

MINUTES for the General Meeting of the **SD71 District Parent Advisory Council**, held Isfeld Library & via Zoom, on **MONDAY, May 4th** at 6:30pm.

ATTENDANCE:

- | | |
|--|---|
| Joanne Barr - DPAC Chair | Sara Schouten* - Denman Community School |
| Megan Cowling* - DPAC Vice Chair (Brooklyn/Highland Alt) | Julie Tabernero*- Huband Elementary |
| Jennifer Fisher*- DPAC Secretary (Isfeld Alt) | Carly Wintschel*- Brooklyn Elementary |
| Hayley Dato*- DPAC Treasurer (Vanier Alt) | Thea Cockerton - Food Service Coordinator |
| Jay Dixon - SD71 Associate Superintendent | Jennifer Viano - Highland Parent |
| Craig Sorochan - Manager of Communications | Emma Dixon*- Cumberland Community School |
| Michelle Waite - SD71 Trustee | Jody Larson - Aspen Elementary |
| Graeme Hahn* - Royston Elementary | Catherine Crowe* - Ecole Robb Road |

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

***indicates DPAC Rep**

1 Call to Order at 6:34pm

Recognition of Traditional Territories - I respectfully acknowledge that the land we gather on is the unceded traditional territory of the Pentlatch, Ei'ksan, Sahtloot and Sasitla people, now collectively known as the K'ômoks First Nation, the traditional keepers of this land.

Introductions - quick round table

Approval of the Minutes from April - Motion to Approve Catherine, Seconded by Graeme

Approval of the Agenda for May 4th, 2026 Motion to Approve Catherine, Seconded by Graeme

2 Correspondence

- [Family Smart - free in person event](#) for caregivers Wednesday, May 13 at Mark Isfeld Secondary School from 6:30pm to 8pm in the Multipurpose Room. *Topic: Mental Health and Preparing for the Transition to Post Secondary.*
- Josh Porter - Director of Information Technology - email: PAC Zoom licenses will no longer be provided by the District as the cost has increased. Question to reps: who actually uses the zoom licenses? Response from PACs present: Miracle Beach, Highland, DPAC, ERR, Denman, Hornby

3 Presentation: Jay Dixon, Associate Superintendent & Craig Sorochan, Communications Director - Erase Reporting, SaferSchools, Safety Drills & Communication.

- Send links to the posters - principals have all been forwarded these
- Stephanie Baker - credit for the sticker idea
- Setting up continues - talk about emergency communications and some of the ideas that are post Spring Break and Tumbler Ridge.
- Rebrand the look & feel of the documents to get the info out.
- After any type of event or emergency situation we dissect the response
- Responsibility: Craig with Emergency Resources & Jay ERASE with resources
- Continual uptick in Erase reports is a good thing
- Thank you for what PACs and different parents have provided in recent years, feedback has helped create this site shaped product we are getting pretty happy with

- Use the text service to notify families - convenient - must opt in because of Canada's spam laws
- We we tried to contact people, it became evident that Information school has in databases was slightly off. We encourage families to learn more about these procedures so you understand what they mean and how schools respond during an emergency. Additional information is available here:
- SIGN UP HERE LINK: <https://www.comoxvalleyschools.ca/emergency-preparedness/>
- Craig - we can zero in on bus routes and see the location on the app
- When Craig first started it was a form letter, when real emergencies happen we will use Twitter
- Reach out to local media for snow days etc., they should have up to date info by 7am.
- Looking for snow day - surges with a huge amount of website traffic when snow days happen
- Hold and Secure example: People always want to know more but we need to maintain our level of privacy. Working on trying to provide more information to ease people's nerves in scenarios.
- Situations are fluid, change minute to minute and Craig has a variety of scripts he is always fine-tuning.
- After each one of these incidents - as a team we sit down emails and families, conversations with the RCMP, debrief. District Incident Response Team. Feedback from staff is also important.
- Drills allow schools to become instinctual and there should be no surprise drills this year.
- After reviewing the incident it became evident we should practice evacuating a school bus.
- Drill at Cumberland with a lot of front-loading.

Question: Aspen in November - debriefing and video? Example of question about November lockdown.

- Provincial guidance re: ways to improve the drills.
- Messaging about the social emotional piece of lockdown drills.

Question: Presence of police in the schools more often to normalize the presence, but also keep the trauma-informed lens. As a district we would encourage families to not come to the schools during emergencies.

Question: is there an extreme heat protocol?

Yes, guidance comes from the Public Health.

Question: is there a smoke protocol?

Yes, guidance comes from the Public Health.

- As a system similar to the pandemic, it depends on where students are safest. We wouldn't want to dismiss students when parents are not home.
- We have also purchased several generators and StarLink systems.

Question: I think it is important that parents understand that some emergency situations where we want kids inside, e.g. lockdown, they are safest. Versus scenarios when the septic breaks or the power is out and we want you to come and pick up your kids. This is important information to express and communicate.

Connect with Craig at: COMMUNICATIONS@SD71.BC.CA

Or Craig's email: CRAIG.SOROCHAN@SD71.BC.CA

Question: High school the kids can just go, how does that work in an emergency?

- Often we have to mobilize a chain of staff to find students, show us permission to leave. Default is that the kids are not supposed to leave the school until there is communication at home.

Question: we do not practice at elementary enough the earthquake drill and knowing the release process and requirements? Discussion.

- Associate Superintendent Jay Dixon: What is the Report It Tool?
 - Video: [YOUTUBE VIDEO](#)

Information and Resources: Review PowerPoint presentation [HERE](#)

Question: Data breakdown, is there a trend in the increase of certain age groups reporting?

Question: Important to encourage parent support to use the Erase tool, when sometimes people are reprimanded for using the ERASE tool.

Question: when you are communicating to the Principals, often hear that parents come to me first?

Address the stigma piece about it going through you first, with addressing messaging.

Importance that it is being reported. No judgement on School Administration for the presence of Erase reports.

Question: What is the line between evening and weekends? Getting trickier and trickier.

- Might be isolated to an RCMP incident that we have no influence over.

Question: What sort of reports happen over summer? Is there coverage?

Most school districts put a disclaimer not active during summer, but our district has 2-3 staff covering the Erase system.

Question: can NIDES use Erase? Yes.

Thanks expressed to all parties for sharing information collaboratively.

4 Reports - Attached

Executive Report

- Attended the BCCPAC AGM
- Jennifer Motion, "to remove Kendall Packham as a DPAC signing authority" Seconded by: Catherine. Motion CARRIED
- Jennifer Motion, " to update the DPAC signing authority to reflect Executive members: Jo Barr, Megan Cowling & Hayley Dato" Seconded by: Graeme. Motion CARRIED
- Financial Report - nothing to report at this time.

Subcommittees:

Anti Racism Committee - Carly Wintschel (submitted)

- No updated report at this time. The next committee meeting is Friday, May 22 @9:15 at the school board office. New members are always welcome! Email: antiracism.committee.sd71@gmail.com for inquiries

Sexual Health Committee - Brooke Finlayson - No Report at this time

- Jennifer Fisher- BCCPAC reflection, see attached [letter from Past BCCPAC President](#) also attached below

Speaker Series Committee - Megan Cowling (submitted)

- Looking for parents that would like to work together for the follow-up session with Inclusive Ed this fall. If you would like to help organize the event and work with Inclusive Ed re: the presentation, please connect.

Emergency Preparedness Committee - Shawn Thir - Nothing to report at this time.

5 Superintendent Report - Jay Dixon, Associate Superintendent

- Finish with the day with success stories. Jay acknowledged the staff at Aspen for the new wing.
- The Numeracy Evening - principals and staff.
- Cumberland School add-ons are really taking shape and the engagement of the community.
- Over 500 results on Long-Range Facilities Plan
- KFN tourism and hospitality event
- Grad season - Highland May 30th
- Grad Attire Program - Thea spoke to the tremendous impact of the program, any family can attend and contribute.
- Vanier Band came home with Silver at the Sun Peaks Resort, Nancy Cox retired teacher to Sun Peaks and Sherry Martens.

6 Trustees Report: Michelle Waite, Board Chair & Area C Trustee

- Reminder: District Calendar finalized and posted see here:
- Next week Open Committee of the Whole: Budget Process (2-3million budget shortfall pressure)
- Third quarter report - forecast 2.3 million will be available at the end of this year, discussions of how to apply surplus one-time money to help balance the budget next year.
- Special Board Meeting May 19th - first reading of the budget bylaw, process changing to the budget being moved on more than one night. Not the historical process, reflects the new ST and his guidance. Budget for the upcoming school year begins July 1st.
- Question: Open Committee of the Whole is open to? All public can attend in-person. Online limited.
- Different structure for the Board to do its work with the partner groups and rightsholders. Work done together versus offer consultation on the work done.

- Sessions with motions and amendments - similar at BCSTA. Huband Park - roads outside of the Municipality and governance and navigation re: road speeds.
- Delegation to CVRD - Graeme is a resource for traffic advocacy.

7 New Business

- [National Volunteer Week was April 19-25th](#) - Thank you to all our wonderful parents & community members who give their time and expertise to our school communities, making these spaces better.

8 Upcoming Events

- Miracle Beach Fun Fair - May 29th
- Garden Documentary on Netflix - watch, see our wonderful comox schools, ERR & Brooklyn

9 Next Meeting: Monday, June 1st 6:30pm

10 Adjourn - Motion to Adjourn 8:20pm - *Moved by: Jennifer, Motion Carried.*

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

Reflections on Sexual Health Advocacy and SD71 DPAC Contributions

To Whom It May Concern,

I had the privilege of attending the BCCPAC Annual Conference and AGM in Richmond from April 24-26 2026, representing SD42 DPAC and Garibaldi Secondary School PAC in Maple Ridge.

One of the resolutions brought forward by another member PAC called for BCCPAC to establish a Sexual Health Committee. This committee, in fact, had already been established as a standing committee but had been largely inactive over the past year due to a lack of volunteers.

I spoke in favour of the resolution to encourage renewed participation. I also referenced the significant work undertaken by SD71 DPAC in bringing forward sexual health-related resolutions at the 2022 AGM. As a result of those resolutions being adopted, BCCPAC established its first Sexual Health Committee in 2023. That committee was active during its inaugural year and included parent representatives from multiple school districts, including SD71.

I served as BCCPAC President from about July 2022 until early 2024, when I stepped down for personal reasons related to my youngest daughter.

While my memory may not capture every detail, I may have contributed to refining the wording of those resolutions. However, the substance, research, and driving force behind the work were entirely the result of SD71 DPAC and its volunteers. In my role as President and/or as a member of the Resolutions Committee, I recall connecting with the resolution authors several times as discussions progressed toward engaging the Ministry. BCCPAC's role was primarily one of support and advocacy, amplifying the extensive work already accomplished by SD71 DPAC.

Following the 2022 AGM, SD71 DPAC had the formal support of PACs and DPACs across the province; the collective advocacy weight of BCCPAC in engaging the Ministry.

Their efforts contributed to several changes at the provincial level. Many—if not most—of their recommendations have been reflected, either directly or in principle, in subsequently updated provincial documents.

Despite this progress, those 2022 resolutions remain active at BCCPAC. The responsibility for advancing this work continues to rest with BCCPAC and its member PACs and DPACs until the Assembly is satisfied that the intent of those resolutions has been fully realized and will continue to be upheld by the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

This ongoing work stands as a testament to SD71 DPAC's rigorous research, trauma-informed and evidence-based approach, and sustained commitment to improving sexual health education reflected in Provincial policies and curriculum.

At the 2026 AGM, when I spoke to the Assembly and referenced SD71 DPAC's past contributions, I mentioned, but did not significantly emphasize enough that their work represents a benchmark for resolution development and advocacy. Importantly, the adoption of a resolution is not the end of the process—it is the beginning.

In the case of SD71 DPAC, much of the foundational work had already been completed or at least was very much underway prior to bringing their resolutions forward. This further underscores their dedication, as they undertook this effort even before knowing whether they would receive province-wide support.

Each year, many resolutions are adopted at the BCCPAC AGM. However, a significant number fail to lead to meaningful outcomes—not due to lack of intent or desire, but because they may not fully account for the complexities of existing legislation such as the School Act, associated regulations, district policies, provincial guidelines, or the importance of grounding the work in evidence-based and trauma-informed research. The SD71 resolutions brought forward in 2022 remain among the few having meaningful successful outcomes because they managed to hit on all of those key elements.

I personally expect to serve on the 2026/2027 BCCPAC Sexual Health Committee. I would very much like feedback on how those Resolutions from 2022 have since been fulfilled (or not) and look forward to continuing on the backbone of those foundations set in 2022, but started by SD71 DPAC long before.

With Humility,

Chris Schultz-Lorentzen

Former BCCPAC President

Current SD42 DPAC Vice Chair

Current Garibaldi Secondary School PAC Chair