



District Parent Advisory Council

DPAC Pulse

April 2020

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DPAC Executive Updates

- ◆ DPAC Executive members have attended all the Public Board Meetings in April. The budget was approved on April 21, 2020.
- ◆ DPAC's President presented to the Board your questions and comments on the budget, for a summary please see letter to the Board (page 3).
- ◆ The DPAC is committed to continue helping parents and children during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ◆ **The DPAC is only as strong as the people who volunteer their time. We encourage all those who want to make a difference in our District to consider running for a position on the DPAC Executive on May 27, 2020.**

Your school events on Social Media and DPAC Website

"Intelligence plus character,
that is the goal of true
education."

— **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.**

If your school has a community event and you would like DPAC to share it on its social media channels or website, please send a .jpg and a short description to our Communication Coordinator and Newsletter/Website Editor:

Teri Towner, communication@dpac43.ca

Maria Ledezma, newsletter@dpac43.ca

Follow us on Facebook (dpac 43 - District Parent Advisory Council) and on Twitter (@dpac43)

CONTACT US:

Do you have any questions, comments, or suggestions?

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President's Corner, a message from DPAC President

We are a number of weeks into a new experience as parents, students and schools. The 2020 school year as we planned it has now been abandoned, both at school and with us in the PAC and DPAC settings. Although there is much to think about respecting a potential return before the end of this school year, including graduation options and transition to 2020-21 for continuing students, most of the inquiries we've received at DPAC revolve around the continuity of PAC governance. Our general response for those PAC's concerned about hosting their AGM is to consult the PAC Constitution and Bylaws. That is of course the place to start, but it may not provide you with any answers. This is truly a year like none previously contemplated.

Some have suggested that PAC AGM's should be postponed until the fall. However, across the province we are witnessing the majority of public meetings moving to online protocols. This includes Port Moody, Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, Anmore, Belcarra and SD43. This sets a fine precedent for us. In addition, we can look to the BCCPAC, the first of our PAC organizations hosting an AGM. BCCPAC will be using a webinar licence through Zoom which includes a polling mechanism. For most of our PAC's in SD43 a free virtual meeting application will likely suffice, although there may be a need to consider a voting mechanism. There are numerous options to overcome this such as voting by text or email and having an outgoing member or administrator assist with tabulating the vote. Of course, many positions will be filled by acclamation so this may not pose much of a barrier.

As we look forward into May, the plans for the last weeks of school will develop. This may provide opportunities for coming together but planning for your AGM likely needs to be put in place now so the proper notices can be sent to your membership. Although it may require additional organization and some creativity, I encourage all PAC's to proceed with their AGM's this spring.

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Letter to the Board, Budget Notes

The DPAC is very pleased to see the addition of the Special Public Meeting for Stakeholder input held in February. This change grants a true opportunity for input into the budget process prior to decision making for the release of the Preliminary Budget. We encourage the District to make this a permanent addition to the budget process.

In our review of the Preliminary Budget and Multi-Year Financial Forecast it is understandable, given the unforeseeable consequences of a pandemic, that the District is confronted with difficult decisions respecting the allocation of funding. The overall reduction in teaching positions by 37, which is approximately the equivalent teaching staff for two elementary schools, is of utmost concern to parents. Although the budget shortfall to be experienced is significant, it is an issue for parents that the individual students in the classroom will suffer the consequences for these cuts. We request that the District work with its partners to achieve the cost reductions with limited effect on the number of actual teachers in classrooms.

Our parents come to us with their concerns and we brought these to you in our Partner Group meeting earlier this year. During the February Stakeholder session many of these same issues were raised by CUPE and the SLC. These include inconsistency in school maintenance issues. Nobody wants the children of our district using washroom stalls with broken locks and sinks with taps that don't work. These issues in our schools need to be addressed in a timely manner which takes not just a maintenance work order prioritization system but also trades people and maintenance staff.

Bullying, in the school, outside the school and online, continues to be an issue of concern. Policies and procedures, Pink Shirt days and pamphlets are only one part of the answer. Staff training, staff time for relationship building and additional counselors are needed if we are to achieve any real success with this issue. DPAC can contribute through parent education but our students need your help.

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DPAC Elections

Our elections will be on May 27th, 2020. As this will be probably a Zoom meeting due to the COVID-19 restrictions, the DPAC executive is still figuring out the voting process during our elections. We will keep you informed.

At this point, we know for sure that our dear Treasurer, Edward Ram, will be relinquishing his position as his youngest son is graduating this year. He will help the new Treasurer to transition into their new role. Note that all the positions are open, from President to Member at Large. Maybe you can start to volunteer as a Member at Large? As such you can initiate your commitment with a small involvement, and participate as much as you can.

As we stated many times, the DPAC is only as strong as the people who volunteer their time. We encourage all those who want to make a difference in our District to consider running for a position on the DPAC Executive on May 27, 2020

Suggestions for parents and caregivers to keep their children learning at home during the COVID-19 pandemic

From: <https://www.openschool.bc.ca/keeplearning/>

Routine

Disruptions in routines can be stressful. A regular schedule helps maintain a sense of stability. As a family, it's good to set up a weekday schedule including: regular bedtime, wake-up and mealtimes, getting dressed and ready for school (even though they're at home), time for learning, time for breaks, daily physical activity, daily communication with friends and family.

Space to Work

Setting up home learning space to work can help children focus. If possible, the space should include: a quiet atmosphere, good lighting, a desk or table at a comfortable height for your child, a storage basket or bin to keep supplies (paper, pens, pencils, markers, books, etc.), access to a computer/tablet or other smart device if possible.

Helping your Child

How much involvement you have will depend on your child's age and needs. Following are suggestions designed for specific age and grade levels. General suggestions for children of all ages include: 1) Let your child see you're interested in what they're doing and be positive and cheerful in your approach. 2) Encourage positive communication with the child (to give and accept instructions). 3) Encourage the development of good work habits and help your child take pride in work well done. 4) Be patient with your child and yourself. This is a new experience for everyone and will take some time to adjust to. The most important thing is for your child to feel safe, loved and supported.



COVID-19 RESOURCES

The public health crisis created by the global spread of COVID-19 has presented unparalleled challenges for all. It has been a very terrifying month of March, and a very long month of April. We feel upset and sad for the sick people in our Province, Canada and the world. We have problems sleeping during the night and trying to focus during the day. We are all confronted with challenges, one of them, helping our children in their education. There is a myriad of resources the government has published, below some of them. Please never forget that you are not alone, and that we are all on the same boat. As a parent, please keep working hard and don't give up hope.

- ◆ COVID-19 Provincial Support and Information
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support>
- ◆ School District 43 Information re. COVID-19
[http://www.sd43.bc.ca/NewsEvents/Pages/COVID-19.aspx#/="](http://www.sd43.bc.ca/NewsEvents/Pages/COVID-19.aspx#/=)
- ◆ Ministry of Education. Frequently Asked Questions on Continuity of Learning
https://www.sd43.bc.ca/Lists/Documents/bc-ministry-of-education-questions-and-answers-continuity-of-learning-k-12-education_system.pdf
- ◆ Also, please check our Website under PARENTS RESOURCES, Community Resources

Below an excellent UBC blog created by Dr. Marina Milner-Bolotin, which includes resources to help you and your children during this process. Please search for the blog dated March 18, 2020 "LEARNING WITH YOUR CHILDREN IN THE TIMES OF QUARANTINE". Dr. Milner updates the blog frequently.

- ◆ <http://blogs.ubc.ca/mmilner/>

Maria Ledezma, Editor

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Executive Email Addresses

Here is a list of the 2019/2020 SD43 DPAC Executive emails. Please send us any questions, concerns or new ideas to present at DPAC meetings.

Marvin Klassen	President	president@dpac43.ca
Judi Zaklan	Vice President	vicepresident@dpac43.ca
Edward Ram	Treasurer	treasurer@dpac43.ca
Charlie Loo	Secretary	secretary@dpac43.ca
Maria Ledezma	Newsletter/Website Editor	newsletter@dpac43.ca
Shari O'Neill	Parent Education Coordinator	parented@dpac43.ca
Hui Wang	Health and Safety Coordinator	healthandsafety@dpac43.ca
Teri Towner	Parent Communication Coordinator	communication@dpac43.ca
Ally Wang	Member at Large 1	member1@dpac43.ca
Corrie Noble	Member at Large 2	member2@dpac43.ca
Will Davis	Member at Large 3	member3@dpac43.ca
Rayne Johnson	Member at Large 4	member4@dpac43.ca

Next DPAC General Meeting is

May 27th, 2020

"We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope."

— **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.**