



Willows Parent Advisory Committee

Regular Meeting Minutes: September 18, 2013

Call to Order : 7:05PM

Approval of the Agenda: The September 18, 2013 agenda was approved by Misha Dhillon, seconded by Carolyn Kroeber

Approval of the Minutes: The June 19, 2013 minutes were approved by Carolyn Kroeber, seconded by Jacqueline Lines

Attended: 34 people (including Principal Wendy Holob and Vice Principal Christine Patterson)

New Business

Introductory remarks by Kyla:

- What the Willows PAC is about, who the key people are, and an outline of “hopes and dreams” for year ahead, followed by break out introductions in small groups
- Special mention of (and thanks to) new kindergarten rep. Taryn Brown and new pizza day coordinator Carolyn Neil
- Noted key positions on PAC executive still vacant: Contact Kyla (willowspac@gmail.com) if interested
- Described Willows PAC core values: community, parental engagement, student achievement, service
- The Willows PAC is:
 - o a volunteer-based organization and all volunteers are valued for making a huge difference
 - o focused on school-wide or grade-wide level events (eg. Grade 4 Bike Rodeo), usually not on projects specific to individual classes (If parents have an idea for these, contact the class rep. or the teacher)
 - o The PAC is a **fund-raising free zone** with the exception of pizza and sushi day
 - Based on voluntary contribution system (suggested amount = \$40)
 - Letters will be sent home in OctoberThis frees teachers, admin. staff, parents and children from constant time-consuming, ultimately less financially productive fund-raising activities
 - o always open to new ideas, but there is a process (we cannot move very fast)
 - E-mail new ideas to willowspac@gmail.com
 - Raise new ideas at PAC meetings (they will be tabled for future discussion)
 - Some projects might be better *without* the PAC

Questions from the floor:

- How do we find out more about vacant positions: Contact Kyla
- How often do we meet?: Third Wednesday of most months (not December or March); AGM = May
- Do we need expertise to volunteer for lice check? NO – Lots of help available

Remarks from Steve Huxter, former Willows Pac chair, now Director on the Executive of the Victoria Confederation of PACs (VCPAC):

- Introduced the VCPAC (links 45 schools across Victoria)
- Does not advocate on specific issues (eg. WiFi in schools) but facilitates communication between schools on various issues
- Acts as mediator between PACs and British Columbia Confederation of PACs (BCCPAC)
- Two main VCPAC initiatives:
 - o Advocate for appropriate services
 - o Develop capacity of PACs (especially those struggling)
- Check out soon to be revised website: vcpac.ca
- Upcoming VCPAC Congress on October 3 (6pm, S.J. Willis School, 923 Topaz Ave.)

Remarks from Craig Mount, Earthquake Preparedness Chair:

- Explained where supplies (food, water, first aid kits, etc.) are placed on the school grounds in case of a seismic event, how they are purchased, restocked, etc.
- Explained the Great BC Shakeout (largest earthquake drill in North America)
- Answered questions about tsunami risk (low for our school's location), latex in first aid supplies (he will investigate) and food for kids with allergies (parents can contact him about individual kits for their children)
- If parents have questions or want to volunteer to help, contact him: cmount@telus.net

Remarks from Julie Chanin, Oak Bay Police Liaison:

- Thanked parents for showing up and for caring about the Willows community
- Being involved makes a huge difference for the children and the school
- Walking in the doors at Willows, she gets a feeling of welcoming, belonging, respect and caring for each other
- Described briefly the WITS program for Grades K-3 and the LEADS program for Grades 4-5
- Offered special congratulations on a well-run bike rodeo last May ("no blood!")
- If parents have questions or concerns, contact her: jchanin@oakbaypolice.org

Remarks from Principal Holob:

- What makes a successful year at Willows?
 - o 2 things: communication and active involvement
- Outlined what successful communication looks like between parents and teachers, between children and teacher and between parents and children
 - o Communicate with the Principal too: If the office door is open, come in!
- Outlined the importance of active involvement in the school for children and parents (beyond the individual classrooms sometimes)

Adjournment: 8:34PM

- Next meeting – October 16, 2013
- For more PAC information subscribe to www.willowspac.ca or like us on Facebook "Willows PAC"
- Please direct any questions or requests to willowspac@gmail.com