

**Special
Interest
Articles:**

President's Report

• President's
Report

WOW!

- Ensuring Student What a month! I am wondering if the students have been able to

Success and slide into school routine quickly since they only have three weeks School

Improvement

before they are off again.

What have we been up to? We put on a DPAC Orientation evening for parents, attended several forums, participated in conference calls, answered many e-mails, surveyed our district through PAC presidents and made preparations for an All-Candidates meeting.

Postponements

During the teacher action there were many conferences and meetings that were postponed. These included the District ^{Inside:} Accountability Contract review for parents, Parents as Partners, Student P.I.C.I., Community Focus Group, Leadership Academy Y4, and Success 2 Parent Involvement Webcast. All of these will be rescheduled in the

Job Action
Survey 5

next little while so we will still be very busy.

Candidate relocated it to Kwantlen University College. Despite the change of Questions 6 venue, many representatives managed to attend.

What's

Happening 7

Parent Input I cannot stress enough to Representatives, the importance of reading the agenda that is sent out and contacting their Executives to let them know the topics on the agenda. Even though you may not be able to attend, you can still send input via e-mail to us. We are trying our best to improve the level of input of our member PACs but we do need the help of the Representatives to DPAC to do that. Pass the information on and get input.

We realize that you may not have the opportunity to meet officially as a whole PAC before our General meetings. However, as elected PAC executive members, parents have entrusted you to represent your school community the best that you are able. The discussions you have with parents outside of PAC meetings, on the phone, via



President's Report -Continued**2005-2006****DPAC Executive****President***Susan Semonick***1st Vice President***Diana MacNeil***2nd Vice President***Bob Bowles***Secretary***Jean Ferguson***Treasurer***Vacant***BDDPAC DA***Naomi Sakai***Members at Large***Kari Medos**Lorna Taylor**Linda Bellamy**Laurie Pearson**Dawn Vowles*

email, etc. constitute parent get sitters, and what ever it input in the absence of an took to make the meetings and official meeting. Your expertise help arrange for things to and knowledge of your school happen. The hours it took to community is greatly welcome cull questions from the original and we do take into list to get a pared-downed list consideration that no official of 5 pages (from 14!) is not an 'PAC opinion' is offered. easy task I will tell you. Then,

to turn them into a yes /no **Phone/Email Survey and** format and to try to ensure that **Candidate Questions** the questions posed were As mentioned, we conducted a effective in attaining the brief survey and worked on information that parents preparing questions for the required before they vote was a School Trustee candidates from challenging task. Thank you to parents. Time was not on our all who were involved for those side but most everyone was many, many hours. understanding and cooperative. Please read reports about both This is now becoming an essay of these in a separate article in so I will end here. We are doing this month's *Dialogue*. our best to keep you informed

and only hope you do realize I would like to thank all the we all have families too. Executive members, who were able to make arrangements, Susan Semonick

Ensuring Student Success and School Improvement

Parents want to know how their designed to provide information children are doing in school. about individual students; Are they learning the skills that others are designed to take a will open doors for them in the look at results in terms of the future? It's a good question – education system (school, and it's the reason why BC's district, or province). Often education system measures assessments address both how students are progressing, areas and it is a matter of how from Kindergarten right the information is interpreted through to graduation. and used.

There are a variety of For parents much of the assessments that measure information they receive about student success. Some are their child comes from direct

Student Success -Continued

discussion with teachers. Reports about individual student achievement often come in the following forms.

Report Cards

The report card summarizes the teacher's evaluation of your child's progress based on a variety of assessment tools, which may include written tests, classroom observations, and visual presentations, etc. In each school year, parents should receive 3 written reports of which one is the final yearend report. As well, you should receive 2 informal reports that may be in the form of a written interim, phone call, or meeting with the teacher (parentteacher conferences), etc.

Foundation Skills Assessment

The Foundation Skills Assessment is an annual provincial assessment of students' academic skills. It is a snapshot of how well students in BC are learning foundational skills in Reading Comprehension, Writing, and Numeracy in Grades 4 and 7. Individual student reports are available to parents. As well, school, district and provincial level reports about FSA results are available to the public online.

Provincial Exams

Students in BC who are

currently enrolled in Grades 11 and below are required to take the following five provincial exams in Grades 10-12 as a requirement of the new Graduation Program.

- Grade 10 Language Arts, Science, and Math
- Social Studies 11 or 12 (depending upon the course students choose)
- Grade 12 Language Arts

Grade 12 students also take provincial exams associated with the academic courses that they elect to take. These provincial exams will be optional for those students (Grades 11 and below) who are on the new Graduation program. However, students interested in provincial scholarships will still need to take them and do well to be eligible. Individual student results for provincial exams are available to students through a secure password-protected Ministry of Education site.

Students aren't the only ones whose progress or success is measured. Your school, School District, and even the Ministry of Education are regularly assessed and evaluated.

School Plans, Accountability Contracts, and the Ministry of Education's Annual Service Plan Report all form a part of the Accountability Framework,

"Helping students develop the ..."

**"knowledge,
skills,
attitudes and
competencies
that young
people need to
succeed as
individuals,
and as
members of
our society."**

"Attributes of the BC Graduate"

*Ministry of
Education May 2003*

Student Success -Continued

which is intended to focus on and support the improvement of student achievement.

School Plans

School plans tell the board what each school community is thinking about student achievement in its school. During the process of developing a school plan, School Planning Councils look at a wide spectrum of data, identify areas of need, and develop goals and strategies to improve student success in identified areas. School plans also include an evaluation of the previous years' school success in meeting the targets set out for student achievement.

Accountability Contract

Every school board in BC is required to submit an accountability contract to the Minister of Education by October 31st of each year. The District Accountability Contract contains a rationale, district goals, and strategies for improving overall student achievement in the district. It also reports the success of the students in the district as a whole with respect to achievement in each of the goals areas. The DAC supports school plans as well as provide a general compass for school planning councils.

District Reviews

Approximately every three years, school districts undergo a review by an external review team composed of educators, parents, and Ministry staff. The review is intended to provide feedback and recommendations to the district and the Ministry regarding the school districts effort to improve student achievement. District Review reports are made public and are available online.

MoE Annual Report

Structured much like school plans and accountability contracts, the Ministry of Education's Annual Service Plan Report tells you how students are performing province-wide. It outlines the services and initiatives the Ministry has undertaken to support schools and school districts. The report also details the MoE's progress in achieving its goals.

Links to the following can be found on our website at:

<http://www.langleydpac.ca/links.php>

- District Accountability Contract
- School Plans for Langley schools
- Graduation Program
- MoE Reports site (FSA)

*"New and Improved
to serve our
members better"*

www.langleydpac.ca

*"Easy and consistent
membership access
to the DPAC
executive"*

Job Action Survey

The last few weeks have been very busy for DPAC executive members. We would like to thank everyone who phoned or emailed us with your parent concerns.

A special thank you goes out to each and every PAC president who responded to our phone/email questions about the labour dispute on short notice. For many PAC's, their communication lines were severed during the Teacher action because they did not wish to cross the picket lines. Many presidents were hesitant to give input on survey questions because they felt their communities were torn on all four questions posed. We did ask them to answer to the best of their ability and they did. Thank you to all of those who took the time from family to answer them.

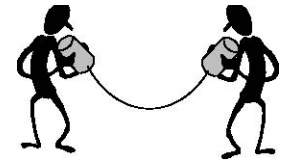
We realize that the survey was not comprehensive in any way but just a series of snap shots. However, they were valuable in putting together a collage of parent views. Parents in all schools should be proud of how well each of their PAC presidents communicated the pulse of their respective school communities. Your responses were shared with BCCPAC via a conference call that took place on October 17th and which included other DPAC presidents from across BC.

The four questions asked were:

1. Generally, do the parents in your school community support the present teacher action in this province?
2. Which do your parents feel affect student learning to a greater degree - "class size" or "class composition"?
3. Has this current situation caused financial burden on families in your school community?
4. Have parents in your school community considered or would they consider placing their child in a private, independent, or home school setting because of the current level of service in public education?

What we discovered from the replies is as follows:

1. Parents were not clear on the issues being addressed in the Teachers action.
2. Many parents had different definitions of what Class Size and Class Composition was.
3. Every school community felt financial effects from this whether it was from additional childcare costs, lost pay, or the loss of opportunity to fundraise for their school. They all stated students had been affected financially or educationally in some way.
4. A majority of parents were happy before the strike with the Education system and only during this action had they considered alternative schooling options.



"... PAC presidents communicated the pulse of their respective school communities ..."



"Parents were not clear on the issues being addressed ..."

Candidate Questions



"... questions were gleaned from several years of input "

Thank you to PAC presidents and Representatives to DPAC for taking a look at the list of questions proposed for the School Trustee candidates.

The questions were gleaned from several **years** of input from Langley parents into questions for past election forums and a list of suggested questions from BCCPAC that were included in their IMPACT newsletter. As well, current PAC Executive and parents in the district provided suggestions. The majority of the people who provided input felt we had put together a fair representation of issues in the district.

The deadline was set in order to get questions delivered to Candidates in time to allow them adequate response time and to ensure that we had time to collate and prepare their responses for media release on October 28th to meet submission deadlines for papers

before the November 3rd meeting.

We realize that it was very short notice, and we apologize. We do try to provide as much time as possible for input from parents and every group with which they work. However, on occasion, we all experience timeframes and events that are not under our control which affect our work and priorities. As you may imagine, the

events of the past few weeks have increased the volunteer hours of our executive who all lead busy lives. Fortunately, some of you managed to provide us with your timely input and we sincerely thank you for your effort.

Please know that the agenda for our October meeting was sent out one week prior to the date and included questions for the candidates as an item for discussion. Several people did send input before the meeting. We also put out a notice on Oct. 1st about the All-Candidates meeting that also started discussion on this topic in schools. The draft questions for candidates were emailed soon after the meeting concluded, on the same night.

These questions are only one way in which parents can learn more about each candidate. Both local papers have sent out their own questions. Look for the responses to these in print shortly. We also encourage interested voters to attend the All-Candidates meeting hosted by DPAC, ask your own questions, and listen to the candidates respond to the concerns of other constituents. If your PAC has questions to pose, send your Executive member to represent your school at the forum. We look forward to seeing you there.

ALL CANDIDATES MEETING

Listen to and Question

**Candidates
For
School Trustees**

NOV. 3

7:00 PM

**Brookwood Secondary
School Theatre
20902 - 37A Street
Langley, BC**

What's Happening ...

Parent Review of District Accountability Contract

This parent meeting was postponed due to recent job action. It has now been rescheduled to:

November 25, 2005 10:30 am – 12:00 (noon) School Board Office

The purpose of the meeting is to review the District Accountability Contract and provide input. The DAC has been approved by the Board and will be submitted to the Ministry by October 31st as required. However, it is reviewed on an on-going basis throughout the year. Students did have an opportunity before the recent break to give input. SPCs, parents, and other stakeholders will have an opportunity to do so as well in the next few weeks.

ALL Langley School District parents are invited to attend this open meeting. Registration is not necessary but if you know you will be attending, DPAC would appreciate knowing so we may make the necessary arrangements. Email office@langleydpac.ca.

Print copies of the DAC will be sent to school principals and PAC presidents shortly. An electronic version should be available on the District website soon. Our website will provide the link as soon as it is available.

DPAC Survey Coming...

District staff is preparing a class size and composition report for the Board of Trustees. DPAC is planning to conduct a parent survey regarding your observations and feelings about the current size and composition of your child's classes.

Emails will be sent to representatives at each school. Please watch for this information at your PAC meeting and on our website.

First Aid Policy deferred

At the last DPAC meeting a motion was passed to request that the Board defer discussion of this policy so that PACs may have adequate time to discuss and give input.

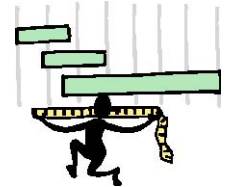
At its October meeting, the Board did approve deferral of Policy #7018 to its January meeting.

We encourage all PACs to discuss the recommendations presented at our September meeting and to ensure your concerns are communicated at the next DPAC meeting on November 23rd. Parents can also email or phone Diana, 1st Vice-President at:

VP1@langleydpac.ca

OR

604.534.4891 ext. 238



"DPAC is conducting a parent survey... about class size and composition "

Langley District Parent Advisory Council

PHONE:
604.534.7891
ext.238

E-MAIL:
office@langleydpac.ca



We're on the
Web!

See us at:
www.langleydpac.ca

BCCPAC's Leadership Conference 2005

*An Environment
of Caring*

Coast Bastion Inn
Nanaimo, BC

November 17-20, 2005

Board Appoints New Principal

Terrie Levitt has been appointed Principal of R.C. Garnett Demonstration Elem. School effective September 2006. She will be joining the administrative team of Willoughby Elem. effective January 2006 and working out of Willoughby as she prepares for the new school.

November Provincial Exams for Grades 10 & 12

An information circular from the Ministry of Education regarding the November Exams is available at

www.bced.gov.bc.ca/exams/trx_updates

The key points are as follows:

1. The November session will be offered as scheduled (all Grade 10 courses, Grade 11 Social Studies and Grade 12 English, History and Biology).

2. For the 2005-2006 school year only, the Ministry will waive the requirement that provincial exams may be rewritten only once. Students may re-write an exam in January, April and/or June 2006.

Please read the circular and speak with your school counsellor for more specific details.

Community Announcement

Linda Light was a Langley mom of 4 who was killed by a hit-and-run driver on 24th Avenue 3 weeks ago. The police are still looking for a "vehicle of interest" – an older model white Dodge Caravan or Plymouth Voyager with red trim and broken windows on its side. Anyone with information about this incident is asked to contact the Langley RCMP Traffic Division or Crimestoppers.

Ms. Light's four children are between the ages of 13 and 18 and a trust fund has been set up for them at the Willowbrook Royal Bank. Diana MacNeil confirmed the details with the bank manager and the ladies in charge are co-workers of Linda's from Revenue Canada. Unfortunately, due to the number of fraudulent accounts opened after "911", the bank requires the following.

Please make cheques payable to:
Debbie Packowich and Diane Bacha

In the memo part of the cheque, please write:

"IN TRUST" for Linda Light's Children

The cheques then need to be mailed to:

Thank you for your support.

Next DPAC Meeting:

November 23, 2005

7 pm, School Board Office