

# PAC October Meeting Minutes

## 1. PAC President's Remarks and Welcome

Introduction of Current PAC

President - Mike Elkoussy  
Vice-President - Megan Cindric  
Treasurer - Lisa Charlston  
Secretary - Megan Livingston

PAC is the voice of the parents. We advise the school board on student matters, we enhance the school experience for students and families and we build community in the school and our neighbourhood.

Everyone is on the PAC All parents, guardians and caregivers are PAC members. The Executive is here to help facilitate, organize and communicate.

The principles of our PAC are: transparency, collaboration and communication.

**PAC meetings are not the 'go-to' space for Principal/Staff/Parent conversations.** We are into building community and school experiences, consider what needs to be included in a meeting, and what can go 'offline'. Share your ideas and questions for the Principal on our PAC website, in advance, so that we can all be ready and engaging.

**2. The addition of a new rule to our bylaws was presented.** *"The PAC executive may, from time to time, consent by executive vote to spend up to \$200 on items that are urgent, time sensitive or essential. In the event that the amount is over \$200, the PAC Exec must consult with the PAC members by email survey."*

There was no further discussion or questions and the above will be put to a vote at our November meeting.

3. Outside businesses often contact the PAC asking to reach our members. A discussion was held regarding how members feel about the PAC including information about local businesses in upcoming emails.

**VOTE:** Are you interested in our newsletters being sponsored by local businesses?

**Passed - 79% in favour**

4. **Halloween Movie Night** is back! October 28th - Hotel Transylvania will be shown in the gym along with pizza and bake sales! Doors open at 5:30, movie starts at 6:00.

*\* it was requested that the date be communicated asap to parents*

*\* it was suggested that the link to the PAC website's new calendar of school events be included in every email to parents*

## 5. Saleema Noon Follow-Up

First, a big thank you to Genny for getting it all organized - this was no small task!

Staff reached out to the PAC with their feedback on the workshops:

*Saleema is a kind, warm, and engaging educator who delivered a relevant Sexual Education workshop. The only issue was that the content was all material that every classroom teacher, regardless of grade level, will have delivered at some point in the year. It was also on the less than engaging side. As a teaching staff we would recommend the PAC not book Saleema next year and save the funds for another project.*

It will be a decision for another year as to whether she is booked again.

During discussion it was asked if we could survey the teachers or even look at seeing if someone can teach the teachers how to speak specifically to gender diverse kids.

Jonathan offered to send out a survey to get all teachers' feedback, with questions provided by PAC so that we can get direct feedback from the teachers. Mike will work on this with Jonathan and results will be presented to PAC.

## **6. Treasurer's Report**

Gaming: \$4,339.56  
PAC Account: \$6,025.51

Total: \$10,365.07

Gaming funds for this year should come in around February - Lisa is expecting approximately \$4700. We have three calendar years to use these funds.

## **7. General Funding Request from Ms. Williams**

"I am reaching out to ask for help with the cost of professional development for our primary team for explicit teaching about sentence structure." The price is \$560.00, which includes 6 hours of training and materials. It also includes the shipping cost.

Discussion:

Question as to why teachers are not going to school board for this type of funding request. Jonathon answered that each teacher receives between \$75 to \$100 per teacher per year from the School Board and that any surplus costs need to be covered by the teachers personally.

Question as to if teachers can request more money from the school board for something as important as literacy. Jonathon clarified that all teachers are offered free professional support from the school board, but as per above, they will only receive once per year their \$75-\$100 allotment for anything extra.

Question as to if the training be available on an ongoing year-to-year basis, making it perhaps more valuable than a one-off for just this year.

Ms. Williams will be consulted for clarification and a vote will be held at a later date.

## **8. Outdoor space shrub removal**

This has been a problematic area for many years - used as a toilet, drug paraphernalia and garbage disposal area etc and kids like to play there. It also blocks sight lines to and from the undercover area.

Jonathan has requested that VSB remove shrubs, which leads us to ask, what do we want to do with the newly opened area?

One idea put forward is to have an outdoor learning area. Photos were shown of Lord Beaconsfield's outdoor classroom. Flat stones can each seat 5-6 kids, stones are perfectly flat so kids can write on them with paper. PAC is proposing that we turn the area into an outdoor learning space/unstructured play area.

**We are looking for thoughts from PAC members - do you support us going forward with this plan?** We could use gaming funds for something like this.

It was brought up that there is a lack of a proper sandpit on the playground.

Megan Cindric will look into options for this newly proposed area and present a budget and ideas at a future meeting.

### **9. Buddy Bench - Variety Grant - presented by Ariella**

Variety has a grant opportunity coming up - the deadline is end of October. They are willing to match up to \$10,000 for a project that would promote inclusivity. The cost of the project would be split 50/50 between the PAC and Variety.

Ariella would like a buddy bench, something that is especially good for neurodivergent kids who may not know how to ask to play with other kids. Sitting on the bench signifies that you want to play so if another kid sees you sitting there they will know that you would like someone to play with. There are two of these benches at Lord Selkirk. We could also look at adding some accessible playground equipment on the same application.

The bench would cost around 1400 plus tax and shipping and an inclusive swing seat would be 1477 plus shipping and taxes. We do not have any final numbers.

The decision was made to take this offline and once we have hard numbers we can come back to this via an email to parents.

### **10. Pumpkin Patch at Kingsgate Mall!**

Kingsgate Mall management wants to bring back the pumpkin patch!

They will donate pumpkins. The younger kids will decorate their pumpkins, the older kids will carve them. They will all be put on display at the mall.

**11. Request for Ideas for a holiday appreciation event for our teachers** - please let us know your ideas via the website suggestion box asap!

### **12. Holiday Craft Market - Kathryn**

Last year's Holiday Season fundraiser raised approximately \$1500. A lot of schools do a holiday craft fair and this seems like a simple thing to put together. We would charge a

flat fee for a table. We will provide the table and crafters can sell their stuff. We could do a bake sale, hot chocolate sales and sell kids' crafts. This would be a combination fundraiser and community event. We could take orders for the holiday fundraiser at the same time.

**Vote - 100% yes!**

### **13. FIDO Committee Update - Kirk**

Kirk summarized the history of the FIDO committee and emphasized that their role is to try to get the city and the school board on the same page with how to address the ongoing issue of off leash dogs on our school property.

Feel free to email them - [mtpfido385@gmail.com](mailto:mtpfido385@gmail.com)

Ultimately this is about creating a safer space around the school. The threats include - holes in the field, feces on the ground and dogs off leash chasing children. This is an ongoing issue.

They are organizing to present at the School Board meeting in November. We need a proper dog park in East Mount Pleasant.

A request was made for the Fido committee put together a one-pager about their history.

One of their dog signs is upside down and will be righted.

### **14. Principal's Report**

Orange Shirt Day was a success. They had hoped to do an assembly but many staff members were off due to Covid. Dena Galay, our indigenous educator went class to class to give students age-appropriate background information regarding residential schools as a lead up to the day.

Oct 24 - Alex, the artist in residence, will start working with the students on "knowing themselves and their personal stories."

Terry Fox Run- thank you to all parents who were able to support this fundraiser.

District News - at the end of June the Board voted to go ahead with next phase of Olympic Village school construction. It will take between 400-500 students and will be located at the West end of Olympic Village, just South of the island near the fenced-in dog park. There is no projected opening date thus far.

A big thank you to the PAC for providing Saleema Noon - lots of great feedback was had from parents. Saleema praised the school for being ahead of the norm for accepting students of all identities. We have work to do still, but she was very impressed with our students and what they knew about gender identity and inclusion.

Every year the school is given the correct number of teachers for the projected number of students. Our final number, though, depends on how much overflow we actually take. We did not get the overflow we thought we would. MTP was originally staffed for

12 divisions and one teacher was pulled as the extra division was not necessary, so we now have 11.

Meet the Teacher night happened.

Next week we have goal setting conferences. This will be a discussion about where the students are now and what their goals will be.

There was a questions about FSA (Foundation Skills Assessment) for grades 4 and 7. Participation is a parent choice - you choose whether you want your child to take part. The ministry says these are valuable tests because they adjust curriculum based on results thereof. The Teacher's Union says it is not a good measure. Jonathon says it is totally fine either way for each parent to decide what is best for their child.

### **Ask the Principal**

*1. Could we please have an updated staff list on the school website?*

Class list will be updated the website. The school has been short staffed. Jonathon will send out a list of all divisions and teachers.

*2. Since the start of school, there have been several instances of adults unrelated to the school being on the school grounds during school hours. Specifically, there were two men on the grass field over a lunch time in September yelling at the kids. Then a few weeks ago, there were two men digging in the school's dumpster during school hours. In general, it seems that the school is becoming less safe. What is the school doing about student safety in general and is the the opportunity to install more gates/fencing?*

Staff on school grounds depends on the time of day. There are two staff before school on duty as a presence, not for care. Recess/lunch has three supervision aids plus approximately five ssa's outside (to supervise kids with special needs). If there is an adult who comes on school property (not walking through, but lingering or loitering or approaching) a staff member will tell them to move on. If a child is approached, children are told to not talk to people they don't know. If a stranger talks to them they are to go to one of above adults to tell them. One aid is stationed on the playground, one on the grassy field, and one on the west side. All have walkie talkies and Jonathon has one and is to be called as needed and he comes out to address the situation.