Some parents have complained about the school's inclement weather policy. Mr. Adams replied that the staff need breaks, and the children need to be safe and supervised. The current plan for lunch time during inclement weather is as follows: supervision aides in various areas indoors; Kindergarteners do activities in their classrooms; grade 1 and 2 students watch a movie in the library; grade 3 and 4 students go to the basement games area; grade 5 and 6 students go to the computer room,; grade 6 and 7 students go to the gym. This has worked fairly well so far. Mr. Adams will, however, review this plan, and after a month or two, the students may be rotated among the various indoor destinations.

Alternate model: if you are dressed for rain, you can decide to go outside. Students who decide they do not want to go outside can stay in the lunchroom. However, there would only be one supervision aide in the lunchroom, and one supervision aide outside the school. We have 340 students, but only two supervision aides. It would be very difficult for one supervision aide to monitor, say, 150 students outside, and one supervision aide to monitor the balance of the students in the lunchroom. This is a definite drawback to this model.

Ultimately, please come dressed for weather. Too many kids come to school not appropriately dressed to play outside. Perhaps it can be put in the Hailer that all students should assume they will be going outside every day during the lunch break, and that staying indoors is a last resort.

In the mornings, if the weather is okay, students are supposed to stay outside until 8:55 a.m. There is no supervision inside the school before 9:00 a.m. If a parent is here with the student, the student is being supervised, so the parent and student can come in. If it is pouring rain before school, the students can come in before the 8:55 am bell. One parent mentioned that some teachers aren't understanding this. Mr. Adams asked to be advised if issues arise with teachers over this matter. Another parent mentioned that teachers need to be flexible, now that the kids have lost the basement area (where they used to be able to come inside) to the construction of a new classroom last year. Mr. Adams will consider options on how to make more inside space available and supervised.

- d. Christmas Concert. The annual Christmas concert will take place on December 19. There will be two performances on that day. Each family will be given two tickets.
 - e. Grade 7 Junior Achievement Program. On November 15 the grade 7 class will be selling hot chocolate for \$1.50, with all proceeds going to the Make-a-Wish Foundation. The hot chocolate stand will be set up outside from 12:30 to 1:00 p.m. and from 3:00 to 3:20 p.m.
- 6. Teachers' Report – teachers not present
 - 7. School Planning Committee Report – nothing to report
 - 8. Members-at-Large Reports
 - a. French Immersion Field Trip Update - Alan. There are only 3 grade 7 French Immersion students at Hudson. However, Sir James Douglas school has an exchange approved in Quebec and they have room to take extra kids from a couple of more schools. The three Hudson students now have the packages to sign up for a Quebec exchange. They would go to Quebec from February 12 to February 19, and would be hosting students from Quebec from May 21 to May 28. Selkirk school got a grant from Heritage Canada for the travel. In our case, the cost per parent is \$550. Next year's grade 7 French Immersion class has 16 students, so Alan is working on the structure of an exchange for them.
 - b. Earthquake/Disaster Readiness. Robert circulated a memo from Robert to Mr. Adams dated November 7, 2012 entitled "Request for Information Regarding

Hudson Elementary's Earthquake Shed." This memo will be entered into the minutes of this meeting. The memo raised many questions that we will need answers to Health & Safety at the VSB. We hope to be able to look at this issue again at the next PAC meeting.

- c. Accidental Fundraising Committee – Beth presented on behalf of the committee (Beth, Svetlana, Gary, Evin). As reported at previous PAC meetings, the VSB has told the school that they will be removing the wooden playground structures at the east side of the school but will not be giving the school any money for replacement equipment. November 13 is the date of the site review of the playground area. The plan is to replace the old, wooden equipment with similar activity equipment, but it will cost \$30,000 and we want to install it by the summer of 2013. So far we have raised \$3,600 towards this goal.

The fundraising committee would like to implement a two-pronged fundraising push:

1. Direct appeal to parent community with the goal of 100% participation, of any size contribution. 100% funding would be \$100 per student.
2. Outreach to local corporations: Lululemon, Starbucks, Molson. Also ask Hudson families whose employers have giving programs.

It will be easier to approach corporate donors after the parents of the school have been solicited.

A motion to approve the raising of funds for the new playground by using a direct appeal to parents and then a direct outreach to corporations was moved by Robert and seconded by Mitch. Motion passed.

9. New Business

- a. Traffic Safety. Robert encouraged everyone please to talk up traffic safety with class parents. If you park and leave your car in the drop-off only area (on the north side of York, west of Cypress but east of the school driveway), the City of Vancouver considers you parked and you may be ticketed. However, you may park your car west of the driveway on York and walk your child(ren) into school without being ticketed (however, you may not park there for very long). One parent asked Mr.

Adams to ask police to step up enforcement at several intersections where people are dangerously not obeying traffic rules (e.g. u-turns on Cypress at York, not stopping at 4-way stop at York & Maple). Mr. Adams indicated that it is too dangerous to have grade 7 students do safety patrols, but if he calls police they will increase enforcement at intersections of York & Cypress and York & Maple (4-way). Mr. Adams and Robert indicated they would call their contacts at Vancouver Police to see if enforcement can be stepped up around the school at drop-off and pick-up times.

- b. Kindergarten Lunch Time Allotment. One parent expressed concern that the kindergarten students apparently are only given 10 minutes in which to eat their lunches before they are told to pack up and go outside. The parent was concerned that the children are not eating enough of their lunches, which is problematic given that they still have 2-3 hours of learning ahead of them in the day. One cannot effectively learn on an empty or near-empty stomach! Robert indicated that this is a recurring complaint each year, and recommended that concerned parents first raise the issue with their child(ren)'s teacher(s). Since the hour is late at this meeting, we will carry this issue forward to the next PAC meeting. **Carry forward to next time.**

10. Adjournment. A motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m. was moved by Robert and seconded by Beth. Motion passed.

Date: November 7, 2012

To: Bruce Adams, VSB Health and Safety Committee

From: Robert Ford, Hudson PAC Chair

Re: Request for Information Regarding Hudson Elementary's Earthquake Shed

Background: The Hudson PAC has been working diligently since the Japanese and New Zealand Earthquakes to upgrade the Earthquake Shed. The state of our shed was so bad that it made the local television news. The PAC has raised money to buy supplies and Hudson staff have helped with drying out and repairing the shed.

Information Requests

- There is still expired food in the shed. When will this be removed and replaced?
- The PAC has no idea what the VSB is supposed to have in the shed. Is there a document that outlines what provisions are to be in the shed?
- There is a stove, but no instructions. Can we get an instruction document?
- There are not enough paper cups for 340 people. Can we get enough for the school population?
- How do we get the water out of the pot?
- How long does it take to boil water for the school population?
- How do you get the water out of the giant container?
- Can we have a list of what is supposed to be present for search and rescue materials and an assessment if it's enough for our current population?
- Where is the manifest of students and contact info kept?
- The PAC's analysis indicates we need to augment the first aid and search and rescue supplies to meet the info set out by emergency preparedness groups. What is the VSB standard for such equipment?

Perceived Gaps

What is the VSB's position on the following gaps that we see for our school's population?

- How are children with allergies and other medical needs to be handled?
- There are no emergency blankets. Does the VSB plan to provide these?
- There is no documented plan for keeping kids overnight in the cold weather or when they are in shock. This seems like a necessity.
- When can we execute our plan for comfort kits? Our research indicates that Elsie Roy, General Gordon, Queen Mary, Queen Elizabeth Annex and others have comfort kits. Why can't we do the same?

I will be following up for weekly status reports so that the PAC can report to the parent population. Please advise us what our next steps are to reach a goal of comprehensive earthquake preparedness for the school.

Thanks,