

DPAC Highlights

April 2010

DPAC executive election update

April 30th is the deadline for submission of nomination forms for parents interested in running for election/ratification for next year's DPAC executive. There are three positions available on the 12-member board. To date, we have received no completed nomination forms.

Please consider/urge experienced PAC parents at your school to consider putting your/their names forward. DPAC executive members have opportunities to work with district management and partner group leaders on board committees and learn how our district works. And DPAC needs a full board to effectively represent Vancouver parents and assist PACs.

We will email information sheets and nomination forms to all PACs this week in case you have misplaced your originals. If you have any questions about the position, please feel free to phone the coordinator or any executive member listed at the bottom of this newsletter and they will be happy to speak with you.

DPAC urges PAC, partners to contact MLAs

In a media release earlier this week, the DPAC executive urged all PACs and partner groups to "continue to advocate strongly to their MLAs to increase Vancouver's funding for the coming school year".

They stated that "...the provincial education funding for 2010-2011 resulting in an \$18 million shortfall for SD 39 is woefully inadequate...All of the cuts proposed...to balance next year's budget will be detrimental to our children's education. Any suggestions to decrease or increase spending in different areas within

the preliminary budget will not solve the basic problem of too little money".

DPAC urges parents and partners not to argue with each other over their share of the inadequate funds, but to work together to advocate for Vancouver's children. At recent budget meetings, the board distributed MLA addresses and a sample letter. DPAC has also emailed these to all PACs. Please use them!

PACs list priorities at annual budget meeting

Following the March 18th information session on the 2010-2011 budget by Vancouver Board of Education Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Rick Krowchuk, Vancouver PAC representatives shared their education priorities:

- Support staff in classrooms for students and teachers;
 - School-based search and rescue training and supplies;
 - Maintenance of staffing levels for inner city schools;
 - Arts programs;
 - Fewer disruptions in class movement in the fall.
- Parents also discussed their

concerns:

- Loss of young teachers;
- Instructional time vs. learning time;
- Fewer resources for teachers;
- Staff reductions, not replacing retiring staff;
- Future school closures.

Suggestions put forward at the meeting included:

- Develop/submit needs budget;
- Reduce need for meetings;
- Make computer use more efficient;
- Look at leasing on school land;

- Look at a balanced calendar – e.g. alternating 3 months of schools with 1 month of vacation throughout the year;
- Look at other agencies/ministries for non-education issues.

PACs still have

opportunities to input to trustees.

Two public consultation meetings remain for PACs and the public to share their budget issues/ideas/concerns with Vancouver trustees:

- **Thursday, April 15th:** 5:30 p.m., Board Room, Vancouver Board of Education, 1580 West Broadway;
- **Tuesday, April 20th:** 7:00 p.m., Mount Pleasant Elementary, 2300 Guelph Street.

Trustees ask that you register to speak at least two working days in advance at 604-713-5080. Even if you don't wish to make a presentation, this is an opportunity to hear what PACs across the city are thinking/doing.

PACs support increase in provincial parent dues

Representatives of Vancouver members of the provincial parent organization British Columbia Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC) supported a \$30 dues increase to \$95 at the April 8th DPAC planning meeting for the BCCPAC Annual General Meeting.

DPAC hosts this annual meeting for Vancouver PACs who are members of BCCPAC to get together to review and discuss the resolutions going forward for consideration at the organization's AGM, being held this year on April 17th and 18th in downtown Vancouver. You can find information on registration, resolutions and the program for the spring conference preceding the AGM at www.bccpac.bc.ca.

Forty-one (41) % of Vancouver PACs belong. DPAC chair Julianne Doctor pointed out that 46 Vancouver PACs are members of the provincial parent group and entitled to cast votes at its AGM. We encourage PACs to

send a representative to the meeting, and will reimburse the AGM registration fee of one parent from every voting member Vancouver PAC that attends. If your PAC is not able to participate, please be sure to get your proxy to Gwen Giesbrecht, Sandy Sharma or Steve Baker (see numbers below) so that our voice is well represented.

DPAC and PAC reps discussed 11 resolutions, dealing with Constitution and Bylaw revisions, changes in voting and election procedures, implementation of sun protection policies at schools, using students as couriers, funding for non-designated children in need and care of children in emergencies

Four things for your PAC to do to support your kids

We hope Vancouver PACs will do 4 things we have suggested in this newsletter:

1. Encourage experienced members to put their name forward for the DPAC executive;
2. Write (and encourage your parents to write) to your MLA regarding education funding and the effects proposed changes will have on your school community;
3. Attend (and encourage your parents to attend) a board budget input meeting to learn what other PACs are thinking/doing;
4. If you are a member of BCCPAC, make sure your vote reaches the AGM either in person or by proxy.

Your 2009-2010 DPAC executive:

Steve Baker: 604-215-8624

Julianne Doctor, chair: 604-992-9324

Stefanie Gajdecki: 604-739-7939

Gwen Giesbrecht, vice-chair: 604-876-8571

Sarina Kier, sec-treas: 604-264-8487

James Pedersen: 778-833-3745

Sandy Sharma: 604-728-6478

Sukhwinder Pal Singh: 604-327-1645

John Tsang: 604-323-1328

Jennifer West: 604-708-9511

Kanman Wong: 604-439-9193

DPAC coordinator: Rosemary Wakefield: 604-261-1250 or rkwakefield@shaw.ca