



CHAIR'S REPORT – 2008/2009

May 2009

2008/2009 was the third year of an intentional plan to develop both the recognition and relevance of the SD 73 District Parent Advisory Council. Building on two previous years of development in PAC education and communication, this year DPAC added a significant amount of focus and impact on the advisory portion of our mandate.

In 2006, DPAC recognized that there were three roles required for the SD 73 context:

- ***Education*** (of parents, PACs, other educational partners)
- ***Communication*** (with and between parents, PACs, and other educational partners)
- ***Advisory / Voice*** (to advise the Board of Education and other educational partners of the collective voice of parents/PACs in SD 73)

A snapshot of the successes and challenges for each of the goals...

1. Education

Successes...

- 2 PAC Executive networking events (attendance: 29 +18)
- 2 “Help I’ve Been Elected to the PAC Executive” sessions (included development of resource CD / website resource material) (attendance: 18 + 8)
- Fundraising 101 Training Day + Tradeshow (attendance: 29)
- 1 keynote parent speaker: Steve Dotto (attendance: 25)
- School Planning Council In-service (collaboration with SD 73) (attendance:

Challenges...

- While parents are attending these sessions, the sustainability of providing them requires continued commitment from the School District for in-kind funding
- The number of events possible cannot be sustained or increased without additional human resources/volunteers
- Participant numbers seem to be dropping somewhat
- PACs continue to struggle with basic governance/organizational challenges that require coaching, mentoring, and capacity building to address

Recommendations...

- DPAC work with SD 73 Administration to develop a plan for funding 2009/2010 speakers series as well as parent delegation to the 2009 SD 73 “Tech it Up” conference
- DPAC education committee re-evaluate capacity to organize speakers series with ad hoc support from PAC representatives and develop sustainable strategy for PAC/Parent education.
- DPAC consider forming a “flying squad” or advocacy support team and inviting BCCPAC advocacy project to train/support development

2. Communication:

Successes...

- Over 80 parents currently are included in the DPAC email distribution list and receive regular updates, information, and ideas
- A website is currently in development on the SD 73 host site (should be completed Fall 2009)
- PAC registration form now includes email address component
- School principals / secretaries regularly include DPAC information in newsletters and communiqués

Challenges...

- Email distribution list is currently maintained on DPAC Chair account
- Changes in PAC executive positions are not tracked centrally to ensure communication
- Contact information for PAC executives / DPAC representatives does not come to DPAC until late fall
- PACs do not currently have a way to communicate with each other
- There is no central repository for DPAC/PAC/Parent resources

Recommendations...

- DPAC continue to develop website
- Website include a list-serve function (or another list-serve be developed/implemented)
- Website include resource repository (or another tool developed)
- DPAC flying squad or executive portfolios assigned with tracking and developing mechanism for communication with each SD 73 PAC

3. Advisory Mandate:

Successes...

- DPAC meeting attendance continues to increase and DPAC representatives are beginning to use the *DPAC Accountabilities* worksheets to liaise and gather input from their PACs.
- Notices of Motion are discussed and advice is provided regarding modifications (SD 73 Policy Committee has revised policies based on this input).
Policies of note for 2008/2009:
 - Policy 227 – Parent Advisory Council Non-Public Funds
 - Policy 1006.1, 1006.4 – Anaphylaxis
 - 506.1 – 506.6 – School Fees, Hardship, etc.
 - 530.1 – School Planning Councils
 - 709.6 – Specialty Academies
- A position on Foundation Skills Assessments was ratified. (Based on survey, public meeting, and PAC input)
- Public presentations and input were provided to the Board of Education and SD 73 Administration regarding school fees and FSAs.
- Transportation: SD 73 DPAC succeeded in having BCCPAC pass a motion regarding transportation funding at their 2009 AGM. (Letters to Ministry of Education and Kamloops media regarding this issue as well.)
- Participation on SD 73 District Committees: Assessment, Social Responsibility, Leadership
- As a result of the 5 year plan developed by SD 73 last year, DPAC has been asked to assist in the development of a strategy for parent leadership.

Challenges...

- DPAC meetings continue to be long and full – policy/position development is being addressed more often; however, PACs continue to struggle with providing informed input to these discussions
- BCCPAC membership fell to 28 members and only 13 proxies went to the AGM
- Timelines for gathering voice are often short – mechanisms are not developed enough for short timeline.
- Volunteer capacity/numbers to continue attending committees or develop voice is low.
- SD 73 PACs are not certain which issues to take to DPAC (or what the process is...or even what the issues might be)

Recommendations...

- Continued development of formal structure for DPAC position statements including mechanism for garnering PAC/parent input.
- DPAC executive / representative “portfolio” structure for capturing emerging issues and positions.
- Continued support for PACs regarding BCCPAC engagement
- Review of SD 73 Policy Manual, District Committees, and Emerging Issues to identify “priority” issues
- Development of issue tracking strategy

With my thanks to all of the DPAC representatives and representatives of educational partners for the work of the last 3 years...I wish DPAC continued success and a productive 2009-2010 school year!!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paula".

Paula Schmidt
SD #73 DPAC Chair (Out-going)