



District Parent Advisory Council

DPAC GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, November 26, 2025

7:00 PM - Virtual via ZOOM

ATTENDEES: Superintendent Nadine Tambellini, Assistant Superintendent Jeremy Clark, Trustee Chuck Denison, Dr. Bonita Squires, Chris Hilliker dpac vp, Darin Wong dpac, Jamie Manchester dpac, Nick Horning dpac, Jimmy Fung dpac, Todd Gelinis dpac, Sherie Bohorquez dpac, Madiha Kaleem dpac, Andrea dpac admin.

Regrets:Alaina Milicevic dpac.

Schools - Elementary: Aspenwood, Blakeburn, Cape Horn, Castle Park, Cedar Drive, Central, Coast Salish Elementary, Coquitlam River, Eagle Ridge, Hampton Park, Hazel Trembath, Glen, Glenayre, Heritage Mountain, Irvine, Kilmer, Lord Baden Powell, Mary Hill, Meadowbrook, Moody, Mountain View, Mundy Road, Nestor, Panorama Heights, Pleasantside, Porter, Smiling Creek, Walton, Westwood. **Middle:** Banting, Eagle Mountain, Maple Creek, Minnehada, Montgomery, Pitt River. **Secondary:** Gleneagle, Terry Fox, Heritage Woods, Pinetree, Port Moody,

Other Guests: Grace, Mike, Wendy, Kindra, Kiharas, Stan, Stephanie, Natalie, Zainab, Kimberly, Alejandra, Gagan, Rojin,

1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TERRITORY – Sherie Bohorquez

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Monty Middle, 2nded Pitt River Middle

3. APPROVAL OF OCT 29th 2025 MINUTES: Approved by Mary Hill, 2nded by Eagle mountain Middle.

4. TREASURER’S REPORT November 2025 - Jimmy Fung

- **General:** \$45,858.45
- **Gaming:** \$8,166.05
- **In -** \$2500 grant came in
- **Out -** telus, admin, payroll remittance

5. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT – Nadine Tambellini

- **Aug 23rd** - PVP and Managememnt LWB Working Session
- **Sept 23rd** - Superintendent Meeting with CTA and CUPE

Board of Education Public Meeting: Directions 2030 Feedback Survey/Overall Plan

- **Oct 6th** - Directions 2030 Survey out to partner groups, parents, community
- **Oct 14th** - Survey due - Had a lot of involvement at community, staff, and student level
- **Oct 20th - Nov 14th** - framework developed and formed by feedback
- **Nov 25** - Board of Education public board meeting - Draft framework
- **Nov 26 - Dec 12** - Final feedback from partner groups, PVPs and Management, DPAC, Advisories and SLC
- **Jan 13th** - Board of Education Public Meeting: final framework
- **Feb 1** - Directions 2030 strategic framework on website

- **Survey Categories-** learning and achievement, cultural responsiveness, community connectedness, and organizational foundations (staff only).
- **Survey intentions** - considering our initial themes: How important are the ideas? What is missing?
- **DRAFT Framework Poster** - receiving more feedback- Qs asked: First impressions? Issues? Clear priorities missing?

• **Inviting all DPAC School Reps to a meeting DEC 9th at ELC rooms 103 & 104 at board office at 6pm, 1-1.5 hours. - run by Nadine Tambellini and Stephen Whiffin.**

- **April 29th** - Meeting with Nadine Tambellini and Ken Hoff - talk about how to better communication with school board. Survey to PACS?

Q: Are there plans to address playground issues as part of the accessibility and inclusiveness? Playground committee? - **A.** Aware of the issues, lots of conversation, but no clear answer at this time. Websites to find potential grant options for playgrounds : *Habitat Systems Inc.* <https://www.habitat-systems.com/services/playground-grants-canada/> , *City of Coquitlam* <https://www.coquitlam.ca/1140/Spirit-of-Coquitlam-Grant> , & *TIRE Stewardship BC* <https://tsbc.ca/community=events-programs/the-tsbc-community-grant-program>

Q: What does strengthen instructional practices mean? **A.** It means teachers have what they need in tools and skills to tailor learning to all kids in the district.

Q: Personalized concept of deeper learning? What does it mean? AI? . **A.** Talking about basic strong learning practices. Not AI.

6. DISTRICT COMMITTEE REPORTS - *Will report back in January.*

7. PRESENTATION: *The Multilingual Brain: Learning Language in Today's World!*

Dr. Bonita Squires (Power Point Presentation will be at <https://dpac43.ca/documents/presentations>)

*Languages live and evolve within the communities that use them.
Languages die if children don't have access them. Kids keep languages alive.*

What is Language? Countable Noun and Uncountable Noun

- **Uncountable noun** - as a system - talking about the capacity for language we have as humans.

What is A "Language" - we tend to put language in 'boxes' by name, convenient but slightly inaccurate.

- More accurate to say language is a system along a spectrum - with dialects and idiolects - (eg. *we are using a North West Pacific English dialect*).
- **Dialect:** a form of a language particular to a region or group of people.
- **Idelect:** language & speech habits particular to each individual person

Language - 3 main components

- **Form** = structure, smallest units of languages. **Content** = meaning - semantics - vocabulary
- **Use** = function of language - pragmatics - skill as telling a story, or giving instructions.

How do children learn their 1st language?

- Language is actually just *shared* with children. No language is easier or harder to learn. Exposure is all that is needed.

Language Input - need good consistent quality, quantity, and exposure - a child will slowly build and construct a language based on amount of input.

- Language learning may be difficult if - child not receiving sufficient exposure to the above.

Motivation - children are motivated by the need to use the language with other people. (eg. A valued elder, favourite mentor)

Multilingualism = knowing several languages at different levels of mastery.

- May be more accurate to call it **Plurilingualism** = a complex hybrid understanding of multiple languages, as languages interact with each other in the brain.

How may people are multilingual? - about 60% of world are multilingual. *See slide.*

In SD43 - >10 languages spoken at home is SD43. *See slide.*

L1 help learn L2? YES! *See slide.*

- L1 (1st language) shares aspects of form, content and use with other languages. L1 is a 'scaffold' for learning L2 (2nd language).
- Like an Iceberg: Have a lot of interconnected language knowledge that we don't 'see' on the surface.

Conversation Canada. www.theconversation.com - online forum for academics to publish research findings in a short blog post style.

2nd Language Timing : *Simultaneous Bilingualism* vs *Sequential Bilingualism* - in both cases someone can learn a language really well, but more natural when simultaneous. *See slide*

PRESENTATION CONT... The Multilingual Brain - Learning Language in Today's World!

FRIM Outcomes (FRIM = French Immersion)

- English skills and academic success are the same for FRIM students and English-only students. Late FRIM Programs found to catch up to early FRIM Peers.
- Early and late have different strengths - late have stronger metalinguistic awareness.

Benefits of Multilingualism: FRIM programs introduced in the 1960s. Views & research expanded on benefits after 1950s.

Social and Emotional Benefits - There are many :D - *See slide*

Cognitive Benefits - early bilingualism can help learn other languages later in life,

- *and* can help delay the effects of aging - benefits increase for each additional language learnt.
 - Study used massive amount of people throughout Europe. Found that can delay effects of aging by ~2x, both with sensory difficulties and cognitive decline. (To note there are lots of other ways as well to delay the effects of aging - eg. Sudokus etc etc).

Maintaining Heritage/Home Language - research finds children benefit most, both socially and academically, when they use the *parents/guardians most fluent language(s)* at home.

- Use of their Home Language does **not** interfere/or make more difficult learning another language.

Multilingualism and Disabilities:

- For children with a LD (Language Disability) research shows multilingualism does **not** cause language disability or make difficulties in language learning worse. *See slide*.
- To note, children with a LD *need more time and exposure to each language* than those w/o an LD.
- Helps to have a **Family language Plan / Bilingual Action Plan** - gets people thinking intentionally about what are their hopes? Why they want to do this?

THE CONVERSATION - links to research. *See slide*.

General Recommendations & Summary

- *Human brains are primed to learn multiple languages.*
- *Children will learn any language that is useful to them in forming social relationships.*
- *Children with disabilities can and may benefit at learning multiple languages.*
- *Even if a language can only be partially acquired, is still a benefit to learning another language.*
- **Q: Parent of indigenous child: Suggestions for parents who are trying to help their children learn a language that is lost, important to their identity. A:** Trying to connect them to someone who speaks their heritage language would be ideal, but can take time to find mentors. There are learning online opportunities. Indigenous languages do have very different systems to the language.
- **Q: Dyslexia - seen as a learning disability. Would FRIM help with that challenge? A:** Dyslexia is a literacy based disorder and can cause challenges in math. A child can still learn multiple languages and benefit from that; but would need to look up specific benefits. To note, the formal definition of Dyslexia is in the process of being changed.
- **Q: In the case of a 7yr old autistic boy, whose 1st language is not English. Is there a benefit to speaking English at home? A:** Parents are fluent in both heritage language and English. The child could lose their heritage language if it is not spoken in a social environment. Recommend to keep heritage language if possible.
- **Q: How would you recommend advocating for continued and expanded investment in k-12 language education, based on your expertise in multilingualism and the demonstrated cognitive, academic, and social benefits of sustained language learning? A:** Policy is changed by stories. Real stories can strengthen an argument, with specific research that show the benefits of multilingualism.
- **Q: All languages are easy? Would like to disagree. What do you mean? For children? Or adults? A:** A child will learn a verbal/oral form of a language no matter which language they are exposed to. Their brain is already primed for that. Will learn different elements of a language at different rates. When talking

about reading and writing, the systems can be very different. Different languages are harder/easier in different ways. (eg. English more complex syntax. But easier to get started to learn as an adult.)

Looking Ahead - Speaker Line-Up for 2026 - next page!

8. LOOKING AHEAD - *Jamie Manchester*

- **BCCPAC Membership** - voted to renew our membership with bccpac. We promise as your dpac to follow up and advocate for transparency with bccpac. We commit to connect with other dpacs.

Speaker line up for 2026

- **January 28th** - Next General Meeting on Zoom - **Michael Harvey - BCs information and privacy commissioner** (<https://www.oipc.bc.ca/about/commissioner/>)
- **Feb 11th** - we are having a **stand alone meeting with Jodie Wickens - BC Minister for Children and Family Development** - On Zoom.
- **Feb 25th** is **Ben King - Trades** - last Zoom meeting.
- **April 29th** - **Superintendent Nadine Tambellini and Ken Hoff, followed by an Open Forum.**
 - 1st In Person Meeting - Extra snacks will be provided.
- **ADJOURNMENT:** 8:39 - Approved by Ecole Mary Hill. 2nded by Lord Baden Powell.

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