

Banting PAC Meeting November 13, 2019

Attendees: Principal Trask, Vice-Principal Ms. McMahon, Noelene Ahern (PAC Chair), Mimi Yue (PAC Treasurer), Marit Heideman (PAC Secretary), Sheila Robertson, Catherine Knaus, Roxanne Abel, Aliz Nagy, Taya Hall, Claire Wheeler.

- Meeting opened at 6.35pm
- Minutes from October 2019 approved.

(Vice-)Principal's report

- **Totem Poles** – made by the Grandfather of a Grade 8 student.
- **Vaping Presentations** – Presentations are organized by the School District. The presentation at Banting was featured in Tri-Cities News. The school and school district want to be more proactive to educate students about vaping. There is a real epidemic in high schools, less so in middle schools. At Banting there have been instances of possession of a vaping device.
 - The presentation at Banting was provided by Fraser Health in collaboration with SFU. The health nurse and 500-level students provided an one hour presentation, with time for Q&A afterwards. The health nurse and SFU students are available for follow-up until 5 weeks after the presentations. The last Banting Team will have the presentation on Friday Nov.15, 2019.
- **Explorations** – New exploration courses have started, as we are currently about a quarter year into the school year. Teams go through 4 or 5 cycles per year.
- **Banting wear** – The sale of Banting Wear has been successful. This year, parents ordered directly from a company (Passion Sports), as in previous years it was too much for the school office to deal with the orders. Pick up of ordered items was at the school.
 - One down-side: the company would not allow returns, and gave no refunds, so parents had to order the right sizes. There was one parent who complained, and the company is working with them to resolve the issue.
 - Noelene: at Glenayre they are working with a company who provides samples for sizing. Perhaps it is possible to get a parent volunteer to help organize Banting wear next year?
- **Book - Fatty Legs by Christy Jordan** – The author is travelling the Lower Mainland, and will be visiting the school on November 21, 2019. The book tells her story as a residential school survivor, and is also available in French. The school assembly will be adjusted to meet the author's available time.
- **School update/completion**
 - Parking lot is done. There is a little finishing to be done in one spot.
 - The growth in the area (due to new developments) is being estimated by the company Beringer, who will write a report on what that means in terms of the influx of new students. It is estimated that the school will be at capacity in 3-4 years. The school is looking into how it can expand to accommodate the new students though an annex or portable. The Late French Immersion Program (~150 students over 3 Grades) was removed from the school, which temporarily gives a little breathing room in terms of student numbers. This year the last Grade 8 Late French Immersion students will be graduating and leaving the school.

- **Report Cards** – Report cards will go home on December 6. The weeks leading up to that will be very busy for the teachers. There will be no parent-teacher interviews scheduled and there will be no early dismissals, but parents can always request a meeting with any of their kids’ teachers.
- **Public Library** – The Port Moody Public Library will come for a visit with 2 Teams this week.
- **Formative Assessments** – Formative assessment are a way of testing students and an evaluation of teaching skills. It allows the teachers to reassess their teaching methods and adjust accordingly to meet student needs.
 - This year, the teachers have found that the Grade 6 students are a little more challenging in self-regulation and are a little less mature than in previous years.
 - The goal for the school is to provide students with more skills towards restorative practices. This means helping students working things out, how to move forward, building relationships, and showing empathy. The goal is for kids to become more self-aware.
- **Foundation Skills Assessments (FSA’s)** – Grade 7 students finished their FSA’s on Friday November 8, 2019. Parents will get a copy of the results. FSA’s are not done for marks, but can help teachers inform their teaching.
- **BYOD** – The school has handed out 52 laptops which go home with the students, another 10 devices have been assigned to students but are not going home with them. There are 12 students still waiting for a device, the school is expecting to hand out 6 devices in the near future. Given the high demand on devices the school will ask the District for more (District devices are all similar and have the same warranty etc.). Students appear to be handling the devices responsibly, and so far the school has only had to deal with a device, of which a pet rabbit chewed through the cord.
- **Ski club** – Ski club is starting Tuesday January 7, 2019. There are still some spots open, 85 students have signed up so far.
- **Parent Question – PEDs** – *Are the students obeying the rules regarding PEDs (Personal Electronic Devices)?* PEDs are not allowed in classrooms, and students are allowed to use PEDs responsibly during lunch breaks (e.g. to confirm pick-ups or appointments with parents). Overall, the students are doing fine, and we are seeing far less PED use in the school. Also, with the BYOD, there is no need for cell phones in the class, as they can now use their laptops in class when the teacher allows it. The benefit of using the laptops in class, is that teachers can monitor what the kids are doing. Principal Trask keeps a “PED-spa” in his office (a.k.a. an IKEA shoe storage device at the back of his door), where he stores cell phones of students who have had to hand theirs in for a period of 2 months. This means that the students bring their cell phone in the morning and pick it up again at the end of the day.

Financial overview

- **Pizza-day**
 - sales for November: ~\$300.00
 - Unfortunately the PAC did not know that one Team was away, and thus there were lots of pizzas left.
- **Parent donations to the PAC**
 - Budgeted: \$5,500, and currently the PAC has received \$5,088

- The PAC had budgeted \$6,000 for speakers and presentations, and there is a separate budget of \$2,500 for school-wide activities from which dancers and a martial arts activities will be paid.
- The **Lunch Lady** will be changing to Tuesdays per December 1st, 2019. This is too align with deliveries at Porter and Glenayre.
- Gift card fundraiser
 - No updates yet on the amount raised, as the Fundraiser is still open.
 - Reminder was sent out today (November 13, 2019).
 - A parent suggested to dial the Fundraiser back one week to accommodate companies to order gift cards for the Holiday season. In addition, a parent asked if the school/PAC could provide receipts for companies. The school and PAC will work together to be able to provide a receipt when asked.

Further PAC Updates

- **BC Teachers Federation Presentations**
 - The PAC surveyed the interest in topics for a BCTF presentation. There were about 40 responses.
 - Two topics appear to attract most interest: ‘Social Media for Parents’ and ‘Supporting your Kid’s Learning’.
 - The PAC will approach the BCTF for a presentation in January, perhaps to follow the January PAC meeting. The PAC estimates about 50 participants. The invite for the presentation can perhaps be extended to other Middle Schools and Grade 5 parents of feeder schools.
- **Family photos**
 - Family photo sessions can possibly be done in the Spring, so not to compete with Glenayre. Banting has inquired with the companies ‘Photo Expressions’ and ‘Little Black Umbrella’. There would be 10 minute sessions per family. The company is not keen on outdoor options, as it would be hard to set up the props.
 - Suggestions are for a date around Spring Break, or even in April/May/June closer to the Grade 8 graduation. The PAC will put the topic on hold for now, and will revisit the topic in the spring.

Parent Input

A parent voiced concerns regarding the use of laptops at the school:

1. Adjustment to BYOD

- a. The parent shared that there seem to be quite some apprehension among parents are students regarding the use of the device. It takes quite some involvement and effort from some parents to help their children adjusting to the use of the device. The parent questioned if the amount of technology used at the school is contributing to their learning. In addition, some children struggle with the technological demands, as they do not even know yet how to type, let alone are proficient in using Office applications such as MS Word efficiently. Some parents find that they have to spend quite some time in the evening to help students complete their tasks, which leads to stress and anxiety in the parents and children.

- i. A parent suggested that perhaps flex time or Pro-D day camps can be used to help students acquire computer skills such as typing or working in Word.
 - b. The parents further questioned who determines which platform is being used for homework and assignments, as this appears to be at the teacher's discretion. Parents and students now have to navigate three platforms (i.e. Freshgrade, OneNote and MS Teams) to keep track of homework and assignments, which leads to confusion. Also, not all of these platforms are as easy to use, and there have been instances where students thought they submitted homework, but the teacher did not have it.
2. **Overall screen time for children** – For children of age 11-12 , the recommendation is still only about 2 hours of screen time per day. Given the amount of time they spend on their device at school and homework, there is hardly time left for any recreational use. It is difficult for parents to know/monitor how much time is being spend on a device at school.

Feedback from the (vice-) principal and PAC:

- The school welcomes this feedback, and realizes there are many growing pains to overcome with regard to BYOD.
- The PAC suggests that perhaps a survey among parents would be a good idea to get some feedback from more parents regarding their experiences with BYOD and to get insight on where students and parents are struggling. This could help the school and school district in finding solutions for some of the issues mentioned today.

Next PAC meeting: January 15, 2020.