

**Approved Minutes of the Willows PAC General Meeting
On Wednesday, October 18th, 2023 at 7pm in Willows School Library**

1. Welcome and Land Acknowledgement

Ken, co-chair, welcomed all present and acknowledged the Indigenous People on whose land we meet. Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Quorum (a majority (50% plus one) of Executive Officers and at least one additional non-Executive voting member) present.

In Attendance: 100% Exec present and 10 parents

3. Approval of Agenda

Trevor moved approval of agenda, Michele B seconded.

Agenda accepted by consensus.

4. Approval of minutes of meeting May 17, 2023 AGM

Moved by Alyx, seconded by Carl that the minutes of the May 17, 2023 AGM meeting be approved. CARRIED.

5. Introductions (PAC Exec/School Admin)

Ken van Leusden (co-chair), Janine Slevinsky (co-chair), Trevor Jones (treasurer), Michele Bristow (secretary), Michele Asada (class rep coordinator), Brenna O'Connor (principal), Carey Nickerson (vice principal), Ruth (co-fun lunch coordinator and class rep), Laura (class rep), Nicole (class rep), Phoenix, Ali Khan (class rep proxy), Emma, Alyx (class rep), Karl, Hayley (class rep), Jen (class rep).

6. Presentation on Combined Classes* (Brenna)

Brenna provided an overview of Combined Classes (which are two grades that are together, not "split").

- Class size limits are very firm. The max number of students per class changes based on student designations. An advantage of a combined class is that the max # students is lower than if it were a single grade class.
- There are benefits to students to have the combined class environment, e.g. better connectedness by being with different students each year while ensuring there is a positive connection, or strategic placement of Educational Assistants to support more students.
- Developmentally there is a natural range among students and combined classes have a similar range to the range of a single grade class. The Spiral Curriculum means that the same concepts get covered year on year with increasing complexity for each grade level (i.e. can teach the same content and adapt to various depths of learning, low threshold – high ceiling assessments). Content specific planning for Science and Social studies means there is structured A year/B Year, so students do not repeat content when they are for example in a gr 3 and 4 combined class two years in a row, and assessment is competency based.

- Class building process starts at the end of the previous school year: Goal is a diverse and cohesive learning group, there is a lot of thought in the process. A lot of input from teachers and purposely match students to teachers as much as possible. Aim for a balance of student learning needs and balance of demands on the teachers.

7. School Leadership Update (Brenna/Carey)

- Picnic tables are installed. Thank you PAC for funding that!
- Cross-Country 100 students. Thank you teachers for *running* that!
- Mrs Evans is back for 1 day a week. Mrs Winthrop and Mme Fox are also teaching music. Thank you Music teachers!
- Sept Pro-d Day (school based): Author interview of *Be a Good Ancestor* by Leona Prince and Gabrielle Prince. Staff reflected on Indigenous ways of being and perspectives, visited culturally significant sites around Oak Bay. Afternoon session on Speech and Language Pathology (SLP) and non verbal ways of communicating.
- Great presentations from Science World on October 18th (today) at Willows in the Gym (fire! hovercrafting!), provided free to the school thanks to a company sponsor.

8. Co-Chair report (Ken/Janine)

A number of successful starts to kick off the school year:

- Welcome coffee for Willows kindergarten families
- Meet the teacher night treats and jazzy music (Thank you Oak Bay high school students!)
- Fun Lunches: a great menu and barrier free. This year there is an option to donate a lunch to another student when you order. Thank you Fun Lunch team, Ruth and Kerrie for getting things going and being inclusive!
- GoByBike trains tomorrow morning October 19th

A recognition and thank you to all the people PAC depends on:

- Janine is our magic fairy who makes special things just appear like cookies, staff appreciation day tissue boxes and chocolates, bike to school poster and stickers.
- Michele B for dedication to meticulous record keeping and all the fruit and student lunches.
- Michele A for stepping up and organizing class reps and volunteers and events ad hoc.
- Trevor for an amazing solid foundation for our accounting system. So much expertise!
- Ken for pulling the PAC together when it was basically falling apart.
- Brenna and Carey for time, advice and support to build the school community.
- Class rep volunteers! We can't do all that we do without class reps.

We are constantly improving services:

- Sign Up Genius to coordinate volunteers
- Regular newsletter – one stop shop for PAC happenings sent out via email to all Willows families through the school office (feedback: helpful, sparked curiosity, info on dance was buried though)
- Inclusive events: Fall Dance next week on Friday Oct 27th (feedback: without tickets it is uncertain what time to go to the dance, parents unsure of getting in; the capacity is 600)

in the gym, so we can likely fit everyone who comes at anytime without having to turn them away, it just may become very hot and uncomfortable)

- Contribution Drive through school district donation facility for tax receipts (feedback: raise money for specific project, i.e. update chromebooks for classes, parents will be more likely to give more)
- Picnic tables look awesome!!! Students are using them. A lovely space for an outdoor classroom.

9. Treasurer report and proposed budget (Trevor)

9.1 Update historical review

- There was a concern raised by a parent last school year that there was a lack of transparency and money leaving the PAC may not be approved properly.
- We have sufficient documentation except for \$12,000 of uncategorized expenses.
- There was indeed a lack of transparency in recent years with no reconciliation having been done, likely due to not having the financial background to do it properly.
- A few receipts are still missing and we're still chasing.

9.2 Budget

- This year we are making it as transparent as possible. Financial documents can be viewed by any PAC member in the password protected Guest Area (<https://www.willowspac.ca/financials>). Password hint to be emailed to all members or email willowspac@gmail.com to ask for password.
- Budget is basically the same but with more delineation of General Funds (unrestricted) and Gaming Funds (restricted). Gaming funds can only be spent on eligible expenses and need to be properly accounted for the granting agency.
- Technology costs have been added to pay for accounting software, hubdoc for handling invoices/receipts, and a purchasing card system. This will take a lot of administrative burden off of individuals.
- Also, added a budget for a fridge \$1200, and line items for gr 5 fundraising, and events expenses.

Michele B moved to amend the budget as detailed above. Ruth seconded. CARRIED.

Motion to approve amended budget: 1st Ken, 2nd Michele B. CARRIED.

10. Class Rep Update and Upcoming Events (Michele A)

- Still need class reps for 5 divisions without
- Advantages of a class rep: better communication on advocacy issues, gifts for the teacher, and volunteer coordination.
- **ACTION: Michele A to reach out again to teachers to tap shoulder of keen parents to volunteer as class rep.**
- **Fall dance on Oct 27th**
- Suggestions to utilize social media, morning announcement, gr 5 students to make posters
- **Next big event; Movie night Dec 8th.**

- We need volunteers to sign up for events: We hope that more parents can find time to spend an hour or two to help out, as there are many things we would like to do but we can only do so much with few volunteers.

11. New Business

None raised.

12. Meeting adjourned 8:30 p.m.

The next meeting is **Wednesday November 15, 2023 at 7pm in Willows School Library.**

Michele Bristow, Secretary 2023/24