

## Centennial PAC Meeting Minutes Monday January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013

**In attendance:** Debbie Bruce (member at large), Mitra Salami, Susan Sorensen (member at large), Cinzia DeJesus, Dave Soer (member at large), Evelyn Chursinoff, Coleen Bohlen, Amy Mah (Vice Chair), Tamara Dean, Lorene Chung, Lorie Shantz (Treasurer), Ernesto Garcia, Sheri Ray (DPAC Rep), Jacquie Hutchins (Chair), Mary Robertson (Secretary), Rob Zambrano (Principal), Diether Malakoff (Teacher), Shane Pope (Teacher)

**Call to Order** at 7:05pm

### **Welcome:**

- Jacquie welcomed everyone and wished everybody a Happy New Year.

### **Minutes:**

- Dave Soer motioned to accept the minutes dated November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2012 with the following change: to remove the sentence under Administrator's report regarding Maestro Tovey as it was reported via email after the meeting, Coleen Bohlen 2<sup>nd</sup>, motion carried.

### **Treasurer's Report:**

- Lorie Shantz presented the treasurer's report for the period ending January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2013. Lorie reported that she now has signing authority and all of the outstanding allocated funds have been taken care of. The PAC received a cheque from the Legion for \$500.00 towards Lacrosse and the \$1,000.00 stale dated cheque, also from the Legion for Girls Soccer has been reissued.

### **DPAC:**

- Sheri Ray reported on behalf of DPAC that in 2006 there were 400 classes with over 30 students they have now brought it back down to 30 students with the exception of middle schools.
- Education is changing to focus more on skill development.
- BC Government has a new initiative on anti-bullying. Visit [www.erasebullying.ca](http://www.erasebullying.ca) to learn about a grant for anti-bullying initiatives.
- Port Coquitlam wants to have the ability to issue a by-law ticket for bullying, if issued a ticket the person must go through an anti-bullying program.

### **Administrator's Report:**

- Rob thanked everyone for coming.
- The Lacrosse team had recently been on a trip to San Diego and the school is very proud of the team and their efforts.
- There are only 3 weeks to go until semester end and the teachers are working diligently to complete everything.
- This year there are only 3 days for semester break, there used to be 5 days but as the Provincial exams are dwindling the time has been cut down. This leaves less time for the teachers to help kids who are behind.
- GTP interviews will take place in the Library on January 29<sup>th</sup>.
- On January 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> there will be a revised schedule and the teachers are trying this out to see if it will help with the lessened days.
- A parent asked if all kids were expected to attend on the alternate days – Yes if they have a class, they should be there.

- A parent asked if all students start new semester on Thursday – Yes, all SD43 Secondary Schools go back on Thursday.
- Centennial has created some new classes to accommodate International students, and also a few new classes to accommodate those students that are not necessarily strong or have an interest in Sciences.
- February 7<sup>th</sup> will be a grade 8 parent evening.
- February 8<sup>th</sup> will be a grade 8 walk-about.
- February 12<sup>th</sup> Jessie Miller will give a cyber-talk to the Grades 9's and 10's around the impact of social media. Rob may extend the invitation to the parents of these students as well.
- February 13<sup>th</sup> will be a grade 9, 10 and 11 parent evening.
- February 27<sup>th</sup> will be Pink Shirt Day, an anti-bullying initiative. This year Terry Fox School asked students for stories about bullying and they have hired a playwright to write a play based on the stories. The pink shirt sales will pay for the playwright, and in the near future there will be a casting call in SD43 for the play.
- In March there will be a Constable from the RCMP giving a talk to the students about bullying.
- The semester turnaround will go quickly and the school hopes to have report cards go out on time. If your child is in jeopardy the staff would have communicated this with you.
- A parent asked about a police presence last Thursday, Rob mentioned that there was a situation surrounding a former student and the police were called as a precaution. Everything was alright, nothing happened.
- Centennial is losing Mr. Birney due to a SD budget crunch. He will be going to Pinetree and will be missed. Rob can take over his duties. The kids will need to adjust to a shuffle in VP's. Mr. Birney will be leaving at the end of the semester.

#### Teacher's Report:

- Mr. Pope and Mr. Malakoff attended the meeting, which will now be a regular occurrence. They thanked the PAC for allowing them to attend.
- Mr. Malakoff spoke of the shortened exam week and the potential effect on the teachers and the students – **please see his full report at the end of these minutes.** Mr. Malakoff's message aims to inform parents and this is his viewpoint.
- A parent asked why the school district made this decision, Mr. Malakoff explained that they never received a letter and they were never clearly informed as to why the decision was made. There is some speculation and hearsay but nothing concrete.
- A parent asked if this was a school board decision, as far as Rob knows this was not a 'board' decision.
- A parent asked if this could be to squeeze extra days into the year, Rob said yes this could be the reason.
- One parent mentioned that it might be helpful to separate the Provincial exams from the 1 week off between semesters, as it is felt that the teachers and students need the week between semesters due to the difficulty of 'shutting down and starting up again' for a new semester. It was explained that initially the Provincials did drive this week off, the time was a positive bi-product and the kids have this expectation.
- Mr. Pope explained that in the Tech department the turn-around time is very tight now. They have shut things down a little early this semester as it all takes time.
- The consensus was that there was not proper thought given to this before the implementation. There could have been some days taken from June.

- A parent asked how they can help, Rob mentioned that the best thing to do is to go through this shortened week and take very good notes and report on how it has affected the kids.
- Rob will bring a summary to the next meeting.

### **New Business**

#### **After Grad Committee update**

- Susan Sorensen reported that there was a meeting on January 17<sup>th</sup>, there is a 3rd signing officer needed, someone who can do this year and continue into next year for continuity, helpful if they have done it before, but not necessary. Open to all grades 9/10/11 parents.
- Cheryl Lindsay will be coordinating the parent volunteers and needs the contact info of these parents and needs the electronic forms that parents filled out at the beginning of the year. Rob mentioned that the school secretary has this information.
- FORD drive one event to be confirmed, most likely held in March – info to be sent out when known.
- The AfterGrad Committee would request the PAC to write the \$3000.00 cheque directly to the school. The school will then transfer the money to the AfterGrad Account. This will need to be done ASAP as cheques have been written to cover deposits and the funds are needed.
- Susan pleaded for volunteers for the 'donations committee' they desperately need assistance. There is 1 volunteer, and 2 parents at the meeting offered their assistance and they will touch bases with Susan offline. If anyone else can help, please contact Susan by March 1<sup>st</sup> or this committee will be in jeopardy of not continuing.
- The next AG meeting is February 21<sup>st</sup> at 7pm in the Library.

#### **Grad Pens**

- Coleen Bohlen said she would have a Grad Pen update at the next meeting.

### **Door Prizes:**

- Lorie Shantz won a \$10 Safeway gift card
- Mr. Malakoff won a \$15 Subway gift card
- Mitra Salami won three Scratch and Win tickets

**Next meeting** is Monday March 4<sup>th</sup> at 7pm

**Adjourn:** Sheri Ray made a motion to adjourn, meeting adjourned at 8:10pm

**This document contains the rough notes presented by Diether Malakoff (Science Teacher, Centennial Secondary) to the Centennial PAC on Mon Jan21st 2013.**

My perspective on the shortened exam week:

#### **i. reduced service to at risk students**

Having an earlier start to second semester is resulting in pushing various deadlines earlier. This results in having to cut short the time I work with students. The end of semester is a stressful time (for some teachers...including me... and students). My observation of grade 9 students at this time is that some buckle down and others buckle under. Some students, who may have been failing in first and/or second report card but have been improving, see the last chapter of my course as a final opportunity to finish the semester strong and bring their mark up. Some students, for whatever reason, likely a variety of reasons, lose focus and do not perform well in the last week (or two) of classes. The former group tend

to manage to bring their mark above 50% the latter group, not. In the last week of classes, I tend to focus my energy on the kids who are focused and motivated to persevere through the last chapter.. I also attempt to localize the negative impact on the learning of others of the students who are 'buckling under'. The students who are not successful in passing the course formerly would come in and have three full days to complete missing work. Three days to focus on these students allowed for me to be able to provide one-on-one help for hours to work with these students in a quiet classroom which allowed opportunities for students to solidify some last minute concepts and perhaps rewrite a test on the third day...for a few students, with this opportunity, they were able to demonstrate understanding of a few more learning outcomes and thus improve their mark above 50%. Not all students were successful...but 3-6 students on average tended to be successful during these three days while around 3-6 (out of 3 class sets of kids) tended to not.

Furthermore, some of the students that I built a connection with in these three days came to me in subsequent semesters when they were struggling with math or science in grade 10.. in chemistry in grade 11...some of those students elected to take physics 11, reputed to be the most rigorous of the sciences and most intimidating to those who do not see themselves as capable of academic success.

With this change in the exam week, I have one day to do what I formerly had three days to do. I will be restricting that one day to students who are missing work due to illness or excused absences...students who mostly get the work done on their own and only need to come in to iron out slight misunderstandings and to sit and write missing tests.

## **ii. Reduction in participation in GTP interviews**

GTP interviews have grown into a powerful and meaningful cultural experience at Centennial. A chance for teachers to sit down with graduates and discuss their (students) reflections on their experience at Centennial and to discuss the things they are proud of and what they are planning for the next phase in their lives. The students I've gone through this with value these interactions...having an adult conversation with an adult they respect. I felt honored that, of all the teachers they've had through their time at Centennial, that they'd choose me to have this conversation with.

Given the restricted time in the exam week, I will not likely participate in GTP interviews in future semesters (I am already committed to interviews for the coming semester end and I will hold myself to those commitments this semester) as I will want to focus my time to be available to my students who may be needing more time to finish work from the ending semester. As it stands, half of one of the three days will be occupied by GTP interviews for me.. I don't think I will be able to afford that time in future semesters.

## **iii. Closure and rest for students prior to start-up of second semester**

It is speculation on my part that the vulnerable students, who had to work hard over a day or so, write provincial exams and wrap up obligations to first semester will likely not have an opportunity to rest prior to starting up another round of courses. It remains to be seen what impact this will have on them.

## **iv. Teacher duties and prep time**

Teachers will have less time to complete bureaucratic obligations to first semester (report cards etc) which represents considerable workload while wrapping up and providing final opportunities to students.. as well as invigilating exams and meeting to discuss students (promotional meetings, adjudication) in order to document recommendations to help with students success in second semester... chances to phone home to ensure textbooks (needed for second semester) are returned...

experienced teachers working with new teachers joining Centennial for the first time to teach in second semester... while also preparing for second semester. It remains to be seen what impact the shortened semester turnaround week will have on these important areas of work that teachers do.

Closing statement:

As with most issues in education, it is difficult to be dispassionate when discussing issues. The goal of my presentation is not to convince you that what has happened is wrong. It's my goal to state what has been decided and how this decision is impacting me and my work and my students. It's also clear that I'm not happy about the change. I encourage you (parents) to speak to others...particularly those on the school board or Tom Grant to ask for their views on this decision.

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM OTHER STAFF MEMBERS:

**ESL Dept.**

Jack is grade ten. And back to the first note.....another impact of the lack of turn-around time which parents may or may not care about .....We have 24 new international students coming. They contribute huge, huge funding and staffing to our school. Because our turn around days have been sacrificed it is really difficult for me and for counselors to get them tested, oriented and registered in the time we are given. Terrible for us and not a very smooth start for these kids who have chosen our district and our school.

**Another teacher's concern re: TEACHER PRO-D**

In the past 3 / 4 years I have attended a pro-d event all day during this week (Faye Brownlie), some teachers have done first aid training etc... - so limited time , teachers will be reluctant to attend or make time for these additional pro-d events, I wonder how many of our staff will be attending the January pro-d with Faye - in Sept we had a lot of teachers

3) And for the past couple of years , I met with my learning team for half a day - again limited time teachers may feel its not the best time to do this