

Draft Minutes - May 17, 2022 PAC Meeting

Erin Yorke and Simon Sun - PAC Co-Chairs

Erin Yorke began with a Land Acknowledgement: *We gratefully acknowledge the lands of the Squamish, Musqueam and Tsleil-Waututh nations on which we live, work, learn and play.* Erin showed a paddle keychain she had received from Chas Desjarlais (nehiyaw-Métis) District Principal Indigenous Education, VSB. Chas spoke about helping “to echo each other”. She said the key chain helped remind her of the importance of remaining open, to listen and to learn as we paddle through the journey of reconciliation and truth. She noted she wanted to share something personal connected to the traditional land acknowledgement.

Michael Singh - McKechnie School Principal's Update

- It's May already! Lots of fun activities coming up, including Sports Day May 20. Bike Parade will kick off Sports Day again. McKechnie Alumni High School volunteers are helping out. Parents can watch. Thanks to PAC for helping out with snacks.
- Plant sale Wednesday afterschool in undercover area. Proceeds go to Garden Project.
- Bike to school week coming up.
- A bike safety program has been lined up for the Kindergarten classes. After that, older classes will receive some traffic safety instruction.
- Police officers coming to help with traffic safety around the school in a couple of weeks.
- Some fun Grade 7 Grad activities are being planned by teachers. Nice to return to traditions that we haven't seen in a couple years.
- Really enjoying McKechnie so far and looking forward to end of year.

Leah Collings - Volunteer and Friday Night Fun Fair Update

- It's back on! Friday, June 3! Lots of feedback from the change of name. Reasoning is after Covid, we don't want to promote a “Fever” party.
- Activities back: carnival games, bouncy castles, face painting, air brush, bingo...
- We need a lot of volunteers. Every family should volunteer 1 hour for the evening.
- Need parent participation for class Raffle boxes (most proceeds to Garden Project).
- VSB not allowing pot lucks (no home baked goods). So, we'll be doing “Candy walk” instead of Cake Walk this year.
- Not many food trucks this year, as we weren't sure how many people would want to eat communally this year. So...eat dinner at home but snack at Friday Night Fun Fair.
- Mr. TubeSteak will be there (very popular in past and fast-serving)
- It will be really nice to connect with McKechnie community for the first time since 2019.
- Really big “thanks” to Leah, as planning and organizing has had to happen all at once!
- Also, talk it up with friends. Lots of newer McKechnie families won't have been to one. We need to get the word out.

PAC Budget Update - Geoff Kennedy, PAC Treasurer:

- Most spending will happen with end-of-year activities.
- Pizza lunch back in full swing, earning \$1000 in March/ April, with over 120 orders/week.
- C'est Mon Cafe raised close to \$1200 for March/April, with 797 meals ordered.
- C'est Mon Cafe hot lunch is back up to two days per week (Mon/Wed)
- Any concerns contact PAC. Or contact C'est Mon directly. They are receptive.
- PAC will fund first part of Garden Project: about \$4000, to fund the limestone base for the garden's raised beds.
- Garden Committee has already fundraised a lot, it's exciting PAC can help out too.

Pizza Provider- Christina Saunders, Pizza Lunch Coordinator -

- Proposal: Switch from Pizza Hut to Dominos as provider. Pizza Hut doesn't allow school accounts, so Christina had to pay out of pocket. Dominos will accept school account. Also, Dominos now offers a paper box with two slices at the same cost as Pizza Hut.
- Ordering some Dominos for Sports Day volunteers on Friday to sample. Can proceed after.
- Traditionally, Grade 7's help on pizza day and half of pizza lunch sales goes to grad activities
- Thanks to Christina Saunders for all her hard work!

Grade 7 Graduation committee- Tiffany Lee

- 8 parents participating in committee. Very excited to participate in full graduation ceremony again. Graduation happens on Thursday, June 23.
- Grade 7's have chosen the theme "Outer Space". Library will be fully decorated by parents who will serve grads and teachers a dinner, followed by a graduation ceremony in gym (also fully decorated by students and teachers)
- After Grad ceremony, students change and the traditional teacher vs student water fight takes place. Evening closes with dessert and photo booth.
- Grade 7 parent volunteers still needed to help with decorating and dinner.
- Grade 6 parent volunteers needed to help with dinner and clean up. This an opportunity for Grade 6 parents to see how the evening works for when they need to run it the following year.
- PAC also funding an International themed lunch for Grads on Thursday, June 16

Parent Education workshop- *Anxiety and Children* with Andrea Sharpe held on April 21st

- If you couldn't attend, handouts and resources have been posted on PAC website; really super, practical resources.
- Also, parents can always reach out to McKechnie school counsellor, Siobhan Doyle.

DPAC highlights- Simon Sun attended the District PAC monthly general meeting.

- Asian Heritage Month presentation; Reminder of how racism harmed Asian community historically, and resulting city-wide apology. Also info on how to raise awareness amongst parents about the many Asian communities in Vancouver.
- Also info about closure of the Multi-Age Cluster Program.
- Advocates for climate sensitive adaptation presented. Provided different perspectives on how parents and community can raise climate awareness among our children.
- Any parents are welcome to attend DPAC meetings: Vancouverdpac.org

Parent friendships group (Debbie Lin) & **Diverse Learner Groups** (Naomi Johnson)- update

Friendship Circle: A group of parents looking to meet, connect and build our parent community. For more information contact Debbie Lin debbielin517@gmail.com

Diverse Learners Parents Group: For parents of kids with various learning challenges. Parents have met a couple times, including an after school playdate. Will have another in the next week or two. Contact Naomi Johnson for more information at naomi@happyjoy.com

-For information on both groups please see PAC Website.

PAC AGM June 14- Erin

- Will be in person in the library! Child Care will be provided in Ms. Pawliuk's room.
- Upcoming PAC Exec vacancies: Co-chair, Communications, Treasurer, Volunteer Coordinator
- Sitting on the PAC Exec is a great way to know what's going on in the school. Please reach out to an exec member for more info if you are interested.

After/Before School Programs-

Writer's Group 4-7 with Nancy Hundal: 6 students cover rotating topics. Ms. Hundal is interested in continuing in- person in September.

Vancouver Youth Theatre - ongoing; contact Ms. Koke if interested

McKechnie & Magee Band Program Update:

Tiffany Lee provided some background and context to the current McKechnie Band Program:

- Few years ago VSB cut band programs across district, including McKechnie. Schools had to come up with their own programs if they wanted one. PAC stepped in and helped continue the program, but a year later needed to find a new provider.

- In 2018, they got in touch with Vancouver Pops, who offered two programs, one for total beginners (starting with Grades 4&5) as well as an experienced group.

- Cost was \$15/\$17 per class. Performances held at Christmas Concert and in June.

- Rehearsals held at McKechnie, before school: very convenient to parents.

- Covid hit and Band Program forced online; continued to offer private and group lessons, some in person lessons and had an end of year online performance.

- VSB didn't allow 3rd party rentals in schools for 2021/2022 school year, so no program.

- VSB will allow 3rd party rentals in 2022/2023. Gearing Up, Young Rembrandts and Chess Club will be held in McKechnie again.

- Many parents would like the McKechnie Band program to return to school as well.

- In 2021 **Magee** started a program for Grade 6/7 students to feed into Magee Band Program

- First offered to Maple Grove students (no band program) then extended to McKechnie

- Lessons at 3:15 at Magee. Many parents find this challenging.

- McKechnie program starts Grade 4, so we could still have McKechnie program and then students could move into Magee program.

- Part of reason some parents are able to participate is because program at McKechnie, on site.

- Also, open to Grades 4&5 whereas Magee only open last year to Grade 6/7

- It's positive for kids to have opportunity to learn when younger. Set up kids to learn more earlier and then to make a natural progression to Magee.

- Simon Sun said his son had started the McKechnie band in Grade 4 and had tried the Magee program this year, for Grade 6, and that it was a little difficult because it was right after school. Definitely beneficial for those with little experience. Sees both programs as useful. Depending on needs, parents could choose either or both. The more programs the better.

- Leah Collings said she had appreciated the opportunity offered her daughter to pursue band as she had been in Gr 4 the year the VSB program was cut. She said she was in support of a Band Prog at McKechnie to expose students to musical learning with an instrument; that it was really popular with a lot of families, so she would hate to see it go.

Michael Singh noted he was new to school, so when Tiffany approached him hoping to have Band program back in Sept., he first needed to talk to staff and investigate Magee program.

- This year, Magee Strings Orchestra started a program and decided to include McKechnie. (their first try to see how it would go. It was an attempt to bolster program at Magee.)

- Conflict for him: like the fact we have music for students. However, Magee (VSB) program is free. Conflict b/c paid program at school possibly taking away from a public school program open to everyone. Also, VSB starting to return funding to Music programs at schools.

- Recognizes there was a big void when program first canceled, and so great PAC put something together to fill void.

- However, might be convenient for parents yet not convenient for people working at school. (Band program takes up teaching space).

- He noted that he had met that day with the Magee program teachers at McKechnie. Result:

- Both a Strings Program and a Band Program will be offered and they've agreed to offer a beginners tier and an advanced tier for next year.
 - They have also agreed to include Grade 5's. He feels they are being as accommodating as possible. Teachers are putting their own (volunteer) time into it.
 - Realize not at school site, but Magee high school student volunteers will be helping McKechnie students (many of whom will be going to Magee themselves) so it's a nice opportunity for students to help and build community.
 - As well, wanted to respect thoughts and position of Mr. D, McKechnie's full time Music Specialist Teacher who also does Music Prep.
 - It's a complicated decision and not an easy one as he wants parents to be happy, but he's encouraged by how accommodating Magee teachers have been.
 - Suggested in the upcoming year, see if VSB program is worthwhile and if not, look at bringing back McKechnie Band program the following year.
- Tiffany proposed that the PAC only promote VSB/Magee program for September and then revisit in January the opportunity to have the in-school program.
- Michael agreed that would be a good compromise.

Discussion and Questions:

- Ideally Band is in school; wasn't Annie B. Jamieson able to keep their Strings Program?
 - Jamieson an Immersion program so set of core subjects, might be that Strings is one of their "Prep" subjects. Quite a few schools don't have a music specialist.
- Haven't heard of VSB bringing back funding for Strings at Elementary level?
- VSB did a Music Survey. As a result, there's a push to bring Music Prep back to all schools. Hasn't heard specifically about Strings.
- Why can't the programs coexist? If parents willing to pay?
 - One issue is space: Teaching space not available in morning when Band is using Music Room
- Erin summed up: moving forward PAC will advertise Magee Program and then have a look in fall and into January and possibly revisit McKechnie Band program.
- Suggestion: We could help families connect through walking groups or carpools so they can get to Magee for 3:15.

Erin thanked everyone for expressing the history and considerations going into this decision. Also appreciate hearing from parents about value of McKechnie program. Any other questions or concerns please reach out to PAC.

- Asked Mr. Singh to pass on to teachers "thanks" for all the extra work they are doing right now (track and field, graduation, etc.)
- Reminder: Two track meets hosted at McKechnie. Come out and cheer students on.

Moved: Tiffany Lee **Seconded:** Simon Sun to pass minutes of April 14 meeting

Motion Carried

The meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Next Meeting will be held Tuesday, June 14 at 7:00pm.

Email: yourmckechniepac@gmail.com

Website: www.mckechniepac.ca