

**BCSD Parent Consultative Committee (PCC)
Meeting Minutes**

November 29, 2021

Virtual meeting via Zoom

Attendees

Committee: Matthew Kalenuik, Brianne Braun, Yasu Shigemitsu, Nicole Eich, Gwen Wong

Parents: Emily Gould, Dan Matheson, Leigh Chan, Genevieve Hohnadel, Nora Maldonado, Ryan De Temple

BCSD Administrators: Cathy Bennett (Principal), Jennifer Zuvic (Acting Vice Principal)

Agenda:

1. Call to order
2. Adoption of Agenda

Pending Business

NIL

New Business

3. Changes to the PCC – new committee member
4. School updates/news – Cathy Bennett and Jennifer Zuvic
5. Gaming funds update
6. Communication with parents
7. Shortage of educators and support staff
8. Outstanding/new issues brought forward by parents and/or staff
9. Q & A

Other Business

Adjournment

1. Call to Order

Matthew (Matt) called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.

2. Adoption of Agenda

It was moved and seconded that the agenda be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

3. Changes to the PCC – new committee member

Gwen Wong introduced herself as a new member of the committee who will fill the role of Liaison to the PAC (Secondary).

4. School updates/news – Cathy and Jennifer

Cathy:

a. Staffing:

- Elementary: BCSD has hired a new teacher for grade five (Nur Abdulle). Jennifer Zuvic is currently the temporary acting Vice Principal. Another new teacher joining the school (Cami Hall) will be teaching a grade three/four class but for now will be the acting LSS (learning support services) teacher. If Jennifer fills the Vice Principal role permanently and Cami fills the LSS role permanently, the school will look to hire a new teacher for the Grade three/four vacancy.
- High school: At the high school level, the life skills teacher left but a replacement was found as a temporary contract until June.
- Counsellor: For the counsellor role, the school was experiencing difficulty in finding an individual to fill the role. As a result, the school has partnered with the Deaf well-being program to offer counselling services and it seems to be going well for now.
- Occupational Therapy/Physical Therapy: BCSD will have access to OT/PT through the Burnaby school district. The district has been able to secure this resource via Fraser Health, but as these roles are currently difficult to fill, the resource will be shared with other schools in the district.
- Interpreters: the school has interviewed two candidates and will likely be moving forward with hiring both. The school is also hoping to hire a Deaf interpreter to act as a good language role model for the students.
- Youth Child Care Worker: the school has been looking for candidates to fill this role, which was left open after a retirement.
- Educational Assistant: the school has recently hired a new EA.

b. School growth plan:

The school started working on the school growth plan in 2020 and is now ready to share the work done thus far with parents, and also to gather input on the plan.

Jennifer:

The school has been working to improve the ways in which it tracks and records student progress. Some staff have received training on new assessment and evaluation tools. New learning tools such as Reading A-Z and Mathletics have been introduced. Student success with these programs/tools will be tracked and recorded.

A question was raised by a parent as to who is currently teaching ASL at the school. Jennifer clarified that the former ASL teacher has retired, and because the school has not yet hired a replacement they are embedding ASL instruction into the classroom for the 2021/22 school year. An additional question was asked as to whether the ASL instruction that is taking place is led by a Deaf individual. Jennifer stated that she is trying her best to give the LSS and teachers the resources necessary to support the students during this change. In place of the ASL class that students took last year, the students are participating in STREAM learning.

Jennifer then provided an update on the Flying Hands competition in Washington. While the school could attend this year's competition it has decided against it due to the many considerations raised by the Covid pandemic. There may be an opportunity for the high school to participate in a virtual event based out of Boston instead, named the Marie Jean Philip competition.

A parent raised a question as to which apps the students are using, and whether the students are really learning by using apps as opposed to more traditional learning methods. Jennifer confirmed that students are using apps including Minecraft, Prodigy, Reading A-Z and Mathletics. Jennifer clarified that some apps are used to support lesson plans, used in groups of students or used at the end of a lesson (not solely for the lesson itself). Links to two articles addressing this question were shared by Matt:

<https://research.qut.edu.au/dmrc/projects/mee-minecraft-for-educational-impact/>

<https://research.qut.edu.au/dmrc/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2019/10/MEE-Research.pdf>

A final question was raised to Jennifer (and Cathy) in regards to whether BCSD could appeal to the provincial government for an exception to the teaching certificate requirement, so that more candidates from outside of the province or country could be considered for available positions at the school. Cathy assured the parent that this appeal had been made to no avail – the government is not willing to make any exceptions to the requirement. As well, international candidates are required to hold a visa, which creates a barrier, as well as the high cost of living in the Vancouver area.

Brianne noted that POPDHH had applied successfully for tuition exemption for teachers of students who are blind or partially sighted. Brianne noted that it might be worth it for BCSD to re-visit this by applying for a similar exemption or having conversations with POPDHH or the council of service providers regarding the details. Brianne also offered the support of the PCC in these efforts if they go ahead.

5. Gaming Funds update

Yasu provided an update on the fundraising efforts by the South Slope PAC, which are currently focussed on supporting the library and gym. The PAC has received a community gaming grant equal to \$20 per student. BSCD has yet to determine what to do with its portion of the funding. Gwen noted that the Burnaby South PAC is having challenges finding members and that the South Slope PAC has been applying for gaming grants on behalf of the high school.

6. Communication with parents

On the issue of teacher-parent communication, concerns were raised regarding the perceived amount and quality of communication by some teachers in comparison to others. Cathy addressed these concerns by noting that all teachers at BCSD are strongly encouraged to communicate at least weekly with parents. She noted that the school cannot mandate this due to union guidelines. Parents can contact teachers to request communication/updates weekly, and then if the parents feel that their concerns are not being addressed they can speak with Jennifer or Cathy to work towards a resolution.

7. Shortage of educators and support staff

It was agreed that this issue had been addressed and discussed earlier in the meeting.

8. Outstanding/new issues brought forward by parents and/or staff

Gwen noted a concern at the high school level in that grade eight and nine students had received a report card with letter grades. The understanding was that these reports should have used the four-point proficiency scale. Cathy clarified that this reporting method had rolled out for grades ten to twelve at all high schools for this school year. It will roll out to grades eight and nine in the fall of 2022.

9. Q & A

No final questions were raised. Cathy thanked all of the parents for their support of BCSD. Brianne noted that the next PCC meeting will take place in February 2022.

Other Business

NIL

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:17pm.