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## Minutes for PAC AGM Meeting, May 12, 2021

**\*\*Meeting conducted via Zoom\*\***

**Attendance:** no in-person attendance. Moderated by PAC executive members (Teresa Bubela, president, Tiffanie Hanoski, vice-president, Caren Morris, treasurer, Tuire Tammilehto, secretary) Total of 21 participants present.

**Call to Order** at 7:03pm by Teresa.

Adoption of meeting agenda by Caren and seconded by Julena.

Adoption of meeting minutes from previous PAC meeting. Moved by Tiffanie and seconded by Julena.

### **Standing Items**

#### **Communications Update**

- **President's Report:**

*This school year has certainly been like no other. Due to the limits that COVID has placed on our schools and communities, we've all had to adjust how we approach our children's education. Fortunately so far (knock wood), the families that chose in-person learning this year have had schools stay open. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to the Torquay educators, administrators and staff who have made our kids feel safe and welcome every day.*

*It's fair to say that we've all experienced some disconnection, from each other and from our school. Without the usual in-person activities or even just those quick conversations at pickup and drop-off that we used to take for granted, it's been challenging for the PAC to find ways to keep our fellow parents and caregivers informed and engaged, and most importantly, to help them feel supported at this time. I'm happy to say even with all the limitations and restrictions, the PAC found ways to continue.*

*We found ways to fundraise and to offer parent education opportunities to families, like the recent Allison Rees virtual event. Torquay was one of a small number of Victoria schools that successfully ran a Fun Lunch program this year. We launched a vibrant collection of Spirit Wear items for the kids to show their Torquay pride. We supported families in need when called upon, and celebrated our wonderful teachers at the recent Staff Appreciation lunch. We helped fund classroom initiatives like the Elementary Woodshop Program and the ongoing restocking of our emergency kiosk.*

*All of this was done through the efforts of parent volunteers and our extraordinary PAC executive. I want to take a moment to acknowledge these dedicated parent volunteers and speak to how much their efforts impact what our PAC can accomplish. As the saying goes, "Many hands make light work." I know all too well that this year, our hands have been very full, and at times too full. Our PAC exec members have each taken on tasks outside of their role. Fortunately we've also had other helpers like Clare and Julena, who stepped up to make the Purdy's fundraisers and Spirit Wear happen. Stacey has been keeping families informed via the weekly PAC email and Facebook updates. Tuire has done both the secretary role as well as organizing the Fun Lunches. Caren has worn so many hats I lost count at five extra jobs she was doing aside from treasurer!*

*All this to say that things have continued this year, but if we want things to return to how we remember them before all of this, we need other volunteers to take on some of the small but important jobs that make things possible. Some of those jobs were listed in the letter that went out to families recently, and we're really excited by the response so far. It makes me feel very optimistic about what we can accomplish together as a PAC. Some of you have asked if you can be added to a list of general volunteers without committing to a specific role and the answer is yes, absolutely. Everything helps!*

*To wrap up, I'm feeling hopeful about what lies ahead for the PAC and, and that we can all breath a little easier in the not so distant future.*

- **Update to SD61 Budget Proposal:** There are still opportunities to get involved. We draw your attention to the Torquay PAC website and Facebook site. Details are added there as they come in. Also, SaveSD61 Music, Facebook group has many members now and is extremely informative alongside SD61 concerns, Facebook group. On May 17 a protest called, "The Last Stand" is being held. It is where families will stand from the trustees office on Boleskine to downtown Victoria. Sign up for your space! Links can be found on the Torquay PAC Facebook page and website.
- **PAC Executive for 2021/2022:** With the exception of Tiffanie, Teresa, Caren, Tuire, have all agreed to stay on in their roles if voted in. A parent named Danielle Parandeh has volunteered to help as Vice President. She is currently a PAC Rep for one of our classes. She also has volunteer experience on other boards.
- Board is opened for other nominations. No other nominations presented. Motion by Devon to approve these 4 as the Executive for 2021/2022 school year. Seconded by Julena.
- **Volunteers:** A letter was sent to parents requesting help. Quite a few of the roles have been filled, THANK YOU! Please do not hesitate to express your interest as the roles can be shared. If you can offer your help for a month or a job at a time, it will be greatly appreciated.

### Financial Update

- **Treasurer's Report:** This school year has been a shorter one due to Covid. I cannot speak to the Budget for 2021/2022 year at present. An update will be presented at the first PAC meeting in September.
- Income this year comes from a variety of avenues: spirit wear, The Village fundraiser, Finn and Izzy, Bees Wax wraps, Purdy's, Mabels Labels, Benjamin Moore Paints and the donation drive from the beginning of the school year. There was also Thrifty's/Fairways cards, the gaming grant, and the Fun lunch profit (final revenue will be available at the end of the school year).
- Expenses in the budget were created for a normal year and therefore many have not been used. We have used funds for education, spirit wear, wood-shop kits, butterfly kits, aquarium supplies, the planting program, hot lunch software, earthquake kits, missing meal supports for sponsoring families, and the music program funding.
- What remains is how to allocate funding for the coming year as we move through Covid and out of it again.
- The Executive will look at each budget line item to determine its accuracy and necessity prior to presenting it to the membership in September.
- Lois comments: Reading Recovery line item is misleading. Suggests that it should read: Home Reading Books.
- **Fundraiser Update:**
  - Thrifty's smile cards:** Please be aware that the **program is changing**. As of June 15, 2021, any money loaded onto the cards will no longer benefit the school directly. If money already exists on cards, it will be honoured. Their new program format will be for schools to purchase pre-

loaded cards and then a percentage of these proceeds will be sent back to the school. It's a big initial commitment to purchase pre-loaded cards. This needs discussion amongst all PAC members prior such an investment.

**-Fun lunch update:** We have added new dates for White Spot and ordering is now open. Cook and Create was revered as a new healthy option for fun lunches. Look for more dates in the future with a simpler entree option for picky eaters. There have also been questions of the return of Sushi. This calls for sorting and labeling of the entrees by parents. Due to the limitations imposed by Covid, it couldn't happen this year but we hope for its return next year! Finally a big Thank You to the office staff, Kim and Kate, all that helped deliver food to the classrooms, and Lois. Without your collaborative efforts fun lunches would not have been possible.

### **Event Update**

- **Spirit Wear:** A second round of ordering is now open! **Deadline is Sunday May 16.** Currently there are 6 orders with 12 items total. In the future, gear will be sold twice per year with office or classroom pickup. Christina Apa offers to help with distribution as needed. First round of ordering for 2021/2022 will be in November. The second round would be in the spring.
- **Staff Appreciation:** Feedback had been extremely positive from the staff luncheon. It was well received by the staff and we accomplished showing them how much we appreciate all their efforts. Thank you Caren for organizing! Perhaps next year we will in a position to return to potluck style lunches and have it facilitated by a Staff Appreciation Coordinator.
- **Parent Ed Nights:** Recently we held the Allison Revs presentation, Sidestepping the Power Struggle. Feedback showed that daytime presentations are convenient for our parents. In some cases both parents were able to attend the presentation. We hope to provide more of these next year in collaboration with other schools.

### **Administration Report**

*Lois Bender, principal*

- Huge thank you for the staff appreciation lunches! It was a relief and enjoyment to have someone do something for them.
- Despite the challenges, we have moved forward to promote school culture. We are continuing with mini zoom assemblies. The last one was at the beginning of May for Music Monday. This day is created and celebrated by educators. Currently your children receive 110 minutes of music per week. The assembly began with Oscar Peterson's 1950 clip, then introduced a bio of this musician. This was followed by a compilation of videos/clips from all over our school district. We had kids speak about what music meant to them. Even the grade 2's spoke about how everyone can be leaders.
- Our next Zoom assembly is themed around Caring for the Earth in 2 weeks time.
- In September, 48-49 new Kinder-gardeners will be coming to Torquay. In-person events will be held in the 2020 format of outside meet and greets. Kiosks will be set up for staff to meet new students. Activity/information bags will be handed out and there will perhaps be an electronic slideshow.
- **Reminder to parents: if you are planning to move out of our catchment, please let the office staff know as soon as possible.** The numbers are tight for children coming in.
- School planning for next year is underway with teachers starting to build classes. This is a multiple draft process. Each group will have a good variety of students.
- We are looking forward to a return of all our students in September. Hybrid, immune suppressed, home schooling/distance learning will not be operating next year.
- What will September look like? Stay tuned. We will see!

- We have had to look at our school schedule. The district is trying to have congruency within our elementary schools as this year has seen all different schedule timing. Our TOC's struggled with the variations in timetables. We are seeking clean breaks for TOC's so they can get from one school to another.
- Our prime goal is safety for our students. This year teachers have stayed in the classroom with "low key learning" during lunch times. This has been in the form of video clips, music, review of afternoon schedule, talking about social responsibilities, etc during lunch. Contractual needs of teachers is being met when children are out to play.
- In the old model, EA's supervised children while teachers had breaks. Torquay now has only 5 EA's. With 3 needing to be stationed in each kindergarten class, it would leave 2 for the rest of school to supervise hand washing, monitoring eating, and moving safely in/out of school. Using grade 5 students to supervise was found to put a lot of pressure on them. Their maturity was not quite there to effectively discipline their peers.
- As EA numbers fluctuate year to year, there is currently not enough to supervise the children.
- We need to review how lunches will operate next year.
- It has also been a challenge to fill EA positions when people are away. This year we have 2 staggered lunch breaks (Blue group and red group). For next year, we plan to have the same lunch time for all students. It will be safe, with enough adults around.
- Parents voice concerns with screen time during lunch break. Their children report not having time to eat their lunch. Children are distracted while videos, or instructions are given. They see focus issues due to missed relax time. Parents would like to see mental breaks for their children. Time where they do not have to engage.
- Lois says the current lunch-time learning is not all that different from what teachers have been doing in the past.
- Sarah speaks that she does not have strict eating times for her students. They are allowed to eat as needed in her class.

Sarah Elford, vice-principal

- For the transition of our grade 5's to middle school, Torquay teachers have had zoom meetings with teachers at Gordon Head.
- Gordon Head had also created a film or virtual tour for new students.
- The grade 5 farewell is in progress. With changing covid protocols, we are meeting with teachers this Friday to discuss further.
- Also, the Birdfeeders are complete for my class. The kids loved its technical instructions and they were used as Mother's Day gifts.

**Town Hall/New Business:**

-SD61 budget is in its 3rd draft now.

-Jasmine: Gordon Head middle school has not had a proper playground for 4 years. While there were plans for a new one, these district budget cuts has made it unlikely. How we keep kids young is to encourage them to play! She would like to fundraise the building of a playground. **Would you consider donating to this endeavour?** It would be a neighbourhood campaign. She asks for \$100 donation, with tax receipts provided through Gordon Head. The playground would be on Gordon Head grounds. Teresa is in support of this playground and will help spread the word through PAC Facebook and website.

**Meeting adjourned:** at 8:33 pm by Teresa.