



Points 2 Ponder

September 27, 2017

From the September 26th meeting:

It was a really good meeting. We had a large group of parents and we talked about some really important things. As promised I will include links or documents as resources for you to carry on the discussions with the parents at your schools. Especially helpful if you were unable to attend. The feedback you send with your representatives is integral to the ability of VCPAC to advise the Board and District Administration team. All past issues of Points 2 Ponder are available on the our website <http://www.vcpac.ca> for your convenience.

Since our May meeting:

The Board of Education passed the **Enrollment Priorities Policy** this policy replaces the one from 1970s it will be used when a school has more students applying than seats available. This takes effect next September 2018. It can be accessed here <https://www.sd61.bc.ca/news-events/media-releases/title/the-board-of-education-approves-new-student-enrolment-priorities-for-20182019/>

The Board of Education is looking at moving to a district **Dress Code**. Currently they are part of our School Code of Conduct and reviewed regularly by staff and parents (possibly students) to ensure it reflects the values of the school community. There was a motion up for debate in September. It has been referred back to the committee for more broad consultation with parents. Please take this opportunity to discuss this topic with your parents and give your feedback to your VCPAC representative or designated delegate for our October 24th meeting. Dress codes are a parent issue VCPAC believes we should be part of this decision. This plan is changing practice so consultation is required under the District policies. The district committee, One Learning Community, meetings are open to anyone to attend. We will do our best to let you know when dress codes are on their agenda again. There was also a notice of motion for next Board meeting to suspend enforcement of existing dress codes until this matter is resolved. I have included the motions with this document. No public discussion is permitted at board meetings, which means response will need to be written or in the form of a speech. A request to speak at the meeting can be sent to Secretary Treasure Mark Walsh mwalsh@sd61.bc.ca and letters can be sent to "All Trustees" cloring@sd61.bc.ca.

Vancouver Parent Conference 2018 is March 3. TBD. If you have a topic or speaker you would like to suggest please do to info@vcpac.ca and we will forward it to the committee

BCCPAC is concerned that **students with learning challenges** may not be getting the support they need, including the full day of learning opportunities, some are being asked to go home early or not come at all. BCCPAC has a survey open until Oct 6th for parents to tell them what is happening in their schools. You do not require a membership to take the **survey**. Here's the link:<http://bccpac.bc.ca/news/bccpac-survey-parents-special-needs-children-not-receiving-full-day-school/>. The official report is that this not happening in our district if you have information that is contrary to this report please contact VCPAC President Audrey Smith at audreys@vcpac.ca

Round Table discussions:

Inclusion: What does that even mean? What needs to improve and What are we doing right? It's not always just about funding. Understanding what we are talking about and what we are looking to improve is equally an issue. There is much to navigate. Since the report says that inclusion is working in our district and that students are in school being supported, we are asking parents if they agree with that report. We can't advocate for better access to support environments etc, for student success when we know the stories out there. The One Learning Community Committee is discussing inclusion practices in SD61, help us represent the parents and students well. Your privacy will be preserved, it is a composite story we will share. Highlights from that table were; more training, transparency, access to resources, and common understanding of lingo.

Students as **lunch monitors**. The GVTA has expressed concerns for the safety of all students when students are the lunch monitors. (Letter and motion attached) Our Round table discussion found that parents also have concerns about this practice. The Board of Education has asked the Superintendent to review the relevant issues including potential costs. There were several concerns expressed. Have a chat with your parents some time soon(the report is due Nov 17, 2017) and help us share that with the board. Here are some of the highlights from our discussion; kids not eating all of their lunch, leadership opportunities = missed social opportunities and down time, selection process, lack of parent approval process, discipline responsibilities, training, not babysitting age, number of students monitored, age difference between the monitor and monitored, pressure to do it right, anxiety, treats/rewards without parental permission, lost instruction time, and segregation of students to make management more feasible. Safety for now and long term health need to be considered. What do you hear from your parent community?

PAC 101 and Partnership Building. What Why When to bring in the A for advisory in the PAC. The first event of this kind for the school year is Oct 5th. We have invited PAC leaders and Administration to come together to learn how to figure out what, why and when they should partner to support student success. That's the first half and if you can't stay for the whole thing please come for that part. The second part is PAC executive training as well as how to access resources for answering what ever comes up. We hope to have more opportunities this year to increase PAC effectiveness. We are generating a list of topics and concerns to address in creative ways, your ideas needed. Ideas such as; more focused events, speakers at our general meetings, coffee chats around town with open invites to join in, or evening appies for more networking, are all being explored. There is no 'one size fits all' solution but coming together in some way will always improve things. What would work for you?

And last on the list is an invitation to participate on committees. If you are interested in representing the parents perspective and share with the rest of us what is happening let us know. We can add you to the list of volunteers for committee positions. Name, school, contact info and committee discussion of interest would be great! Send to info@vcpac.ca Find the list below.



Committee work

District Committees: Terms of reference can be found here <https://www.sd61.bc.ca/board-of-education/ad-hoc-committees/>
French Advisory 2 parent positions meets 1-2 times a year
One Learning Community 1 parent vote, open for all to attend meets monthly(?)
Long Term Facilities 1 parent meets 5-6 times a year
Middle School review 1 parent vote, open to all they have not yet met(?)

VCPAC Committees

Awards Committee

Plan, organize and facilitate the event. Meet as needed to make a memorable event.

Vancouver Island Parent Conference

Various levels of participation. Meets as needed. Many hands make light work.

Emergency Preparedness

Work with Marketa on the initiatives we are collaborating on at district and municipal level ie reunification exercises in January

Future possibilities to be decided at a future general meeting

Parent Education committee

Coordinate events hosted by School PACs when open to all district parents, perhaps help connect PACs with similar plans

Develop a list of topics and speakers VCPAC may include in their General Meeting agendas

Arrange for speakers and advertising when VCPAC is involve at that level

Leadership training committee

Poll the PAC leaders as to what is needed and help find speakers (experienced PAC leaders?) to address the topic

Decide what venue is best to address identified issues

Plan or organize networking events such as PAC congress, PAC summit, coffee chat groups, evening appies, etc to support leadership development

Dress Code

Notice of motion for October 23, 2017 Board Meeting:

That the Board of education direct the superintendent to instruct principals to suspend the enforcement of school dress codes pending the completion of One Learning Community committee consultations and recommendations on dress codes.

Motion at September 25, 2017 Board meeting, referred back to One Learning Community Committee for further consultation specifically with parents:

That the Board of Education of School District No.61 (Greater Victoria) direct that the School Code of Conduct will not include any other statements regarding expectations of dress, save for the following:

Our school is committed to creating a learning community that values diversity and is free of all forms of discrimination. In line with the BC Human Rights Code which prohibits discrimination on the basis of an individual's race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression and age, (insert school name) promotes a climate of understanding and mutual respect where all are equal in dignity and rights. Actions through verbal and non-verbal communication (including clothing) must demonstrate support for the BC Human Rights Code.



Lunch Monitors

Right before the motion was on the table for discussion, VCPAC informed the Superintendent that we looked forward to working with him on this effort. We were told this motion had nothing to do with parent input. We don't see it that way. If we have concerns about this practice we need to let the Board of Education know and advise them of our ambition to change the practice to better serve our children.

Motion passed by the Board of Education May 23rd after much amending

That the Board of Education of School District No.61 (Greater Victoria) direct the Superintendent to review lunch monitor guidelines, training, student/supervisor ratio; and costs for alternatives and bring this report to the November 2017 Operations Policy and Planning Committee meeting



Greater Victoria Teachers' Association
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May 2, 2017

Via Email

VCPAC President
audreys@vcpac.ca

Dear Audrey Smith:

Topic: The use of grade 4 and 5 students as lunch time monitors

The Greater Victoria Teachers' Association believes there should be policy and guidelines around the use of elementary students as lunch time monitors. We recognize that the role of student lunch monitors is a leadership opportunity; but we are concerned about the appropriate use of student volunteers. Of most concern is the health and safety of both the monitors and the students they are monitoring. Lunch monitors are being required to care for other students who have significant health concerns, i.e. allergies that require the use of an Epi Pen, significant behavioural concerns, dietary concerns, and parental requests regarding lunch consumption.

Schools are asking children who are too young to babysit, to look after a large group of children without adult supervision while they eat. And yet, these same students are not allowed to be left unsupervised on the school property. Making it appear as if this a staffing short fall, not a leadership opportunity. Moreover, student lunch monitors are asked to leave their classes early in order to help with younger students affecting their access to academic time with their teacher. Parents of both the students being monitored by children and the student monitors are not being informed of this practice, nor is their permission being sought.

The district is in effect employing children as supervisors in the guise of leadership. The Employment Standards Act, states the conditions for employing children under the age of 12 are as follows:

iv. Employment conditions under age 12:

- The director will assess each application carefully. Before permission is granted, the employer must demonstrate that:
- The parent or guardian has given written permission;
- The school has given written permission;
- The child will be under direct and immediate adult supervision at all times;
- The child will not travel to or from the worksite unaccompanied; and
- The child will not work near hot surfaces, noxious substances or dangerous equipment.

The director will also consider such things as:

- The degree to which the child can physically be expected to perform the work;
- Whether the child has the maturity to function in a work environment; and
- The child's ability to understand the nature of an employment relationship and health and safety issues in the workplace.

It is the GVTA's opinion that children's volunteer roles should have the same standards applied. We will be making a presentation to the District Operations Policy and Planning Committee on Monday, May 8th, requesting that the district immediately call a moratorium on the use of elementary students as lunch time monitors until they have established policy and regulations that identify how and when students can be used for this leadership opportunity.

We feel these regulations should include:

- That parents or guardians must give written permission to perform these monitoring duties;
- That students should receive an orientation and training;
- That any class that has significant behaviour, health, or dietary concerns should be directly supervised by an adult;
- That careful consideration should be given to the maturity of the child asked to take on these duties.

If you have any questions and concerns, please let us know. We hope we have your support with this initiative.

Sincerely,

David Futter, 2nd VP

Winona Waldron, Local Rep

cc: GVTA EC