

## ECOLE SECONDAIRE HUGH MCROBERTS PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

January 10, 2018 Minutes

Parents in attendance: Diane Pai, Carla Shkwarok, Diane Neufeld, Lucy Guo, Anna Alibudbud, Zahida Dhalla, Winnie Loong, Susan Ness, Glenn Busnardo, Miwa Suzuki, Sandra Clark and Sheryl Jerstad

Administration in attendance: Neil Kamide

Meeting started at 7:05 pm

- 1) Welcome and introductions
- 2) Minutes from November 2017 reviewed and adopted (motioned by Lucy Guo and seconded by Winnie Loong). All in favour.
- 3) Guest speaker Heather Nicolaas, co-chair and treasurer for McRoberts Dry Grad Committee:
  - Background: Heather became Dry Grad treasurer in 2013 and has continued in that role since then. PAC funds allotted to Dry Grad (\$2500) were last used fully in 2013. Since then, fees have been charged to students for Dry Grad (\$50), which along with fundraisers and winning 2 BCAA video contests, enabled the committees to host the event using approx. half the allotted PAC funds (\$1250). A “bare bones” dry grad event costs typically \$10,000, with much of the cost being for buses (\$3500+) to and from the hotel downtown, entertainment throughout the night (\$3,000+) plus food, security, decorations, prizes etc. The actual cost is usually closer to \$13,000. The intent is to run a break-even event.
  - Recently there was a meeting for dry grad executives throughout Richmond, and information was shared. All Richmond schools now charge graduating students a fee for dry grad. The average amount received from PAC funding was \$3000-4000, although 1 larger school receives \$8,000. Some PACs calculate the amount provided to dry grad as the \$20 per student that has been received from the gaming allowance in recent years x the # of students graduating (although those funds are not guaranteed). For McRoberts that would be about \$3500, an increase from the current \$2500. As some costs have increased significantly in the past 2-3 years (ie. Buses), this is something to consider for next year (the budget for this year is already committed).
  - Parents continue to do fundraising, but some years this is left up to 5 or 6 parents, so it's not realistic to expect them to raise a large portion of the basic cost. Students don't usually fundraise for this as they're doing fundraising for their grad legacy project(s). If necessary, the school may be

able to contribute, or students could have a carwash/bottle drive type event, with any excess money after the event going to the grad legacy fund.

4) Administration Report:

- Discussion of “absence of feedback”; admin. would like to see more feedback, both positive and negative. Probably only 10-20% of concerns get communicated, often because parents worry about impact on their child. But ‘silence means acceptance’, and positive changes won’t happen if teachers and admin. staff aren’t aware. May try to set up opportunities for feedback, such as a ‘world café’ on a Pro-D with an equal number of teachers and students discussing certain issues so the student voices can be heard.
- Core competencies (critical thinking, communication, etc.) focus on basic skills people should have to be successful (“the educated citizen”). Schools are looking at how to focus on these areas better, so students are learning skills, not just facts. The current Ministry mandate of once a year self-assessment of c.c. is not enough. Schools need to imbed c.c. in other courses because universities are still requiring certain academic pre-requisites and we don’t want to lose those post-secondary opportunities. (Example: Leadership would be an important thing to teach, but we don’t specifically.) Work habits are being phased out on report cards unfortunately.

5) Dates to remember:

- Jan 15-19 Grad Photos
- Jan 24 (Wednesday) Grade 7 Parents Night and Hands On Night
- Jan 25 (Thursday) Grade 9 immunizations and Block Rotation 3,4,1,2
- Jan 26 (Friday) Pro D Day
- Jan 31 (Wednesday) Program Planning Night for grades 8-11 from 6:00-8:00
- Feb 6 (Tuesday) Term 2 Interims sent home
- Feb 14 (Wednesday) PAC meeting 7:00 (and Valentine’s Day)

6) Treasurer Report:

- Gaming account: \$27,040.30
- General account: \$4,412.07
- Wish list items accepted: \$21,842.16
- Clarification of scholarships in budget: PAC agreed to increase # of \$500 scholarships offered from 3 to 5 as stated in November minutes, but accompanying budget chart still lists 3 scholarships. Will amend chart to read 5 scholarships at \$2500. Discussion: what are the criteria for awarding these scholarships?

7) Secretary Report:

- Notice given to administration re. workshop at Richmond Hospital for community partners re. assessing adolescents for suicide risk. Discussion of resources available in the school: admin. states that staff have a protocol to be followed and are aware of resources that can be brought in once a student at risk is identified. Often signs are not reported by students or parents, or a number of people are aware but are unsure of how to judge the 'seriousness', or what to do to intervene. Admin. encourages anyone with concerns to please report them so action can be taken.

8) Open forum: no new items

9) Meeting adjourned approx. 8:30 pm

Next meeting Wednesday Feb. 14, 2018 at 7:00 pm.