

NVPAC
North Vancouver Parent Advisory Council
Annual Report from the Chair
For 2008/2009

The information in this report was presented at our Annual General Meeting in May 2009, to be later posted on our NVPAC website and by email for reference and distribution.

The report will also be presented to a Public Board Meeting of the North Vancouver School District (SD#44) in September 2009.

With the end of the 2008/2009 school year, this annual report is submitted on behalf of the North Vancouver Parent Advisory Council (NVPAC). We have included some of the highlights and successes of this past school year, and will remark on some of our ongoing challenges with respect to bringing our parents' perspective to the District level and beyond.

From NVPAC's Constitution & Bylaws, we take the following points:

- *To establish and maintain a parent group on a School District level and thus provide the framework for continuous communication among parents, teachers, trustees, and administrators so that in time of need the means for constructive discussions is readily available.*
- *To assist members in obtaining information and in communicating with District personnel.*
- *To help parents become more aware of the realities of running a school system on both the local and district levels, to encourage them to take the broader view, to see the possibilities as well as the problems and thereby make informed contributions to discussions. To ensure that opinions formed and circulated throughout the community are based on fact.*

I know that the Executive this year has been 100% committed to following these and other stated purposes of NVPAC. We have repeated these purposes openly, often, and with conviction. We have done our best to solicit feedback from parents and to represent the diverse views of our community at every opportunity.

There will always be more that can be done, but we are satisfied that we have continued to make progress in many places this past year.

GENERAL MEETINGS

Our regular monthly meetings have been mostly well-attended this year. Our general meetings are open to all parents in the school district and we particularly welcome the regular attendance of many of our NVPAC school reps whenever possible. Our meeting themes this year have often been based on the School District's current "*Vision Statements*":

- § Sep'08 District Orientation for new NVPAC reps
- § Oct'08 *Program Diversity*: International Baccalaureate programs update
- § Nov'08 *Communications*: Communications Protocol / School Talk Audit update with Victoria Miles
- § Dec'08 no meeting in December
- § Jan'09
 - *Integrated Communities*: Family of Schools initiatives hosted by Windsor Secondary
 - *Community Connections*: "SnowTalk!" with John Lewis/Ian Abercrombie
- § Feb'09 *Program Diversity*: Sharing stories from our schools
- § Mar'09 Parent representation: committee reports, discussed Board process and letter to be sent; discussed BCCPAC issues at "open" executive meeting including letter set to BCCPAC requesting a Special General Meeting
- § Apr'09 Parent representation: add'l committee reports - small group discussion
- § May'09 AGM including Communications Survey update and our elections for 2009/10

PARENT COMMUNICATION including the "*Parent Communication Protocol*"

This year, we continued our efforts to streamline communication with parents and to determine the extent of our reach into the parent community through our email network. This was the first year of putting our NVPAC "*Parent Communication Protocol*" document into action to assist PACs with effectively setting up their email networks.
<http://www.nvsd44.bc.ca/AboutUs/~media/02B8A46804F74082B67ABFB1A6A19B23.ashx>

The interim results of our year-end PAC Communications survey indicated that, with about two-thirds of our school PACs responding, we had in excess of 6,400 email addresses accessible through our PAC email network/fanout system. Our regular NVPAC email communications go out directly to all PAC Chairs and DPAC reps at each school, who in turn can distribute messages to their local parent community.

We have improved our regular *NVPACNews* email publication to include editorial perspectives, important items, dates, and meeting/event reminders along with general interest notices from the extended educational community. We are also able to send out reminders in the event of emergency situations (ie. inclement weather, health issues, etc.) to remind parents to access information through the NVSD website, etc. We are continually working to improve the information on our own webpage, and hope to use the website access more often as a way to inform parents of upcoming dates and news. <http://www.nvsd44.bc.ca/AboutUs/NVPAC.aspx>
 In addition, we always include links to important websites and our own webpage and remind parents to check often for regular news at www.nvsd44.bc.ca and www.bccpac.bc.ca

We need to continue to encourage NVPAC Reps to engage actively on behalf of their schools at the district and potentially at provincial levels. Also, there is still room for improvement in

terms of offering effective messaging which is then willingly and consistently passed on by all PACs to their broader parent communities in order to engage as many people as possible throughout the system and to provide effective two-way information sharing.

NVPAC ADVOCACY INITIATIVES:

It is with some disappointment that we have to report that the letter we sent to the Minister of Education in April 2008 with respect to our concerns about the FSA (Foundation Skills Assessment) process, has never been answered or acknowledged, despite sending it five times to the Minister (email, fax, mail on separate occasions and over several months). Our call for a full review of the process to ensure that the FSA's are meeting the needs of the students and the other partner groups involved, as well as parents is one that is also reflected in a recent BCCPAC resolution passed at the May'09 AGM. Despite the lack of response to our own letter, we were pleased that, since then, the Board itself and the Joint Advocacy group have also sent letters to the Ministry in support of this position.

JOINT ADVOCACY INITIATIVES & PRESIDENTS' COUNCIL:

NVPAC is very pleased to have helped initiate the *Presidents' Council* and the associated *Joint Advocacy* concept in our school district. Working directly with all of the presidents of our district education partners, several *Presidents' Council* and *Joint Advocacy* sessions resulted in jointly signed letters on the topics of: "*Submission to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services Budget Consultation*", *Foundation Skills Assessment*, and "*Funding Concerns and Submission of 2009/10 Opportunity Budget*". These are posted on the NVSD website at <http://www.nvsd44.bc.ca/Trustees/Advocacy.aspx>

BOARD of EDUCATION/TRUSTEE RELATIONS:

A new Board of Education was elected in November 2008. NVPAC was pleased to host an All-Candidates meeting in Oct'08 in support of the election of our new Trustees for the Board of Education and had the opportunity to meet all of the candidates at that time.

After a very quick inauguration, we observed that the Board was presented with some major issues very early in their new term and while still learning to work together. However, after allowing for a few months of settling in, in March'2009, the NVPAC Executive felt compelled to write a letter to the Board of Education expressing our concern for inadequate process around the Board Table over the course of several Public Board Meetings from January through March. We distributed this letter to each of the Trustees, to our member PACs, and to the chairs of each of our education partner groups to acknowledge that we had taken some action on behalf of the concerns that had been expressed by parents and other concerned members of our education community. The strong support we received from our fellow stakeholders was notable. The Board Chair responded in writing and a meeting with some of the Trustees was arranged to address these concerns. We saw the Trustees respond and take considerable action towards improving their procedures around the Board table including an undertaking to mitigate the consequences of some earlier decision-making processes.

As always, we look forward to continuing our strong relations with individual Trustees and the Board as a whole and respect the often challenging situations that the Board must contend with in the best interests of our children's education. We thank all of our Trustees for their dedicated service to our community.

DISTRICT EVENTS/FUNCTIONS:

The NVPAC Executive and, in some cases, other parent representatives have attended and participated in numerous District functions over the course of the year such as:

- "Towards the Future for Schools" series of meetings
- Community Forum - 6th Annual
- Public Meetings/Open Houses with respect to the future of Balmoral/Carson, and Ridgeway/Ridgeway Annex

PARTNER LIAISON:

While we did not have an opportunity to specifically host any partner liaison functions this year, representatives of the NVPAC Executive did attend:

- Board Inauguration Nov'2008
- Presidents' Council sessions
- NVTAs liaison dinner and assessment workshop with the NVTAs and NVPAC Executives
- Education Week'2009 Trustees Reception.
- NVSD Recognition Ceremony for 25-year Employee Service: It was an honour to be part of acknowledging teachers and support staff for their valuable contributions on behalf of our children in schools. (*see copy of NVPAC's address on our webpage.*)
- NVTAs Retirement function for outgoing President Linda Watson

PARENT EDUCATION WORKSHOPS:

Our attempts to host Parent-Ed workshops were not as successful this year as they have been in the past. We did host a FoodSafe Certification workshop, but registration numbers were lower than we hoped. The other workshop sessions that we offered were all cancelled due to lack of response, primarily due to scheduling difficulties as feedback indicated that many parents would be interested in the information.

The School District has generously provided support for our FoodSafe training in the past, but as mentioned in the Treasurer's recommendations, we will not accept the additional \$1,000 this year as we did not feel this was an efficient use of District funds with such low participation.

We will be looking at alternative delivery models for encouraging PACs to make sure they have FoodSafe certification and other parent workshop opportunities in the future.

PAC SUPPORT and LIAISON: DPAC Reps and PAC Chairs

NVPAC needs to continue to improve the effectiveness of DPAC Reps at each school in order to build broader educational awareness amongst parents in general. DPAC reps are a key part of our liaison capability throughout the community and we will work on more clearly defining their role as new parents volunteer for these positions each year. We want to make sure we are doing our best, to collect the parent voice(s), to advise the District wherever appropriate, and to enable parents at all levels to participate fully, in an informed way, in the educational system

NVPAC has continued to provide Parent-education/Speaker grants of \$150 per school PAC on a first-come, first-served basis. In discussion with parents attending meetings this year, we

have found that this is a program worth continuing in the future. We had schools apply for seven of the ten possible \$150 grants budgeted for in the 2008/9 school year.

We also initiated a PAC Family of Schools Grant of \$200 to put towards initiatives that involved the secondary and elementary feeder schools in each area. In this first year, three Families of Schools (Windsor, Handsworth, and Argyle) made use of this funding for various community-building events and we hope to support all areas in the future.

PARENT REPRESENTATION:

School District - Public Board Meetings and Administration:

We have provided representation at every Public Board Meeting, and the Standing Committees for Education & Programs and Finance & Facilities. We have also been present at nearly all public consultation and information venues. Also, in our capacity as your Executive, we meet regularly with the Superintendent and other Administrative staff to give and receive updates on current topics of interest and concern for parents.

District Committees:

A significant portion of our NVPAC energy has gone toward providing effective parent representation at the District level. The Executive and several other parent volunteers sit on many committees alongside reps from our other partner groups. The request for parent representation comes through NVPAC from the District.

During the 2008/9 School year, we have participated on the following district committees:

- § Band & Strings Advisory
- § Capital Planning Committee
- § Communications Committee
- § Community Forum Planning Committee
- § Education & Programs Standing Committee
- § Education Week Planning Committee
- § Finance & Facilities Standing Committee
- § French Planning Committee
- § Health Committee
- § Inclusion Committee
- § Joint Advocacy Task Force
- § Kindergarten Planning/Info Committee
- § Outdoor School – a parent liaison has been recently reestablished
- § Policy Review
- § Presidents' Council
- § Safe & Caring Schools
- § School Library Advisory Consultative Committee
- § School Planning Council Steering Committee
- § Sustaining Schools Working Committee
- § Various other ad hoc committees or discussions on emergent issues including: Mandarin Immersion Study, Policy 104 Subcommittee, Budget Tier Working Groups

Along with our regular involvement in many of these committees, we wish to acknowledge our particular appreciation to be included along with our partner groups in the "Budget Tier Working Groups" with the new format this year as it offered a tremendous opportunity to learn more about the complexities of the district finances, and an opportunity to engage interested new parents from our community at a district level.

Provincial Level/BCCPAC: www.bccpac.bc.ca

NVPAC continues to pay for all of our PACs to be members of BCCPAC (BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils) although it is still up to the individual PAC to submit their own membership renewal form directly to BCCPAC each year. This year 35 school PACS (out of a possible 38) plus NVPAC (District PAC), signed up as members and we will actively promote membership renewals for the 2009/2010 school year.

We will need to continue to inform parents about the role that BCCPAC plays in the provincial education system, and about the importance of staying aware of developments at that level. An ongoing effort is needed to engage North Vancouver parents in the sometimes intricate workings of the BCCPAC member resolution and voting systems; and while NVPAC reps have typically been available to carry proxies on behalf of our local BCCPAC-members, we really need to encourage all PACs to participate more directly in BCCPAC events and discussions in order to receive the most benefit from the association. BCCPAC's role and relevance to our own community will continue to evolve as time goes on. .

Parent representatives from NVPAC attended both the Fall and Spring/AGM Conferences held by BCCPAC (BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils) in 2008/9. We have participated actively in the discussions and workshops over the past few years and encourage all PACs to budget parent workshop funds to send their own parent reps to these conferences whenever possible. Apart from providing parent volunteers with some valuable skills and knowledge development opportunities, participating at the provincial level provides additional perspective when dealing with issues arising in our own schools and district. However, there is also considerable room for improving participation in this area as very few parents engage beyond the local level.

BCCPAC has undergone some significant governance and representation challenges in the past year, but with the conclusion of the AGM in May'09 resulting in new leadership, NVPAC will support the continued renewal of BCCPAC in the coming year.

Additional Dialogue & Communications:

We also had the opportunity to answer calls from many PACs, individual parents', partner representatives, and the media requesting information, support, and guidance in navigating the educational system in North Vancouver from a parents' perspective. The conversations, emails, and meetings our Executive members have had throughout the year have served to provide significant education, dialogue, and relationship-building on many levels. In the past year, we have participated in significant background dialogue during the Balmoral/Carson discussions, the Trustee elections of 2008, the District Budget Tier process, and many other issues of interest to parents.

FUNDING ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

NVPAC receives a regular annual operating grant of \$7,500 from the School District. We thank the Board for this ongoing funding which has provided NVPAC with a consistent and stable approach to budgeting and providing service and support to our members for many years.

As mentioned previously, we have opted not to apply for the additional \$1,000 in "FoodSafe" funding from the School District this past year, as our workshop had only limited reach in 2008/9. Our thanks goes to Superintendent Lewis for supporting this important certification process for parent volunteers serving food in our schools and we will continue to promote the certification to all our PACs.

The Provincial Gaming Branch also provided a flat rate of \$2,500 funding on an annual basis to all DPACs in the province. Our Gaming Funds are primarily used to pay for our BCCPAC Memberships and conference fees.

Our year end *financial statements are attached to this report* for the information of our member PACs, the School District, and any other interested parties.

APPRECIATION:

I'd like to thank all of the parents who have come forward to participate in discussions with NVPAC this year. We have had met many new NVPAC reps from our schools, have welcomed interested parents who have volunteered for committees, and have appreciated a great number of individual conversations, email inquiries, and other forms of feedback directed our way. We appreciate each and every opportunity to interact our PAC reps and other parents across the district. We are looking forward to extending the conversation even further next year as we bring on more new parents at the Executive level, as we continue to find new ways to get together with parents, and as our overall communications network continues to evolve and improve.

We also need to recognize the support and encouragement of staff, partner groups, and the Board of Education for welcoming parent input in the discussion at all levels in the North Vancouver school system. As a District PAC, we take our role seriously, and work to build strong relationships throughout the educational community in North Vancouver amongst our own parent community and with our partner groups. We also take our voices to the provincial level from time to time, by corresponding with the Ministry of Education and participating with the recognized provincial parent group, BCCPAC (BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils). We have had the opportunity to build relationships with parents in many other school districts around the province, including with our immediate neighbours in Burnaby, Vancouver, and West Vancouver.

In North Vancouver, we are fortunate to have an open and accessible relationship with our partner groups and recognize that this is not necessarily the case in every school district around the province. Thank you, in particular, to Superintendent John Lewis on behalf of Senior Administration and the Board of Education for his ongoing leadership in this regard.

NVPAC EXECUTIVE:

I would like to acknowledge the particular support and dedication of your small but motivated NVPAC Executive this year who, like most parents in our community are, by definition, in an especially busy phase of life while raising a family, working, and volunteering in their community. It will come as no surprise that a vast majority of the organization and continuity in the PAC world comes from a handful of volunteers who feel compelled to go above and beyond to contribute in this way. As we see at every school PAC, your district NVPAC Executive has also done its best to provide relevant and effective service to the PACs and parents of North Vancouver. Of course, we can always do more with additional help, so ongoing recruitment and mentoring is a crucial part of NVPAC sustainability.

I have thoroughly enjoyed working with each and every member of the NVPAC Executive this year and would like to acknowledge their contributions both individually and as a whole. We have worked very well together, in a compatible, respectful, and productive manner and have some great conversation along the way.

I would be remiss in not acknowledging the incredible family support (and in some case our employers) that we have all had in terms of enabling us to make the personal commitment to NVPAC over the years. We have all had to sacrifice a considerable amount of family and work time to participate fully at the NVPAC level, but all of us recognize the benefit in working together to build a stronger sense of community through our contributions.

I would particularly like to acknowledge the following parents who have left NVPAC by the end of the 2008/2009 school year:

KAREN STEWART: With regret, Karen must leave our Executive after 5 years on the Executive having served as member at large, Registrar for two years, and most recently as Treasurer. She leaves only with the excuse that her son graduated from Seycove this past year and, as such, Karen has become ineligible for official membership in NVPAC. However, with Karen's enthusiasm to stay involved, we feel certain that we will find some wonderful special advisory capacity for her in a mentoring role in the future and know that Karen continues to take an active interest in the public education system....we don't have to have a final goodbye yet!

SONYA KLASSEN: For health reasons, Sonya has had to step back from NVPAC for the time being. We wish her the best during a difficult time and hope for a speedy recovery. Sonya embarked on the BCCPAC SPLSS/PI RC training to offer her time as a resource person based in our District to provide service to all PACs and NVPAC on behalf of our provincial parent organization. Unfortunately, she was unable to fully complete her training, but will still have great knowledge if she wishes to return as a parent volunteer in the future.

VERNA DYK: For personal reasons, Verna has been unavailable for NVPAC since earlier this year. We thank her for her many years of participation at NVPAC and for the valuable perspectives she has provided, and wish her well in other endeavours.

The following members of our Executive have actively represented the parents of North Vancouver for the past school year. My huge thanks go to all of them for their support:

Karen Stewart	Leslie Uhlenbruck
David Whitehead	Susan Corcoran

Franci Stratton (until her election as school trustee in November 2008)

And thank you to the initiative taken by these additional committee volunteers in 2008/09:

Cyndi Gerlach	Todd Dea
Mike McGraw	Karl Graham
Sandie Herunter	Barbie Milley
Stefanie Barilla	Natasha Penner

With the inclusion of parents in the education system, we have an active and legitimate voice in matters concerning our children's experience in school. With this opportunity also comes the responsibility of living up to the expectations that have become associated with PACs and DPACs across the province, however. The challenge is meeting the demands on our time and diverse experience as volunteers. We are very pleased that we will have several new parents joining the NVPAC team next year, and hope that the renewed energy of a larger Executive team will also help to inspire the more active involvement of NVPAC Reps and other interested parents at schools from around the District.

NVPAC's new executive for 2009/2010 is:

Co-Chairs	Leslie Uhlenbruck and David Whitehead
Vice Chair	Mike McGraw
Secretary	Susan Corcoran
Treasurer	Jane Lagden Holborne
Registrar	Stefanie Barilla
Members at Large:	Todd Dea, Cyndi Gerlach, Bob Gifford
Past Chair	Lisa Cartwright (BCCPAC Liaison)

It is a pleasure to be handing over the reigns to such a dedicated and competent group of parents.

As I now move into the role of Past Chair of NVPAC, I would like to say that it has been an honour to have been able to contribute in a meaningful way to our school community and to work with all the amazing parents, staff, students and partner groups in our district and beyond. I am very glad that I have been able to give my time and energy as a volunteer in this capacity. I look forward to staying active with NVPAC and the North Vancouver School District in the future in whatever role there may be.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of NVPAC,

Lisa Cartwright
NVPAC Chair 2008/2009

7:55 AM

09/18/09

AccrualBasis

NVPAC North Vancouver Parent Advisory Council
Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual
 July 2008 through June 2009

	Jul '08 - Jun 09	Budget	\$ Over Budget
Income			
BC Gaming Commission Funding	2,500.00	2,500.00	0.00
Dividend Income	0.29	0.50	-0.21
Interest Inc	12.59	10.00	2.59
School District 44 DPAC funding	7,500.00	7,500.00	0.00
SD 44 Food Safe funding	0.00	1,000.00	-1,000.00
WORKSHOP REVENUE			
FoodSafeTrainingRevenue	175.00	350.00	-175.00
Total WORKSHOP REVENUE	<u>175.00</u>	<u>350.00</u>	<u>-175.00</u>
Total Income	<u>10,187.88</u>	<u>11,360.50</u>	<u>-1,172.62</u>
Expense			
ADMINISTRATION			
BankCharge	75.02	72.00	3.02
Communication	0.00	125.00	-125.00
Legal Fees	64.07	50.00	14.07
OfficeSupplies	399.72		
ADMINISTRATION - Other	0.00	500.00	-500.00
Total ADMINISTRATION	<u>478.81</u>	<u>747.00</u>	<u>-268.19</u>
BCCPAC MEMBERSHIP COSTS			
BCCPAC Dues	2,340.00	2,470.00	-130.00
Total BCCPAC MEMBERSHIP COSTS	<u>2,340.00</u>	<u>2,470.00</u>	<u>-130.00</u>
CONFERENCES Summary			
BCCPAC Fall Leadership Conferen	1,241.85	1,800.00	-558.15
BCCPAC Spring Conference / AGM	881.25	2,400.00	-1,518.75
Conferences, Seminars - add'l	0.00	300.00	-300.00
Total CONFERENCES Summary	<u>2,123.10</u>	<u>4,500.00</u>	<u>-2,376.90</u>
MEETING EXPENSES			
Childcare Reimbursement	0.00	200.00	-200.00
Executive & Committee Mtg Exp	182.10		
General Meeting Expenses	625.49	800.00	-174.51
Gifts Given	343.80	200.00	143.80
Partner Meetings	0.00	700.00	-700.00
School meetings/PAC reps, etc.	71.13		
Total MEETING EXPENSES	<u>1,222.52</u>	<u>1,900.00</u>	<u>-677.48</u>
PARENT EDUCATION/WORKSHOPS			
Family of Schools Grant	600.00	1,400.00	-800.00
Food Safe Training Day	766.44	800.00	-33.56
PAC-Ed Workshops Day	0.00	1,500.00	-1,500.00
Parent Education/ Speaker Funds	1,350.00	1,500.00	-150.00
Total PARENT EDUCATION/WORKSHOPS	<u>2,716.44</u>	<u>5,200.00</u>	<u>-2,483.56</u>
Total Expense	<u>8,880.87</u>	<u>14,817.00</u>	<u>-5,936.13</u>
Net Income	<u><u>1,307.01</u></u>	<u><u>-3,456.50</u></u>	<u><u>4,763.51</u></u>

7:56 AM

09/18/09

AccrualBasis

NVPAC North Vancouver Parent Advisory Council
Balance Sheet
 As of June 30, 2009

	Jun 30, 09	Jun 30, 08
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Chequing/Savings		
NSCU - Chequing Maximizer	11,234.29	10,776.57
NSCU - Equity Shares	11.98	11.69
NSCU - Gaming Account	23.48	84.48
Total Chequing/Savings	<u>11,269.75</u>	<u>10,872.74</u>
Accounts Receivable		
Accounts Receivable	910.00	0.00
Total Accounts Receivable	<u>910.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>12,179.75</u>	<u>10,872.74</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u><u>12,179.75</u></u>	<u><u>10,872.74</u></u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY		
Equity		
Opening Bal Equity @ Aug'03	6,247.38	6,247.38
Retained Earnings	4,625.36	3,798.60
Net Income	1,307.01	826.76
Total Equity	<u>12,179.75</u>	<u>10,872.74</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u><u>12,179.75</u></u>	<u><u>10,872.74</u></u>