

# **MINUTES NVPAC General Meeting**

**Thursday, Oct 22, 2009**

**7:00pm LMCC Meeting**

**Chair:** David Whitehead

**NVPAC In Attendance:** Leslie Uhlenbruck, David Whitehead, Jane Lagden Holborne, Mike McGraw, Cyndi Gerlach, Stefanie Barilla, Lisa Cartwright, Susan Corcoran

Guest Speaker: John Lewis, Superintendent North Vancouver School District

Trustee: Holly Back

**In Attendance:** Gail Kitt, Susanne Till, Iraj Babaei, Megan Smith, Laurie Oseen, Danielle Bretton, Sandra Bridgman, Tanya Mealing, Julie McNeil, Sandra Ayling, Judy Clarke, Dorothy Gigliotti, Agnieszka Jaszewska, Cathy Floe, Henk den Breejen, Cathy Patterson

**Schools Represented:** Sherwood Park, Cove Cliff, Seycove, Queensbury, Larson, Cleveland, Capilano, Ross Road, Carson, Upper Lynn, Carisbrooke, Windsor House, Ridgeway Annex, Handsworth, Montroyal, Plymouth

## **A. GUEST SPEAKER**

Guest Speaker: John Lewis, Superintendent North Vancouver School District

The presentation "Achieving our Vision" provided information on the school districts plans for moving forward given the factors impacting education provincially and within the district.

During the summer the SD meet to develop the emerging themes for the district. It was broken down into the 7Cs, which provide the context for the coming year:

- constraint
- consolidation
- collaboration
- communication
- caring
- capital management
- commitment

The presentation will be posted on NVPAC's web site for parents.

Notes of interest regarding the new provincial initiative All-Day Kindergarten:

- almost 500 people for the All-Day K information session Oct 21st
- John discussed the Ministry of Educations process
  - confirmation in Aug that full-day K will go ahead, phased in
  - timelines of notice and request for interest, details are very short
  - at risk populations are to be considered first when implementing
  - SD requires additional information from Ministry but feel with our existing all-day K "Inspirations" program puts SD in a good position regarding curriculum (noted the all-K will be play based)

- “Inspirations” is currently a user-pay offering, with mandate of all-day K, SD will not be able to charge a fee for this offering
- lots of unknowns currently but the SD will get information out to parents as quickly as possible
- registration for Kindergarten is being delayed by the SD until more information about the new all-day K is received from the Ministry
- current unknown is how many parents would want the ½ day K option and to what degree, if at all, the Ministry will accommodate the option

Full day K implementation will impact capital projects but do not know to what degree

- factors to impact budget will be facilities/location (i.e. room availabilities), how it is rolled out (50% 2010, 50% 2011), the amount of funding from the Ministry for classroom set-up

## **B. FORMAL BUSINESS**

1. Approval of Agenda – Amended, Trustee Holly Back to speak, motion David Whitehead, Jane Lagden Holborne seconder. Approved as amended.

2. Approval of September 24th General Meeting Minutes – Motion David Whitehead, Sandra Ayling seconder. Motion carried.

### 3. Reports

Recent NVPAC Activities - Leslie Uhlenbruck

- **Advocacy:** Letters sent to the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Housing and Social Development. NVPAC is asking PACs and parents to advocate as well, strategy has been broad to encourage all members. NVPAC has also joined with School District partners to advocate for the School District and education. No response has been received from either Ministry. NVPAC is receiving copies of letters from schools and parents who are also advocating. Reinforced that the voice from parents is stronger than from the associations.
- **Committees, public board meetings in full swing** – budget NVPAC is working to ensure our parent voice is being heard at committees.

### 4. Trustee Liaison, Holly Back:

Introduced her self and experience in the school district and on the North Shore. Spoke to her meeting with David and Leslie, which had been very positive. Agrees there is a the need to advocate, identified some other areas of interest, one idea when students leave our district why, look at exit interviews to inform SD on why students are leaving (be aware of our ‘customers’), we need as a SD to strive for excellence in services (supporting John’s talking about ‘welcoming’). Look at small ways to celebrate our great teachers, do more to share the successes in our SD, still areas for improvement for our front line people to be more welcoming.

Our SD it is an exciting time, all our schools 50 yrs old, we are re-building, we should celebrate this, looking forward to our all day kindergarten.

Leslie reminded us that we can loose site of how successful and good our school district is, this year we will look to feature our successes more.

### 5. North Vancouver Outdoor School (NVOS) Report by Mike McGraw

NVOS is a 40 year old facility, part of what makes our SD unique. It is run and owned by the SD and is currently subsidized to about \$300,000 each year. However there is lots of opportunity for NVOS, with outdoor environmental centre

- the NVOS committee has representation from throughout the community, with high level business leaders and Mike McGraw of NVPAC representing the North Van parents
- Cathy Jenkins of NV Outdoor School was introduced as the face of NVOS. She mentioned that there is a regular newsletter that is distributed several times a year and is also available at [www.nvos.ca](http://www.nvos.ca) or on the School District web site. The Campus revitalization link has all the most current information on the new environmental centre project. It is moving forward with the aim for moving in November 2010. Although tight, the timing is expected to be on time. The goal is to develop more communities and they are looking for more help. Of special interest is someone with marketing experience to help. Also, NVOS would like to more fully develop relationships with all their alumni. Outdoor School will work towards having a more provincial focus but there are some concerns with branding to a wider audience. Revitalization includes the education elements, integrating first nations and the local community. During the building, the site will continue to run classes.

Mike noted that the core focus of Outdoor School will remain on NVSD students but it will be a multi-use facility in order to become profitable on its own.

#### 6. Blog and web based communications by Co-Chair David Whitehead

NVPAC sent a survey to PAC Chairs and DPAC Reps the week of Oct 11, some of the feedback received is that reps are getting too many emails. However some parents feel they are not getting the information from the District. David talked about to the importance DPAC Reps and PAC Chairs to pass on the emails. The District relies on information being forwarded to parents, one means is through the NVPAC. The Executive is now considering other communication tools for parents to access, in particular a Blog. This format would allow information to get out more timely, however NVPAC will still rely on email distribution and the web site will be used more as well. The idea is that through email a short description will be provided on information on the blog, going to the blog and web site will provide all the details.

Another option discussed was use electronic calendars more, however fewer people were as familiar and comfortable with this. NVPAC will explore and use more if well received.

Asked those attending what there communications concerns are, these included suggestions such as:

- Send shorter emails with links only
- Electronic calendar is helpful but fewer people are comfortable with them
- Connect survey tools into blog that everyone has access would be helpful
- New PAC Executives would like to receive information right after being elected (in June) as to registering for DPAC, and any other information they can provide to help the newly elected PAC execs.
- Also NVPAC should send a request for update of new DPAC Reps & Chairs contact info in June.
- The Secondary schools have different concerns collecting parents emails
- Some expressed concern that there are too many NVPAC emails (general discussion focused on how to determine what information is considered important as parents are diverse in the interests and may not be aware of issues if they are

not forwarded to them). Ultimately the PAC Chair determines which messages are forwarded to their parent community.

- Suggestion is that NVPAC executive draft a letter to send to parents requesting if they want School District information. The DPAC reps for each school would distribute this and collect a list of all emails for the parents who are interested in receiving information and would forward the NVPAC emails to those parents.
- In closing it was agreed that communication is very important, everyone has a different comfort level with the amount of communications and methods of receiving it but NVPAC will strive to improve communications to parents and make efforts to be more effective.

## 7. Around the Room

Asked what parents/PACs are doing to advocate?

- David mentioned that parents should tell the government know about actual impacts to students and in the classroom that they are aware of is very important (i.e. specific about cancelled band trips, funds being moved from one activity to another, etc.). How the cuts are really affecting our children, needs to be conveyed to the government and it has more weight coming from parents than it does coming from the NVPAC and School District.

- One school mentioned they have printed postcards for parents to send and that one parent donated all the postage.

David also mentioned the District is asking for feedback from parents on what cuts will work for the District (this is part of the Budget Challenge meetings the district is running). See the SD web site for full details.

- noted that the SD is informing the parent community more of budget issues and the issues around cuts in the School District.

Sandra Bridgman in closing wanted to note how fortunate we are to be in a School District that takes the time to liaise with the parents and that the Superintendent makes himself available to speak with parents.

Meeting adjourned 9:15pm

### **PAC REMINDERS:**

- PAC Chair and NVPAC rep should be registered with NVPAC, send your email address to registrar@northvanpac.org
- Check out "NV Parent Advisory Council" web pages at [www.nvSD44.bc.ca](http://www.nvSD44.bc.ca) bookmark it!

### **UPCOMING DATES:**

- Education & Programs Meeting, Lynn Valley Elementary School on Tuesday, November 3, 2009 from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. in the Library,
- NVPAC General Meeting, Thursday, Nov. 19 '09, 7pm, location LMCC

### **Location Notes:**

SBO is School Board Office at 721 Chesterfield Ave, N.Van

LMCC is Leo Marshall Curriculum Centre at 810 West 21<sup>st</sup> St, N.Van

