

# Point Grey Parent Advisory Council (PAC) Meeting

September 17, 2013, at 7:30 pm in the staff room

**In Attendance:** Esther Kwok (chair); Maureen Bayless (past chair); Lisa Kilner (Secretary); Fan Chun, Mei Chong, Karen Aiouch, Keren Gertsman, Nancy Wang, Emma Li, Elizabeth Chang (Members-at-Large), Cindy Dong, Ahmad Abre, Ma Yun Ping, Zhang Xin, Terry Poon, Hao Dai Wei, Michelle Au, Miranda Lam, Yong Chen, Yun Dai, Patricia Almeida, Cindy Hum, Ron Beshara, Laura Zitron, Loree Young, Jenny Chuan, Vivian Ye, Eva Ito, Ying Zhou, Alan Huong, Shannon Quinn, Karen Balwhaw, Tracy Yuen, Della Lee. Quorum Met.

## **Mr. Lloyd - Head Librarian**

Mr. Lloyd recently attended a reading forum by Stephen Krashen whose PHD is in grammar and who is also a big Noam Chomsky fan. He suggested that the single biggest factor for improving reading is reading. Krashen believes that there is no fundamental difference between the way we acquire our first language and our subsequent languages. As well, he believes that poverty is the most negative thing for impeding literacy development.

Mr. Lloyd believes that school libraries are important because it is where the students are. There is a correlation between the openness of a school's library to literacy development. There are 3 important factors in a library: the librarian, an engaging collection and a librarian unencumbered by busy work. Mr Lloyd also noted that previously he held the position of an English teacher.

In the 1970s, he indicated the library would have been funded \$30,000. Ten years ago, the library received 15,000. The funding has been decreasing every since. Last year, the library received \$12,000 with an additional \$2500 from the PAC for the purchase of books. Staffing has decreased to half the staff of 20 years ago. He likened the staff cutbacks to getting rid of all the clerical staff in the office. He noted that he does a lot of clerical work because of cutbacks. He mentioned that the students would say that we have a fantastic resource selection.

## **Q/A:**

**Q:** Are you the only librarian?

**A:** There are currently 2 librarians. A full time employee is scheduled for 7 blocks. We have 10 blocks scheduled for the library and last year it was 11 blocks.

**Q:** Esther was asking what he would want in the library.

**A:** I encourage you to look at the Dr. Steven Krashen website focussed on what makes for better literacy. [Books and Articles by Stephen D Krashen](#)

**Q:** Do students have the opportunity for independent learning under the librarian?

**A:** No.

**Q:** Are you part of the morning tutorial?

**A:** Yes. If you ever want to come into the library during tutorial, there's no where to sit.

**Q:** Do you teach research skills?

**A:** People bring their classes in and we go through how to do research. The first avenue students resort to is Google. We are trying to move kids to use databases such as World Book, EBSCO, Culture Grams, etc. There are about 35 databases in total.

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## **Mr. Baxter -- Gr. 9 Counsellor**

Counsellors follow the students from grade 8 through grade 12. He mentioned some upcoming dates for counsellor evenings - the walkout on the 26th, Melinda from Options Solutions is speaking on Oct 9. and Oct 23rd. is Grade 12 night.

He mentioned that the counseling department has 2 objectives: to help the students to graduate and to help them get to university (over 80 percent). There is a different set of parameters depending on which field of study a student is interested in (i.e. commerce, engineering, arts, etc.) Starting in grade 11, kids have to get selective about the courses they take based on the prerequisites of the field of study. Kids often change their field of study in first year university and often earlier.

Mr. Baxter is concerned about getting full course loads for all of the students. There are currently scheduling issues and this is the first time that some grade 9s have had spares. There are even some grade 8s with spares. They don't need more free time at school. Currently, all grade 9 classes are full including elective courses.

**Q:** As a parent who has a child with a free block what can be done? We want to keep kids engaged in learning. There must be other options.

**A:** Online learning initiatives were mentioned.. Mr. Baxter indicated that everyone has all the necessary core subjects. Every english block is at 30. A proposal was raised that perhaps the PAC could lobby or get a VLN teacher here. The kids will learn more and better in a classroom. There are many online schools in the province.

**Q:** to Irfan: In terms of the students in grade 8 and 9, what can we be doing?

**A:** Irfan asked to speak later on the subject.

Mr Baxter indicated that he could be reached via email at [ibaxter@vsb.bc.ca](mailto:ibaxter@vsb.bc.ca) If there are any issues, come in to talk to him or email him. He also pointed out that Point Grey has some excellent music programs as well as fine arts programs. Those are the things that develop the children. He noted that starting in grade 10, courses start counting towards graduation. Typically, universities don't start looking at grades until grade 11 -- especially UBC and McGill. UBC looks at the essays as well as the volunteer aspect and work experience. He encouraged the students to be broad-based learners.

Esther indicated that she understands the concerns of parents. Our voice is heard in VSB, and part of the job of the PAC is to talk with administration and help resolve issues. However, it is important for all parents to be involved.

## 1. Welcome (Esther)

- thanked special speakers:

(i) Mr. Brad Lloyd, Head Librarian, for sharing about the library and its importance

(ii) Mr. Ian Baxter, school counsellor, for sharing about the start of school

- invited parents to visit PAC website, [www.pointgreyparents.com](http://www.pointgreyparents.com) and sign-up on email, [pointgreypac@gmail.com](mailto:pointgreypac@gmail.com)

## 2. Approval PAC Meeting minutes in June 2013 - Elizabeth Chang motioned - motion carried

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3. Nomination and voting for committee members. (*amended 11/19/14 to include count*)
  - a) Fan Chung as treasurer (*19 present; 16 for; 3 abstentions*)
  - b) Greg Anstruther as DPAC representative (*19 present, 18 for; 1 abstention*)
  
4. Principal's Report
  - indicated that school enrolment is higher than projected - 1180 students, 5 more than projected
  - there are 120 international students
  - grade 8 enrolment is up from last year; new students coming into grade 9
  - parents are spreading the message about PG: "What we are focusing on is that in order to get to the brain, you have to get to the heart." "Happy kids learn better"
  - PG trying to bring up the level of engagement in the community
  - social responsibility is really important - what are you giving back to the community?
  - still trying to fix course scheduling for students. Very complex problem. School has enough blocks but the problem is where these blocks are situated.
  - SWIS program to engage new immigrant youth, targeting grades 10-12 students
  - Tutorial time (M-F) between 8:30-8:50 am where students can meet up with teachers to ask for help, finish assignments, make up tests, etc. Will only work if students use it. There will be a year end review of its success
  - Homework Club is funded by an UBC group whose goal is to support aboriginal kids in their learning but the kids aren't using its services while non-aboriginal kids are using it well. Funding support may be cut if aboriginal students don't use this service. Need to tap into other avenues to keep this program alive.
  
5. Chair's Report
  - new format to Tuesday's PAC meeting. Each meeting will start with two guest teacher speakers. Usually department heads
  - direct donation has started and will have more information at next meeting
  - seek approval for the funding for two breakfasts at the Staff Meetings - Mei Chong motioned - motioned carried
  - highlighted Oct. 9th, Course and Planning Night with guest speaker Melinda Giampietro
  
6. Announcements
  - a) request parents to fill out Transportation Safety Questionnaire - Nathan Wilkes, PAC Chair at Eric Hamber, requested help with a survey on road safety between pedestrians, cars, and buses on roads surrounding schools. Parents handed out questionnaires to fill
  - b) gift cards - mentioned that gift card program is ongoing and encouraged parents to participate
  - c) Bean Brothers - mentioned that PG gets money back for sales made at the store. Encouraged parents to get their key tags

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- d) SWIS Workshops - noted that there are 3 workshops for parents on Sept, 27th for new immigrant families
- e) introduced Grad Chair - Andre Rowland. Graduation ceremony will be on June 24th at the Chan Centre. Grad dinner/dance will be on June 20th at the Hellenic Centre. Grad committee will fundraise with a poinsettia sale and a bottle drive. A request of \$500 to help with dinner/dance. Mentioned that PG is one of the few remaining schools in the province where parents put on the dinner/dance. It's a PG tradition.

7. Introducing Mini School Chair - Farah Shroff

8. Adjourn - motioned by Winston Sheh - motion carried

Meeting adjourned at 9:06 pm