



**MINUTES** for the General Meeting of the **SD71 District Parent Advisory Council**, held Isfeld Library & via Zoom, on **MONDAY May 5th** at 6:30pm.

## **ATTENDANCE:**

Jennifer Fisher- DPAC Vice Chair (Isfeld Alt)  
Megan Cowling - DPAC Secretary - (Brooklyn/Highland Alt)  
Kendall Packham\* - DPAC Treasurer - Glacierview  
Shannon Aldinger - Trustee  
Thea Cockerton - Food Services Coordinator  
Carrie McVeigh - Secretary Treasurer  
Dr. Jeremy Morrow - Superintendent  
Jim Tessman\* - Valley View Elementary  
Emily Hanson\* - Airport Elementary

Kari Pratt\* - Isfeld Secondary  
Rae Walsh\* - Vanier Secondary  
Mackenzie Leslie\* - Courtenay Elementary  
Karen Parkinson\* - Aspen Rep  
Brooke Finlayson\* - Highland Secondary  
Jennifer Vaino - Highland Secondary  
Carly Wintschle\* - Brooklyn Rep  
Jen Storey\* - Miracle Beach Rep  
Catherine Crowe\* - Ecole Robb Rd  
Kristine Saltzman - Huband Park El.

**11 of 21 voting reps (min. of 7 req'd for quorum)**

*\*indicates DPAC Rep*

## **1 Call to Order 6:35**

Recognition of Traditional Territories - Red Dress Day May 5th, read more about this [here](#). In Canada, more than six in ten (63%) Indigenous women have experienced physical or sexual assault in their lifetime. The impact of these disproportionately high rates of violence is felt in all areas of life. The effects on health and wellness include inequitable access and treatment in health care and underrepresentation in health research. On Red Dress Day, and every day, we honour the lives and legacies of MMIWG2S by listening to their stories and commemorating their strength and spirits. We stand in solidarity with the families and communities who continue in the pursuit of justice, healing, and change.

Locally : [Lil' Red Dress Project](#), the event from 1pm-4pm today, and links within [here](#).

Approval of the Minutes: Motion to approve - moved by Rae Seconded by - Brooke **CARRIED**

Approval of the Agenda: Motion to approve - moved by Catherine Seconded - Jen S **CARRIED**

## **2 Correspondence**

- Equity Scan - beginning surveys are open, find more info about Equity in Action [here](#), and more information about Comox Valley Schools Indigenous Education department and governance [here](#).
- Budget Survey - open now here [Budget Survey](#) **from April 23rd to May 12th**.

## **3 Presentation:** Carrie McVeigh - Secretary Treasurer - Budget Survey

Jenn welcomes our Secretary Treasurer, (brilliant but also very kind) and explains complicated topics well. Carrie mentions that this is hopefully more of a conversation than a presentation. As mentioned, the Budget Survey is open. Encourage everyone to complete it. Is there anyone that has feedback about the survey? Different format this year, moved to the option to select choices rather than fill boxes. Hopefully easier to provide results and glean themes. Feedback is welcome.

(Read more about this year's [timeline for Budget Process here](#))

Comment of feedback from a Rep: Please add more space in the text box. It is better than previous years, nice to be able to select from the wording and pinpoint where things should go.

Carrie: Overview of some high level information, this year for the Operating Grant, it was 127 million, up from 123 million. 127 million for the 2025-2026 school year based on a projected 10,548 FTE students (FTE=full time equivalent. ([Read more about the 25-26 Operating Grant here](#)))

Moderate growth in the District, about 70 more students, enrollment trend is plateauing. It is projected to keep growing while other districts are facing declining enrollment. The money we receive from the Ministry is primarily spent on staffing, 90% of the budget is spent on staffing.

(Read more about this on page 59 of the April [Agenda Package](#))

With regards to FTE (full time equivalent) anticipating 670 teachers, 10 more than last year, 215 EAs, the funding depends on the number of designations that we have in our system in various 660 unique and diverse needs.

(See the allocation of funding for our District by Level 1, 2, 3, on page 55 [here.](#))

(See the categories of designations with supplemental funding attached [here](#) - please note funding numbers outdated.)

(Find the criteria and funding for designations in BC [here.](#))

Question: Of the 127 million, with 90% spent on staffing, how much is actually left? What is the amount that we have discretion and decision making over? 10%?

There is another budget presentation coming up at the COTW on May 13th, find the schedule [here.](#)

Question: PACs are often asked to Fundraise, can you outline what PAC's should be contributing to?

Answer: We can review what is appropriate for PACs to be contributing towards and what is maybe not as appropriate. PACs shouldn't be asked for classroom resources that are curriculum based and any additional resources that are supplemental to that.

Dr. Morrow: As a District, we are responsible to provide the basic needs. PACs can go above and provide things like robotics club kits, or subsidizing an enrichment trip.

Less so being asked to fundraise for expanding playgrounds. Current funding for playground expansion is 125k from the province. Collaborative relationship and best practice - recognizing when PACs have made that contribution. When we really start to move into the space, parents are partners and not parents as fundraisers.

Usage potential for DPAC funds: Would be wonderful if you look at the Strat Plan and align with it presenting workshops.

Question: I'm aware that there is not a lot left over after wages and operating, we have seen a lot of change in the District, with new people and new lenses, have we done a deep dive on old line items?

Answer: Are they aligned with the Strategic Plan? We should be able to look at a District's budget and know what their plans and values are.

Looking closely at the decisions and the funding and we need to be open to the ways that we're spending the money.

(Read more about PAC In-Service accounts [here](#))

PAC In-Service accounts - one of the questions would it be better to be given to PACs/DPACs?

Question: Quick roundtable of current ways that PAC reps spend their In-Service account funds?

Answers: paper, BCCPAC membership, childcare, small operating grant for a PAC.

Markers, BCCPAC, BCCPAC membership, handed-down between Treasurers, photocopying and bank fees, using for BCCPAC registration. (see BCCPAC registration rates [here](#))

Carrie: I would encourage you to use that funding and find out about it early in the year.

Question: Should we look at a same amount for all PACs? Discussion.

Question: Is there a reason it has been used by the end of the year? Not sure to know historically?

Question: Would it be better to have it as a cheque at the beginning of the year?

**Homework: How could the in-service accounts best serve PACS?**

Rep Question: Hearing rumours of layoffs and rehiring?

Answer: Difficult because it involves personal, contracts and collective agreements and obligations. We have had to issue layoffs letters we strongly believe at the end of the day we will be reengaging them but perhaps not in the same way as now.

What gets complicated in our system is 14 months of continuous contract, and then hired again, received continuing contract, temporary position (e.g. maternity leave) 55 layoff notices. We owe them a job, they will find work, but it doesn't dismiss the emotions of receiving that letter. Not declining in enrollment.

Teaching staff aging and way less retirements than anticipated this year.

Rep Comment: 55 of 670 is a relatively low percentage compared to other districts.

Operations Questions? Aging schools get a new playground with no accessibility funding in that to go with the playground? Accessible component versus entirely accessible.

Playground funding is now \$125k-\$150k?

Question: In the board office, is there someone whose portfolio is community partnerships?

Capacity locked up into each school, hearing that there is a very real human rights-based need.

That queue was delayed by the Ministry. Discussion around barriers to grant applications.

#### 4 Reports

##### Chair Report - Joanne Barr

- Sends sincere regrets. In April we attended the Board Meeting, COTW and multiple additional meetings.

##### DPAC Treasurer- Kendall Packham - as of May 5th 2025

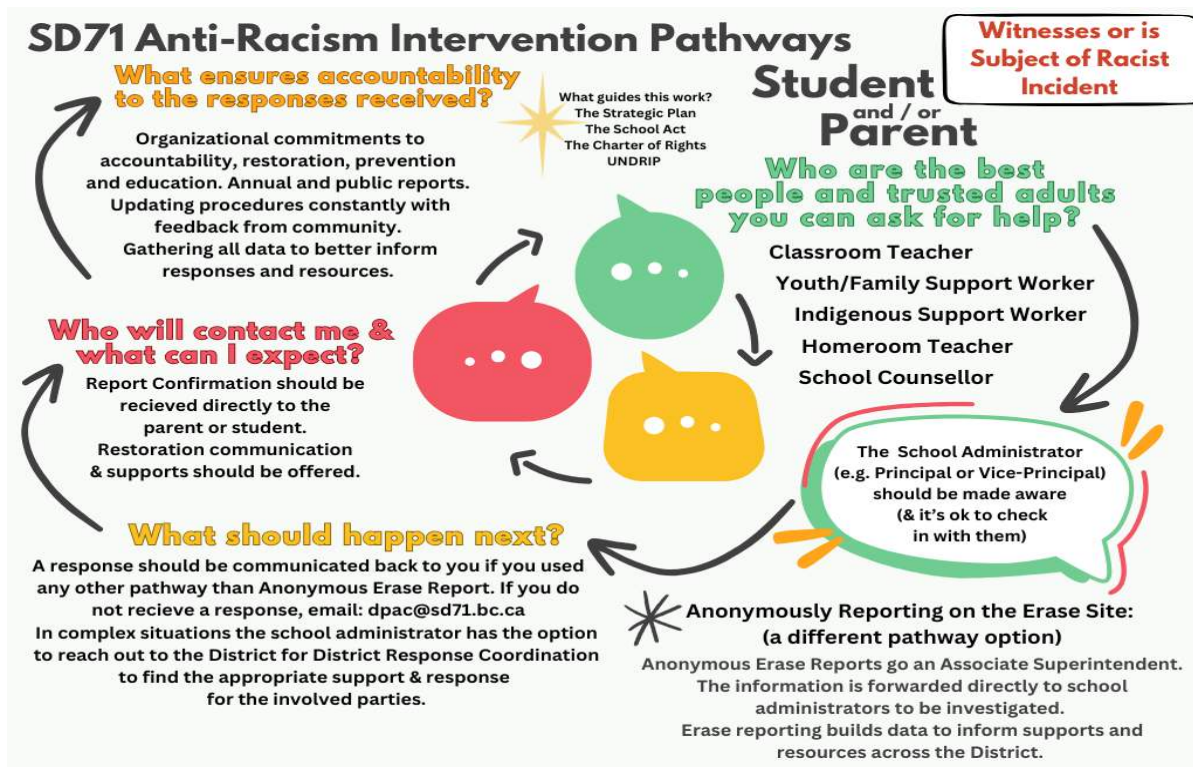
- General account -\$5810.08
- Gaming \$4136.89

New updates to Society guidelines, BCeID info: [HERE](#) Link to BCCPAC webinar: [HERE](#)

Making sure PACs have updated Constitution and Bylaws will be required.

##### Anti Racism Committee - Carly Wintschel / Megan Cowling

- Working on collaboratively refining our flow-chart to support path finding for experiences of racism. Focus is on student/parent experiences and the steps that can be taken, as well as what can be expected along the way. Link to working flowchart [HERE](#) (wording will be simplified)
- Met with Karma (District Principal of Equity and Non-Discrimination) and will be meeting with her



- again on May 23. Upcoming dates of note: anti-racism presentation from Wachiay, May 9 and final committee meeting of the school year May 30th.
- If you would like to see the presentation and celebrate this work, please RSVP to: [antiracismcommittee.sd71@gmail.com](mailto:antiracismcommittee.sd71@gmail.com) (space limited to 30 spots)
  - Wachiay Presentation @ Wachiay Friendship Centre Society, [1625 McPhee Ave., Courtenay](#). 9:30am - approx. 11am, Friday, May 9th

- Next Subcommittee Meeting @ 9:00am-10:30am Friday, May 30th
- What is the Erase site? Reporting tool. Districts and schools have responsibility for actioning the information. Focus would be tightened based on how much information the team has.
- How do I know that something is being done? We may not be able to find out what the consequences are due to confidentiality but we should receive updates.
- Active-witnessing and bystander training.
- Find the ERASE site [here](#) and the reporting tool [HERE](#)

### **Sexual Health Committee - Brooke Finlayson**

- Guest Kim Doerkson attended our last GBV meeting. She is the coordinator for both the Path Forward program and the Employment, Life Skills and Training program through the Wachiay Friendship Centre. She spoke about what she does and answered the committee's questions.
- We have more community engagement opportunities in the works. Shannon will be meeting with the ISW's at their regional meetings in May and Brooke will schedule more community engagement opportunities for late May/early June.
- GBV survey closed on May 1<sup>st</sup> and to date, there are over 300+ responses. The information will be collated, and the committee will be looking for themes in the data.
- The committee continues to compile an impressive and well researched list of resources that district staff will have access to. Shannon has asked the Learning Resource Centre (where some of the resources are housed) if the district has a centralized list of all SH ed. materials. There was discussion about how to incorporate the resources into our existing library, and we are curious about "how do we bring this resource list to life?"...in other words, how can the resources be used in classrooms and how can the district best support staff in using them.
- That lead to further discussion about the "how". Some ideas included creating Consent Committees in schools, building more consent resources for teachers, adding resources to district or school websites (school websites would support parent engagement and education), Pro D Day opportunities, shareable presentations, and lesson plans...to name a few.
- Discussion around a 'budget ask' to employ a part time District Lead/Curriculum Support teacher to support GBV initiatives and to oversee the portfolio.
- Shannon: so much good work being done and the hope is that it is shared between schools with more collaboration for all about the good things we are doing.

### **School Food Subcommittee - Shawn Thir - Committee paused until September**

### **Speaker Series Committee - Megan Cowling**

- Family Smart Presentations: <https://may7icare.ca/> Three presentations all free & all virtual:
  - Topic: [Finding and Creating Connection with Kids](#) Tues, May 6: 6:30-7:30pm
  - Topic: [Supporting Kids with Substance Misuse: A Conversation with Together We Can](#) Wed, May 7: 6:30-7:30pm
  - Topic: [Substance Use and The Power of Support: A Conversation with Guy Felicella](#) Thurs, May 8: 6:30-7:30pm
- LTCES [Community Connections Day](#) May 8th & May 10th.
- Family Smart- May 28th: free in-person event coming up at the end of May for caregivers in the Comox Valley:

#### **Topic: [ADHD: The Real Deal](#)**

There are many myths about ADHD and it can be hard to understand how to support our kids who have ADHD. Join us as we listen to Dr. Don Duncan, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, dispel the myths, learn how and why the ADHD brain works the way it does, and talk about medications for ADHD.

This video presentation will be followed by a facilitated discussion by Carolyn McCarthy and Megan Watson, Family Peer Support Workers in the Comox Valley.

Note: This is a repeat topic for the Comox Valley - showing the same video from our event in November. We welcome you to join us whether you've joined us before for this topic or if it's your first time.

When: Wednesday, May 28 from 6:30-8:00pm

Where: Mark Isfeld Secondary (Multipurpose room)

Cost: Free

Register: For more information and to register, [click here](#). Even if you are not sure if you can make it, we encourage you to register as you will receive access to resources following the event via email.

\*While the event is held at the secondary school, this event is for parents of all school aged children and youth who are interested in learning more about ADHD.

- Save the Date: *"Understanding IEPs for Parents & Caregivers"* 6:30-8pm on Thursday September 25th, at the SBO, with Tracy Pederson of Inclusive Education presenting. Question: will there be an opportunity for parents with specific questions to give them to Tracy in advance to respond to in the presentation? Answer: that would be a great addition, as 90% of so much District communication is knowing the right question to ask. Will incorporate this feedback into the evening's model.

**Emergency Preparedness Committee - Shawn Thir** - Committee paused until September.

### **Superintendent Report - Jeremy Morrow-**

- As busy and complex as May & June are, it is also a celebration time of year as well. Upcoming 2nd Inclusive Ed annual Comox Valley track meet.
- Student Voice - prioritize their conversations. The big things they highlighted for us to work on: careers education, possible solutions and proposals, washrooms are a big topic, there is a third.
- Privilege of hearing such honest discourse. Closing meeting exercise, please share one word as we leave? Those words include: understood, heard, seen.
- They will say something that is wrong and bring good ideas at the same time, they can't help themselves and are solution-oriented.
- Equity in Action survey with parents in the next couple weeks.
- Intention is really to more fully focus on uncovering areas of inequity in the SD. All Indigenous Equity Scan Teams. We will be uncovering things that people would wish were not there.
- Risk in this work as we uncover these truths and there is a heaviness to the work as well.
- When we start to address students at the margins that it is actually good for all students.
- Partner in a different way. Aware of the creating the partnerships.
- Working together to have DPAC be present in the morning of our Admin summer sessions, best practices with your PAC. Fundamentally show a distinction of working together and remove historical grit in the wheel.
- May 29th having all PVP and Management and having an anti-racism workshop, responding in a good way to the complexity of racism in a good way.
- Jen: Can a DPAC rep attend the PVP anti-racism presentation for a shared understanding of what is known?

### **Trustees Report**

- Thank you all for coming to all of the PAC and DPAC meetings that you do. We appreciate that you all continue to come and the shift to greater advocacy and advisory roles, information focuses on the target audience.
- Following Brooke's report, GBV committee is starting to bring it all together. GBV Committee just got the survey results in today, and total number of responses is just over 330.
- Along those same lines, our Board brought a motion to our provincial association (BCSTA) seeking address sexism in schools and the motion passed. The idea is based on the

province's K-12 Anti-Racism [Action Plan](#) and [Response Guidelines](#). Essentially the pitch to the MOEC is that we have done all this great work around anti-racism, with a good and practical guide – let's do the same with GBV and sexism.

- Budget timeline was covered earlier in the meeting.
- **Inclusive Education** provided a detailed presentation at the Board of Education's Committee of the Whole (April 8) about how that department operates and included many resources that may be of interest to parents.
- The powerpoint presentation can be found starting page 3 of this agenda package:

<https://www.comoxvalleyschools.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/AGENDA-Open-Committee-of-the-Whole-Apr-08-2025-2.pdf>

- The whole presentation can be viewed via this link:

<https://www.comoxvalleyschools.ca/committee-of-the-whole/#toggle-id-1>

- Other resources about Inclusive Education:
  - Inclusive Education Services: A Manual on Policies, Procedures & Guidelines (2024)

[https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/inclusive/inclusive\\_ed\\_policy\\_manual.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/inclusive/inclusive_ed_policy_manual.pdf)

- A Parent's Handbook on Inclusive Education:

<https://inclusionbc.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Parents-Handbook-On-Inclusive-Education-2024.pdf>

## **5 New Business**

**Exploring APs by theme: Earth Day and [AP 547 Appendix](#)** "Principals may wish to, in partnership with the Parents' Advisory Committee (PAC), develop a school ECO (Energy conservation) team to provide landscaping and greening of the grounds to provide shading, greening and beautification of the school grounds."

## **6 Upcoming Events**

- Miracle Beach Fun Fair May 23rd. Friday 3pm-8pm
- Arden Penny Carnival is May 22nd.
- COTW - Tuesday Budget
- WestJet Raffle through Ecole Robb Rd, ATTACH
- Lake Trail Fun Fair June 5th

## **7 PAC Sharing**

- Track and Field concession - please send best practices and ideas to add to the PAC resource library
- Gladstones Burger & Beer - \$1200 a night

## **8 Next Meeting:** Monday, June 5th, 2025

## **9 Adjourn:** 8:34pm Motion to adjourn. Jen Storey, seconded by Jim "The Jacket" Tessman

Any questions or comments please don't hesitate to [contact us](#)