



District Parent Advisory Council

DPAC Pulse

November 2020

DPAC Executive Updates

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Here are a few of the things the DPAC executive is working on:

Coquitlam Community Grant Program Open to PAC's!

Grants of up to \$10,000 are available to help organizations — registered and not registered — that are developing projects or adapting existing programs that benefit Coquitlam residents affected by the pandemic. The money can be used for salaries; however, operational costs such as rent or utilities are excluded. Visit <https://www.coquitlam.ca/csrpgrant> to apply.

Follow DPAC43 on Social Media and our Website

Follow us on Facebook (dpac 43 - District Parent Advisory Council) and on Twitter (@dpac43) to stay up to date on things happening with DPAC and the school district as a whole. Also, be sure to check out our website (www.dpac43.ca) for links to community and district resources, presentations from our general meetings, news and much more!

“I cannot always control what goes on outside. But I can always control what goes on inside.”

-Wayne Dyer

DPAC43 Outreach

If your PAC wants to have a DPAC executive attend one of your PAC meetings to talk about DPAC and what we offer to PACs in the District, please contact the office. We would be happy to schedule an executive to attend one of your meetings.

CONTACT US:

Do you have questions, comments, or suggestions? Are you looking to reach out to other PACs and their parents? If so, please contact the DPAC at:

Ph: 604.939.3690 || Email: office@dpac43.ca || Web: www.dpac43.ca || 1100B Winslow Avenue, Coquitlam V3J 2G3

NOTE: THE OFFICE IS CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE BUT WE CONTINUE TO BE AVAILABLE BY PHONE AND EMAIL.

President's Corner

A message from the DPAC43 President

As we hang our Christmas lights and close out November, we look back on a month of further concerns respecting the safety of our schools and our communities. Halloween was a quieter experience for most families. Remembrance Day services were another virtual attendance experience. Thankfully, although suffering exposures, our schools have avoided any outbreaks to date. Our communities are pressing forward thoughts of a post-COVID transition are in our minds.

One of the benefits of my role as DPAC President is the parents that one meets from around the district. In essence, it's the people that I've met, the conversations and laughter; that's my favourite part of holding the position. I miss the collegiality of our in-person meetings. I miss the conversation and sharing that takes place after PAC meetings, as do many of you. But then the next exposure notice arrives. No matter which school is named it seems I, or one of our executive, know families that attend. And we know their day is going to be one of concern and anxiety because it's happened in our schools, too.

So we are now living with COVID-19 and anxiety. It takes a toll on our emotional state, which plays out in our families, with our friends, and sometimes with strangers. Tempers are shorter than usual. Judgment is quick and intolerant. Too often we leave broken pieces behind as we make it through the day. However, there are mechanisms for coping with anxiety that limit the damage we do to ourselves and others.

We hope that this month's DPAC presentation on November 25 from Anxiety Canada will be of benefit to you and your families. And we invite you to our Parent Education evening on December 8th where Anxiety Canada will provide information on their Mindshift CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) app. The app gives you tools to take charge of your anxiety, instead of letting anxiety take charge of you. Please join us for what's sure to be an interesting and encouraging evening.

PAC Spotlight on Cape Horn Elementary School New Outdoor Classroom

Tara Lyons, DPAC Member at Large, had the pleasure of speaking with Hannah Ward about Cape Horn Elementary School's new outdoor classroom. Hannah is the former Chair of Cape Horn PAC and is currently the Grade 5 Rep and Fundraiser Coordinator.



Photo by Hannah Ward

Can you tell us about your new outdoor classroom?

We started to fundraise for this project 3 years ago when the school also started to focus more on the social emotional goals of the school. We have done a lot of great work in our school to use different environments to get kids into green zones, including: sensory pathways, neutral paint colours, and this outdoor classroom.

Our main goal was to get kids outdoors more and also to make it a useable space. The kids are loving the new space! They are even doing singing competitions at recess (a version of America's Got Talent!) The kids are using it in really creative ways.

Another priority for this project was to ensure we acknowledged our school is on Kwikwetlem First Nations territory and to ensure Indigenous culture was incorporated into the outdoor classroom. We were fortunate to have Peter Gong carve the arch for us. He spent 8 days at the school last year doing carvings. Classes were able to visit and learn from him while he was doing the carving. It was an incredible experience for the students.

What is some advice for PACs who want to build an outdoor classroom?

I would recommend thinking about the project in phases, otherwise it may be too overwhelming. I would also recommend choosing a site that doesn't need much drainage or ground prep by the District because that is expensive. Also think about how you may want to add onto the space in the future. We are hopeful that we can build a shelter and maybe even add some picnic tables in the future.

What would you tell PACs who are struggling due to Covid-19 protocols?

Anything you can do will be well received by the school. Ask yourself, what does the school really need this year? Maybe this is a time when you don't over-fundraise because there are limited opportunities. Also, kids are resilient and are seeing their friends at school. This will be over soon, and fun things will be back. Try to find the positives in your school if possible.

Does your PAC have a success story to share? Let us know and we will feature your story in an upcoming newsletter for our PAC community!.



Seasons Greetings

Next DPAC General Meeting

Wednesday 27 January 2021

“The great thing, then, in all education, is to make our nervous system our ally instead of our enemy.”

—William James