

**NVPAC General Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, Nov. 19, 2009**  
**7:00pm LMCC**

**Chair:** David Whitehead

**NVPAC Attendance:** Leslie Uhlenbruck, Jane Lagden Holborne, Susan Corcoran

**Attendance:** Sandra Bridgman, Sylvie Michaud, Garth Gleason, Cathy Paterson, Mike Sexsmith, Sandra Ayling, Lisa McDonald, Christina Medland, Tanya Mealing, Julie McNeil, Agnieszka Jaszczewska, Erian Baxter

**Schools Represented:** Ross Road, Argyle, Plymouth, Queensbury, Fromme, Lynn Valley, Upper Lynn, Highlands, Lynnmour, Montroyal, Carisbrooke, Brooksbank, Braemar, Ridgeway Annex, Seycove, Cove Cliff

**Regrets:** Lisa Cartwright, Cyndi Gerlach, Todd Dea

1. **Welcome**
2. **Election of Member-at-Large:** Mike Sexsmith standing for one of three member-at-large positions open on the NVPAC Executive. Call from floor for other nominees by David Whitehead. Motion by Leslie Uhlenbruck to elect Mike Sexsmith, Jane Lagden Holborne seconded, carried. David welcomed Mike to the Executive.
3. **Minutes:** motion by David Whitehead to approved the minutes, carried.
4. **BCCPAC Conference Report:** A written report was submitted by Lisa Cartwright. David directed everyone to pick-up a copy to review.
5. **Financial Report By Jane Lagden Holborne:** Approximately two-thirds of the PACs in the District have renewed their BCCPAC memberships. Reminder to please let your PAC Chair know if they haven't renewed yet to contact BCCPAC directly. Just fax in a completed form to BCCPAC, NVPAC will pick up the membership fee. Reminder of the three NVPAC grants available to PACs this year are: 1) \$ 150 Speakers Grant for parent education, currently 4 are still available 2) Family of Schools (FOS) grant is \$200 towards a cooperative event (a Secondary School along with it's feeder schools) 3) \$50 grant for FoodSafe training for parents are available, 18 grants are still available for this year. To apply for grants the PAC Chair or Treasurer should contact Jane with details. Jane can be reached at [treasurer@northvanpac.org](mailto:treasurer@northvanpac.org) or email through the NVPAC web site page.
6. **School Planning Council (SPC):** Leslie introduced SPCs:
  - This is the time of year that SPC is put together, elected parent, organized by school principal
  - Plan for student achievement
  - Made up of three parent reps, principal, and student if applicable, at some schools the teachers feed into the process but do not sit in at the SPC meetings
  - Work includes review of school's previous year's plan, learning the terminology involved (the lingo of learning and education), and learning about what and how data is collected( i.e. in the classroom, report cards, Ministry data (FSAs), District surveys, etc.), and this information is then assembled within each school's culture (i.e. what is important to that particular school). Usually biggest concern voiced by parents is that SP doesn't make sense to their school. This is why communicating out to the parent community during the process is very important.  
As a parent always ask questions in you're unsure of the process or focus of your schools plan.  
There are district resources available if needed, an advisory council, contact your principal or NVPAC with questions.

**Questions:** Are SPC Plans just rubber stamped? Is everyone going through the motions, are parents of any value to the process? Discussed that there is a learning curve for parents when they first get involved, also administration and teachers do bring their expertise, plans are built on from one year to the next for continuity, but parents do contribute.

Ideally parent volunteers should consider sitting on the SPC for several years.

Where do parents get training for the SPC? Go to your principal first and also ask your principal about the

Family of Schools training which usually takes place in the late fall.

Noted that all school plans are posted on their school web sites as well as on the school district (SD) web site.

The school plan report which compares the reports for all schools is on the district site, it can be hard to find on

the site, a link will be provided on NVPAC's web page:

<http://www.nvsd44.bc.ca/Schools/~media/88987CDE26C84AD1BF5305F149A6DA14.ashx>

7. **Report on Education & Programs Standing Committee:** Leslie & Susan, were pleased to report on how excited and motivated teachers are in the District. Both spoke of the last E&P meeting which discussed the training teachers are getting to be better teachers. Items included: The Training Institute, Collegial Learning, and the focus of the SD on training teachers to be better teachers because this creates better learners. Also spoke briefly about the report on Assessment and that NVPAC will try to arrange for a presentation for parents early in the New Year. It was requested that NVPAC send an email reminder to PAC Chairs and DPAC Reps when these meetings are scheduled. Parents can also check the NVPAC calendar and the SD site as these meetings are posted. Generally the agendas for the Standing Committee meetings are posted to the SD site the Friday before the scheduled meeting.
8. **Budget Challenge Consultation meeting Report:** David Whitehead reported on the previous night's meeting: It was thought that overall the meeting was well promoted and attended, approx 200 people. Although some DPAC reps and Chairs had not received either NVPAC's notice or the SD's blank email to parents. General summary - cafe format (round table discussions, people are moved around to a different groups every 15 minutes), 5 areas of discussion, 15 minute conversations on a list that was provided as potential areas to cut. Groups offered reactions and when possible provided alternatives. David asked for parent suggestions on feedback or improvements for meeting, comments included: there was a big challenge with regard to the time allotted to each area relative to the impact on people or area. What worked: having number's on each person's name tag to facilitate group changes worked really well, so people mixed, offering different perspectives; helpful conversations happened; generally found someone at the table could speak to different aspects under discussion; outside facilitators worked well. Concerns: noted 10-15% of the ideas related to improved revenue; however the SD is looking at cutting approximately 7% of the budget. The SD didn't provide much information on the actual scale or impact of cuts, nor any indication of when decisions will be made. David noted the SD budget is submitted in June to the Ministry of Education but the process to close schools (if necessary) takes time and needs to happen well before that. NVPAC generally concerned that SD is not mapping out the process, indicating where we're going, how fast things need to be done. The SD needs to provide more information on process. Also, more details should be provided from the SD prior to meetings, this will allow parents to better prepare and to offer viable ideas. However, it was noted that to keep in perspective this was a public input process to provide SD with a sense of the areas that parents believe can't be touched. There had been no discussion about the SD re-organizing

itself, schools consolidated/closed, what would the criteria be. NVPAC discussed that parents need to have a safe place to ask questions and there is a need to have broader discussion along with preparing parents for the tougher discussions. NVPAC to take a roll in this. DPAC rep asked: As the DPAC Rep for a school do we coordinate parent involvement? What is our role? Suggested bring general information to your PAC, ask parents to go the the SD web site to inform themselves and promote attendance at Finance and Facilities (F&F) meetings - Dec 1st, SB Meeting Dec 8 at SBO

David to ask SD to post the list from Nov 18th meeting on the District site.

The next meeting will be the Finance and Facilities meeting on Tues. Dec 1.

Discussed need for communications with PACs to look at the broader picture at school district and need to:

First get informed, secondly start discussing how are we going to improve the SD for all parents.

David will do the following:

a) ask SD to get as much information as is available onto their web site

b) request the SD provide details on the overall process

c) ask if the process is looking at re-organizing the district versus just cut backs to the current organization

9. **New business:** A rep asked for suggestions/advise on the challenge of when a school has a difficult teacher/staff that is impacting the quality of education in a classroom. Instead of parents/students resigning themselves to it being 'a get through year' are there any suggestions as to what can be done? General discussion included: First, speak directly with the teacher to get their understanding of the situation. The teacher may not be aware of the student's or parent's perspective. Also, it may provide insight into what may be impacting the teacher. Next step is to go to your principal to discuss the situation and discuss strategies. Keep in mind parents should be open and enter into the discussion with 'how can we help'.