

HENRY HUDSON PAC MEETING

Date & Time: November 13th, 2013. Meeting started at 6:35 pm.

Location: Henry Hudson School Library.

In attendance: Parents (approximately 30), teachers Mme Boyd, Mme Suzanne, Mme Tso and Mr. Dominic and principal Mr. Adams. Also in attendance was the DPAC Chair, Monica. Please note, a full list of attendees is available from the PAC Chair upon request. For privacy reasons the full list is not posted in the minutes.

1. Minutes

- a. A motion to approve minutes from the October 2013 PAC meeting was motioned by Jerry and passed by Andrea C. The minutes are posted on the website.

2. PAC Chair Report

- a. Robert began the meeting by thanking Mme Perella and Mrs. Hahn for making the Haunted House a great success with the grade 6/7 students leading the way! The recently approved fog machine was also a great addition to the festivities.
- b. Robert also wanted to send out a huge thank you for all the support that came via the Chapters/Indigo @ Broadway and Granville Adopt a School program's that donated \$4,239.39 to the Hudson Library in gift cards. There is a parent card being sent to Chapters soon and Ms. Nikon will work with the kids on a large thank you card that could be hung in the store.
- c. Motion to setup PAC Bylaws Committee
 - i. Robert handed out a copy of the resolution to the parents.
 1. Motion included in minutes as Appendix A.
 - ii. Robert discussed the history of the PAC and the growth of the school.
 1. 5 years back, PAC meetings were about 8 parents/meeting.
 2. School was only 2/3 full as FI program was only at K and Gr 1.
 3. Every year after, another class was added.
 4. By acclimation, the PAC at that time changed the structure and it was documented in the minutes.
 5. Ensuing years included increased PAC revenues (more students/more hot lunch), school closure issue, and centennial celebration (Thanks Alan).
 - iii. Sheila C, former treasurer presented a handout discussing the history of the PAC and the growth of the school.
 - iv. A document labelled Constitution was found yesterday (November 12th, 2013) at about 3 pm containing a Constitution and Bylaws for the Henry Hudson PAC.
 1. No date was found on the document.
 2. No supporting documentation was found confirming these were adopted.
- d. Break for 5 minutes was called for parents to review motion.
 - i. Changes to the Constitution and Bylaws would need to consider:
 1. Where we are
 2. Where we want to go
 3. Be relevant in the future
 4. Lots of parent involvement
 5. No direct PAC involvement
- e. DPAC Chair Monica answers questions:
 - i. Parent hypothesis that this found document came in 2002-2003 with new regulations requiring PACs to form
 - ii. Parent noted block program (noted in document) ended in 2005, so document predates 2005.
 - iii. Can election dates and PAC structure be changed?

Yes, Constitution and Bylaws established how that is done. Written notice of 30 days and 12 voting members.

- iv. Is this Constitution and Bylaws still in effect since it wasn't being used?
Yes, they STILL are.
- v. Generally, should you use a template or create your own Constitution and Bylaws?
Most PACs start from template to save time and legal complications.
- vi. Is this our guiding principle?
Yes, unless there is another ratified document that came after it.
- vii. We are currently out of compliance with our Bylaws (i.e. exec structure), how do we proceed?
The PAC at that time asked at a PAC meeting to restructure the PAC exec to the current system and it was documented in the meeting minutes. The bylaws were not amended, but this was done working under best knowledge that none existed. Now is the opportunity to go forward and get it right.
- viii. How many PACs have a Co-Chair?
DPAC has:
 - 1. Chair
 - 2. 2x Co-Chairs
 - 3. Treasurer
 - 4. Secretary
 It should be fluid to your situation as the DPAC Treasurer and Secretary last year were same person. It is great to see how many parents are attending the PAC meeting tonight.
- ix. Which is better, formal or informal structure?
The goal is parents working for the betterment of the school. It is most important to get along. Too formal can lead to roadblocks. Work with your own style and try to be transparent.
- x. Is it standard that monetary budget amounts over \$300 require vote?
Standard.
- xi. Benefits and cons of PACs becoming societies?
Required to be more formal, more costs, more headaches, but can access more grants and tax breaks. Go to BC PAC website in PAC 101 <http://www.vsb.bc.ca/pacdpac-publications/>
- xii. How many PACs are and which ones?
Unsure.
- xiii. In PAC 101, states that non-society PACs legally liable?
PAC Exec legally liable on contracts.
- f. Robert asks if motion is worded suitably including what constitutes sufficient communications with parents and ratification of recommendations. Robert also highlights that no time constraints have been placed on this group which DPAC Chair agrees.
 - i. Constitution states that it only requires 12 voting members to make the changes?
DPAC chair recommends that a committee is better to spearhead project as there will be ownership over 12 individuals.
 - ii. Chair recommends thorough review as many points in bylaws are dated.
 - iii. Should we start with our constitution or another one?
DPAC chair reiterates that the method to change the constitution and bylaws is in our bylaws and must be adhered to, but any wording changes can be made.
- g. A motion to approve the Bylaw Committee motion was approved by Wendy and 2nd by Beth with a majority of hands from the voting members.
- h. Volunteers for the committee were noted: Christine, Larry, Brian and Evin
- i. Recommendation for committee to let parent body know they can be a part of committee
 - i. Parent noted emails already went out regarding preparing bylaws.
 - ii. Noted that four members for the committee are sufficient.
 - iii. DPAC chair recommends that after a couple of meetings, the committee should have a forum for the parent body to bring their ideas and concerns.
 - iv. Can committee present recommendations at a PAC meeting?

DPAC chair: YES, then it gets into the minutes.

3. Principal's Report
 - a. Principal Adams presented on Numeracy and its differences to math skills and what that means at Henry Hudson.
 - i. Detailed notes can be found in Appendix B.
 - ii. Thank you to Principal Adams for his presentation.
4. Teacher's Report
 - a. There was a ProD day on numeracy.
 - b. On Nov 22, a ProD day on social responsibility with a speaker from UBC speaking on bullying.
5. Secretary Report
 - a. Chantal passed on a note that Ms. Nikon, in light of the Chapters/Indigo donations to the library, will donate book donation proceeds from Winter Fair to Haiti through a libraries helping libraries program.
 - b. Victoria noted that on Dec 6th, there would be an assembly with Police Officer speaker and his police dog.
 - c. The PAC meeting dates have been scheduled to the end of the year. Dates noted below. Please also check out the website:
http://go.vsb.bc.ca/schools/HUDSON/Parents/PAC/Pages/PAC_Meeting.aspx
 - d. The VSB is changing its website to a SharePoint format.
 - i. This impacts the school's site including the PAC site.
 - ii. The new sites will be coming out next week.
 - iii. The PAC section is a bit limited, but the meeting minutes and PAC meeting dates will be there plus the Constitution and Bylaws and any other information.
6. Treasurer's Report
 - a. Direct Fundraising: We are at 89% of our goal of \$4000. A final appeal form is going home in backpacks this week.
7. SPC Report
 - a. Background on SPC (School Planning Committee) noted.
 - i. Sets goals for school (numeracy and social responsibility).
 - ii. Elections are in January.
 - b. Mitch noted SPC binder being passed around
8. Hot Lunch
 - a. Wendy wanted it to be noted that Market Meats on W4th donated all the meat for chilli (~\$150). Please say *Thanks!* From Hudson if you are there. The kids will make a poster. One parent noted that they thought the meat was high quality.
9. Earthquake Kits
 - a. Done!
10. Community Garden Project
 - a. Proposal is sent to VSB.
 - b. Numeracy skills at work. The kids will be building with tools using their great measuring skills. Remember, measure twice, cut once...
11. Choir Update
 - a. Chamber choir to perform at VanDusen on Dec 12 during the Festival of Lights.
 - b. Junior and senior choir to present during winter performance on Tuesday Dec 17th. Two performances.
12. Winter Fair Update
 - a. The date of the Winter Fair is Friday, November 29th from 3-6pm in gym. All welcome.
 - b. Preliminary schedule for volunteers has been emailed to those who volunteered.
 - c. Backpack requests for string pull and kid's gift market went out this week. Activities were described. Donations can be made to office. Please note they are for fair.

d. Noted that there is no carry-over of gifts this year. Best gifts are ones that the kids think the parents would like. These are usually blingy and gaudy. Looking for both masculine and feminine items.

e. Planning is going well.

13. Grade 7 Grad Update

a. There are two parent volunteer representatives to help with graduation planning! one parent in French Immersion and one in English.

14. French Immersion Trip

a. Still exploring possibilities as a small group.

b. Grant applications are in the works and waiting to see if other school will proceed.

15. New Business

a. None.

16. Next meeting date

a. Tuesday Dec 10th at 6:30pm.

17. Motion to adjourn the meeting by Mitch was seconded by Andrea at 8:15pm. Motion passed.

18. Future meeting dates:

a. Tues Dec 10

b. Wed Jan 15

c. Wed Feb 12

d. Tues Mar 11

e. Wed April 9

f. Tues May 13

g. Wed June 11

Appendix A – Resolution

Motion for Bylaws Committee for Henry Hudson PAC

November 13, 2013

Be It Resolved that the Henry Hudson PAC shall create a Bylaws Committee tasked with updating and modernizing Constitution and Bylaws for the Henry Hudson Elementary PAC.

Be It Further Resolved that the Bylaws Committee will consist of a minimum of three parents who are not currently on the PAC Exec. The Principal and DPAC will be subject matter experts available to the Bylaws Committee. The Committee will be encouraged to request additional assistance as required and review what historical data is available.

For the Bylaws to be successfully adopted, the Bylaws Committee will distribute at least two different drafts to all parents. The timing of distribution will be determined by the Bylaws Committee. The Bylaws Committee will integrate feedback from each draft into subsequent drafts. The final Bylaws will require a ratification vote of at least a 75% at a PAC Meeting designated for this purpose

Appendix B – Principal Adam’s Presentation on Numeracy Notes

Numeracy as it connects to the school plan is the premise of a presentation that Principal Adams gave at the 2013 November 13th Henry Hudson Elementary PAC meeting. Below are some notes taken during the meeting by one of the PAC secretaries as an appendix to the meeting notes. These notes are from the note takers perspective and have not been vetted by the presenter.

Principal Adams requests feedback if this type of presentation is useful.

Notes:

Teaching and learning is the focus in the school day in and day out. It is what is planned for and implemented. It is understood that it must be difficult for parents to get a sense of what happens each day. It may also be difficult to understand the difference between math and numeracy.

In 1996, Principal Adams started teaching. It was very clear to him that the number one reason that a parent came through the door to speak to a teacher was for math (not ever social studies or science). There was something about math. Maybe the value it had in society or that it can be easily measured. Teachers were generally asked *why is it taught this way, or this is not the how it was taught when I was in school.*

The teachers and principal have to focus on what is important. All aspects of learning are important, but when boiled down, there is very minimal time for the teachers and the principal to meet and set goals. Six PD days, only three for which the principal and teachers meet for staff meetings and setting goals. As such, fifteen priorities are too many. One to two priorities are manageable.

Traditionally, reading and writing have been the focus at Henry Hudson, but this has been going on for some time. Now there is a greater sense of what is being taught and where to get resources from for teaching it.

In the last fifteen years in math and numeracy, teachers are struggling with what to teach, how to teach and what to teach with. Previously, there was a logical development and repetitive practice of math skills. It started systematically with a review of basics, addition of single digits, double digits, subtraction, etc. This made sense to most teachers and most parents. It was clear, skills based, linear (parents could easily follow the methodology if helping their children). Enrichment was answering the word problems.

This was the world that Principal Adams came into as a teacher. However, there was a change around 1998 to 2000 which essentially took the math curriculum guide out of circulation and replaced it with a numeracy guide. This was a very different approach to numbers. Numeracy was a language based use of numbers versus math, which focussed on basic skills. Numeracy was creative problem solving and math used number systems. In an entirely new curriculum textbook on numeracy, there were less than 3 pages of basic math/number skills.

Principal Adams is not saying that one system is better than the other as each type can be used effectively, but they are quite different, especially in how ones goes about teaching them. There were academics at the time that thought this was a better way to learn and this was implemented by the school boards at large.

Unfortunately, parents had no idea of what was trying to be taught. It was not linear and it was much different than what they saw growing up. For the teachers, it was very different to teach and difficult to implement into a lesson. Time to prepare lessons each night increased significantly.

Principal Adams showed examples of two types of textbooks: the older (out of circulation) skills based math book and a textbook on numeracy filled with pictures and words, but almost no basic math skills practice. These new textbooks were tried. However, basic math skills practice was still sought. These books had good ideas for intellectual thought, but they were almost impossible to implement.

Years go by and more problems surfaced. Cracks were forming in the system. Yet, one could not use school money for the old style textbooks and since out of curriculum, no one was publishing them either. They were increasingly unavailable.

“Who has 3 copies of math quest <1, 2, 3, 4>?” are the types of questions teachers spent time asking. This is still an issue today and now there is no textbook for math or numeracy anymore. Fifteen years of no one knowing what to buy anymore and now there wasn’t anything available but photocopying from other resources. There were programs like Jump Math that cost \$10 for basic skills that parents could buy.

Teachers photocopied. About one-third of the money to run the school is spent on photocopy paper as the days of the textbook are long gone.

The school has outlined two goals this year: Social responsibility and numeracy. Numeracy is a challenge for parents and teachers. This issue is not just a Hudson issue; it is a great debate in education everywhere. The numeracy goal of the teachers is to answer these questions for here at Hudson.

Note: That the PAC can buy enrichment resources but not curriculum material. It is not about the money regardless as, if there were an ideal textbook for teaching, the money would be found to get them.

So what do the teachers need? Time to think about this issue. It is not something that can be solved tonight. Teachers would like a proper “textbook” as it takes a lot of time and effort to create an arsenal of material for lessons. A new teacher comes in with nothing.

Principal Adams did some tutoring to supplement his income when he started teaching. He recommends that if your child gets seriously behind, the best thing you can do to help them is to give up. Give up helping them scrape by getting through that year in which their comprehension of the material is so low that they will not retain it. Instead, figure out what level they are at right now even if it is years back. If you are struggling with fractions but do not get simple addition, it is nearly impossible to figure out fractions. Work on the basics with them rather than focussing on getting them through the next test. Note that, generally, at the elementary level, if a child is significantly behind, then there is likely an underlying reason that it is difficult to learn.

Again, this issue is not going to be solved tonight. It is a window for parents to hear the conversations occurring in this long term discussion. This is why numeracy is a goal of the school this year.

Some questions:

Q: Differences in teaching boys and girls?

A: There are differences but it can go both ways.

Q: Have there been negative outcomes due to this switch to numeracy over basic math skills?

A: Not sure as it depends on how it's measured. There is a growing sense of frustration in the curriculum. It is so large, basic skills take less of a portion.

Thank you Principal Adams for presenting.