

## **HENRY HUDSON PAC MEETING**

**Date & Time:** December 5, 2012                      6:15 pm

**Location:** Henry Hudson Library

**In attendance:** Parents (approximately 20), Principal Adams, Mme. Boyd. 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 November 7, 2012 PAC meeting was moved by Wendy and seconded by Jerry. Motion passed.
  
2.     **Presentation by John Tso re Smartboards and Technology for Teaching**
  - a.    Interactive, can enhance both visio-spatial learning and kinaesthetic (touch screen to manipulate images around; special pens for use on the screen). Like a giant tablet on a screen on the wall.
  - b.    Takes a lot of up-front time to create lessons.
  - c.    Can be used to support student-led presentations; like more dynamic PowerPoint presentations where they and fellow students can interact directly with the board. E.g., do a frog dissection.
  - d.    Showed some sample Smartboard presentations. Can pull up graphs and other tools, diagrams, pictures, objects.
  - e.    Useful peripherals include document cameras, speakers.
  - f.    Interactive projectors would be less expensive option; Smartboards are expensive for the board, plus you need a projector. Not recommended to be portable, they are better when mounted to a wall. It's like getting an interactive projector; you need a good computer and a projector.
  - g.    Students can work on their presentations themselves by allowing kids to install the Smartboard software at home, or to project anything else from a computer.
  
3.     **Parent Open Mic to Express Wishes/Concerns**
  - a.    Jessica: Likes music in the morning and hopes we can keep it. Likes pylon instead of chains on entrance ramp. Likes big/little buddy system among classes. Wants more "no idling" signs, finish fence & gates around parking near Cornwall, and doesn't want to see kids cutting corners on Cornwall & Cypress, please educate to walk within crosswalk lines.

- i. **Comment:** changes for fencing is unlikely prior to seismic upgrade. Also, there's a safety concern. If all the kids are fenced in, it means there is only one practical way out. If an armed intruder came into a totally fenced-in school yard, the kids would have no exit point except toward the intruder. The similarity to a fox in a henhouse seems inescapable.
- b. Mitch: Can city paint lines on street (York & Cypress) to give guidelines for where people should walk, again kids are cutting diagonally across there.
  - i. **Answer:** Mitch and Robert have taken up the overall traffic safety issue and are pressuring the City of Vancouver to enforce the existing traffic laws and by-laws. Parents will be emailed as efforts progress.
- c. Catherine: Leaf cleanup and snow removal on sidewalks around the school: is school responsible? VSB? City?
  - i. **Answer:** Mr. Adams says VSB ensures at least one entrance to school is clear and one entrance to parking lot in each of 150 schools, then come back to finish the rest.
- d. Robin: Likes idea of buddy program, great for older kids and they should be rewarded for that. Also we used to have a reward certificate to acknowledge children who did well, and these were acknowledged as well in assemblies on Monday mornings. That seems to have been ignored, possibly due to teacher action. Kids very proud and excited when they got an award.
- e. Helen: Does school have resources for an enrichment program, and if so, how can we get it. By enrichment means extra challenging curriculum in some area.
  - i. **Answer:** we do have enrichment and challenge centres in VSB. These are applied for by teachers for certain children; ask teacher first. Applications already being made.
- f. Rina: I wish our school was a model for teaching kids kindness and compassion in the classroom and/or with extracurricular events.
  - i. **Answer:** Strong topic for consideration by the SPC is Social Responsibility.
- g. Christine: We don't score well on the standardized test scores. While realizing that this does not necessarily reflect on school as a whole, wonders whether this is of concern to the administration and what can be done about it. Also, can we introduce other kinds of dancing than hip-hop?
  - i. **Answer:** Belle has been asked to pursue the dance school options with Mr. Adams.
- h. Belle has asked if kids at another school (Douglas) would come and volunteer to lead instruction other kinds of dancing.
  - i. John's school (Livingstone?) had tap dancing once, but he says to be careful about gym floor.

- i. Jo: website has a calendar that is not updated; can we use it more effectively. As daycare user, can there be a mailbox in there so don't have to run up to office to drop off forms, etc.
- j. Andrea Coutu: Parents of 66 kindergarten students also find it difficult to get stuff into the office upstairs. Also, please more extracurricular activities; community centre activities downtown or at Kitsilano community centre start too early after the end of school day to be suitable for lots of parents.

**i. Answers to i and j are pending.**

- k. Belle: Are there anti-bullying programs, place for kids to go to talk about it. More like peer support than school counselor.

**i. Answer to k is pending.**

Keri: Wishes there were options for reverse lunch: bell goes, play outside for 40 minutes, then come in to eat. They would eat better and have more time to eat.

- l. Keri: Field needs work, but so does the pavement, lots of big puddles.
  - i. **Answer:** Mr. Adams: public schools all over city, paint is peeling, asphalt cracked, fields flooded. Physical place is slowly deteriorating everywhere. What has message been for 20 years? The VSB spends every dime it gets. Rotation for painting schools is now 50-100 years. Should we spend \$200,000 fixing field, or get 5 special needs workers. These are hard decisions. Is the facility slowly falling apart? Yes, it is, but that cupboard is bare.
  - ii. The field in poor condition affects our kids' activity. Is this a school playground or is it also a city park? Parks Board has no money either. Robert: facility is a community asset.
  - iii. **Answer:** Robert spoke with Patti Bacchus our Trustee and confirmed that a \$20 million budget shortfall for the VSB is real. The other fact is that Hudson is on the 5 year seismic replacement plan. See page 36 of this massive document. It is expected that any major upgrades will be deferred due to this plan.  
[http://www.vsb.bc.ca/sites/default/files/shared/12Sept19\\_op\\_commlI\\_item3.pdf](http://www.vsb.bc.ca/sites/default/files/shared/12Sept19_op_commlI_item3.pdf)

- m. Mitch: Can we hire a professional traffic guard?

**i. The VSB does not hire crossing guards so it's not a possibility through them. The PAC is investigating alternative options.**

John: seismic upgrade?

- ii. Mr. Adams says, three buildings here; main building, gym, and preschool. This building is H1, most dangerous, therefore on priority list in Vancouver. But so are a number of other schools. Time frame: begin in 2015 here. Engineers to figure out what it will cost to upgrade this facility to acceptable

standard, compared to the cost of tearing down and replacing with new school. That process itself is 2-3 years long. When re-do a school, they will put portables on other end. Or like Lord Kitchener, build new school on the field and then move everyone over. Playground equipment will be able to be repositioned.

[http://www.vsb.bc.ca/sites/default/files/shared/12Sept19\\_op\\_commlI\\_item3.pdf](http://www.vsb.bc.ca/sites/default/files/shared/12Sept19_op_commlI_item3.pdf)

- n. Robert: Will we ever get an evening Christmas performance back. This year we're having two during the day, inaccessible for most working parents.
  - i. **Answer:** Mme. Boyd: some teachers are reluctant to participate during the evening, so doesn't work if not everyone on board.

#### 4. Members-at-Large Reports

- a. Accidental Fundraising Committee (Beth, Svetlana, Gary, Evin). Robert says we've received \$2,400 in donations from parents earmarked for the playground replacement, so we're at \$6,340 now. If you get your donation in by December 15' 2012 you'll get a tax receipt in time for the 2012 tax period.

Evin reported that a letter has been sent to Lululemon, but we need to leverage your commitment by showing them that parents are invested, that's why the first step is to raise money from parents. Funders want to see that there is a strong community basis. We could send out one more reminder to parents, but it's Christmas season and we don't want to put parents off.

Jo asked whether there is any way of applying pressure by getting the media involved. Robert got an email from Mi-Jung Lee of the CTV who has been looking at the whole issue of why it is downloaded to parents to pay for playgrounds when playgrounds are a community asset. A playground at an East Van school was in the news; the playground was torn down but there was no money to replace it. Are all the PACs talking to each other about this?

Andrea reported that she went to the Elsie Roy PAC meeting last week, they get \$20,000 per year from Concord Pacific and from the Lion's Club.

Evin also reported that they now have a template letter for getting corporate donations.

- b. French Immersion Field Trip Update - Alan. French immersion field trip planning is progressing.
  - c. Earthquake/Disaster Readiness and Comfort Kits. Mr. Adams advised that he and the staff are going to take control of earthquake preparedness. There's been a lot of confusion surrounding this matter, and a lot has been done to improve the state of Hudson's preparedness, but it's an internal responsibility of the school to have the basic requirements to get us through a disaster. The plan needs to work for the staff, as they are the ones who would be implementing it. Quick question from a parent: in the event of a disaster, will the Hudson students and staff be staying on the Hudson field or going up to Kits Secondary? Mr. Adams: at first we would stay here, but Kits Secondary would be the second level place if we need it.
5. Traffic Safety Update - Robert reported that he has spoken with the Vancouver Police Department. He also found a City website that showed a lot of traffic on York Street. The traffic police officer with whom Robert spoke says he will recommend extra enforcement at the no stopping area on Cornwall at Cypress. One parent commented that there isn't enough 30 km/h signage around this school. Belle asked whether parent volunteers could be traffic guards or assist with traffic safety. Robert replied that we've considered this previously, and we have also considered looking into hiring a professional traffic guard. Another parent commented that a lot of this traffic looks like Lululemon employees, and wondered whether we could enforce this with them as part of corporate responsibility. Rob will speak again to the traffic police officer.
6. School Planning Committee Report – The next meeting will take place in January, and it seems like social responsibility will be the priority.
7. Teachers' Report – Mme. Boyd.
- a. Knitting Club. Mme. Boyd and some other staff members are looking to start a lunch-time knitting club for students, and are looking for a parent who has knitting and/or crocheting experience to assist/volunteer.
  - b. Food Bank, Christmas Hampers. At the upcoming Christmas concert, food bank donations will be solicited. Also, every division this year will be preparing one Christmas hamper for family social services (15 divisions).

- c. Dancing Teachers. One parent reported hearing that some of the teachers had performed a dance for a staff party, and commented that such a dance should be performed before the whole school!
8. Principal's Report – Mr. Adams
  - a. Christmas Concert. Mr. Adams reminded the group that there will be two performances of the Christmas Concert on December 19, and that each family is entitled to two tickets.
9. PAC Treasurer Report – Dana
  - a. Hot Lunch. The Treasurers will report on hot lunch in January. Dana advised that the hot lunch forms for next term will go home with the students next week.
  - b. Status of Technology Fund. Mr. Adams commented that Smartboards cost about \$4000-\$5000 per classroom, and it would take years to get them in each class. A sales rep from Epson came last week to demonstrate an Epson projector, which, with installation, would be about half the price. While an Epson projector would not be as versatile as a Smartboard, Mr. Adams feels that they are 80% of the way there, and it just projects against a regular whiteboard. One of the teachers will test-drive one to see if it works. Andre: you can get the notebook app on iPad which would do similar things, though you wouldn't get interactivity on the board, just on the iPad itself. Robert reminds us that the teachers are investigating options to see what would be the best and also most cost effective solution. One parent remarked that already embedding usage of a lot of iPads, transition already happening to move away from Smartboards to iPads, technology is speeding away.
  - c. Winter Fair. The Winter Fair will take place on December 7 from 3:00 to 7:00 pm. Bring lots of money, as it is a fundraiser!
10. PAC Secretary Report – none
11. PAC Chair Report – none
12. Next Meeting – Robert will email regarding the next meeting date. Wendy wondered whether we can we try a Thursday, e.g. Thursday, January 17, 2013?

13. Adjournment – A motion to adjourn the meeting was moved by Robert and seconded by Mitch. Motion passed.