

George Jay PAC Meeting  
9 December 2020  
6:30-8:06pm  
Virtual Meeting over Zoom

**In attendance**

Executive: Andrea Walker Collins (President), Sam Albers (Vice President), Zeta Lay (Treasurer), Roberta Hamme (Secretary), Leslie Rewega (Member-at-Large), Melanie Cullins (Member-at-Large)

Parents: Jo Addison, Kate Berniaz, Sonja Childs, Colleen Danks, Kristy Domineck, Catherine Fowlie, Rebecca Freedman, Emma Gillespie, Lena Gryshko, Myra James, Khadija, Danielle MacKenzie, Karla Marshall, Naomi McCormick, Matthew Payne, Hannah Tamondong, Teresa

Staff: Melanie Postle (Principal), Leila Durzi (Family Liason), Rebecca Bathurst-Hunt, Joanne Buxton, Lisa Heffelfinger, Sandra Kurtz, Lisa Mulvihill, Laura Robertson, Ai Linh Trinh

1. **Meeting called to order** at 6:30pm. Welcome and recognition of traditional territories (Andrea)
2. **Agenda accepted** as displayed.
3. **Minutes of 18 November 2020 meeting accepted**
4. Reports on previous action items
  - a. **Follow-up on challenges at the school from VCPAC survey** (Andrea and Roberta) – Major concerns expressed were around EA support and racism/bullying. PAC Exec discussed how we can move forward on advocating for enhanced EA support. Plan to bring forward an action plan at next meeting. Racism/bullying referred to equity and diversity subcommittee.
  - b. **Survey on PAC fundraising priorities for this year** (Roberta) – some issues with extracting all survey responses from the free account. Roberta working on obtaining all data from surveymonkey. 40 responses (representing 2/3 of the respondents) showed Emergency supplies as a clear top priority, followed by music risers, school-wide art supplies, sports equipment, and lastly folding chairs. Annual budget support should not have been part of survey as PAC has an obligation to provide at least \$6000 in funds carryover to the following year. Leslie will bring forward a comprehensive plan at next PAC meeting (with \$\$ quotes) for what is needed in emergency supplies at the school. *Motion to devote PAC fundraising to the items in order identified by survey – Zeta seconds – Motion carries 14 yes, 0 no.*

c. **Active Transportation site visit by city** (Andrea) – Site visit minutes from 24 Nov attached as appendix to these minutes. Key problem: room for parents to spread out and car parking congestion. Focus on implementation of School Streets Program on Queens. Planned trial week for the first week after Spring Break. George Jay would be second school in city to participate in program. Expanding sidewalk on Cook was discussed to allow for more physical distancing as parents access each side of school. PAC should pursue further. The yellow line at the Denman/Spring intersection requested at the last meeting has already been painted.

d. **Winter crafting activity**

Staff will be doing crafting activities in classrooms as an alternative to the Holiday Emporium. Allocated \$50 per division. \$1000 approved at previous meeting for this activity from a previous grant from the city to the HAWC Fair.

*Motion for the PAC to spend additional \$300 to support winter crafting activity by staff – Matthew seconds – Motion carries 15 yes, 0 no.*

**5. Principal's Report** (Melanie)

- Crafting activity starting on Monday, to be finished off throughout the week.
- Maximus usually does a pancake breakfast for George Jay in Dec. This year they are sponsoring a grab bag with oranges, gingerbread people, a holiday pencil, etc.. Coming home with students on Friday.
- Construction began on Queens St field (fun for kids to watch the diggers). New child care and preschool facility coming, slated for completion by 2023. Permits completed, so starting construction now. Putting in the parking lot first. May finish by 2022. Large portion of back field to be left empty for play space when completed. Planning a buffer between facility and apartment buildings.
- George Jay has posted one remaining EA position, but so far no applicants. Saying goodbye to Mark Ahenda (Grade 2/3 FRIM) and Nicole Harcos (Grade 2/3 Eng). Welcome back to Caitlyn Cliffor (Grade 2/3 FRIM) returning from maternity leave.
- District has rented building to NetFlix movie crew for Friday evening through Monday 4am. Filming a movie called Scaredy Cats in library and hallways starring trained housecats (part of Air Bud movie series). Communication to parents with more details coming soon. Cleaning protocol is extensive. Funds from rental will go to district. **\*\*addendum after meeting\*\*** filming postpone to new year.
- New crossing guard Gail has retired. Joanne Buxton has been able to accept this position as our school's official crossing guard in addition to her staff position as EA. Some training will be necessary for kids/parents when crosswalk light is in place.

**6. Survey of parents on assessment** (Lisa Mulvihill) – Lisa is a K/1 teacher at George Jay working on her Master of Education degree. Survey for her research on different styles of assessment and how they represent student learning was sent out to parents via school e-

mail list. 60 responses so far (40 from parents), far more than expected. Link to survey is <https://forms.gle/LgCcr9tYk5dcVnv9> Please complete if you can. Data is collected via google – so be aware that the data is stored in the US. Thank you, George Jay community!!!

7. President's Report (Andrea)

- a. **Silent Auction** – Auction has launched and is going very well. Keep on bidding!
- b. **50/50 Raffle** – Finishing paperwork with Raffle Nexus for this event. Plan to sell tickets at \$5 each or \$12 for 3. Plan to launch on 8 Jan and run until 16 April. Will do a draw every 2 weeks (7 winners over the raffle) to keep momentum going throughout event. Steve is designing poster / banner for it.

8. Vice President's Report (Sam)

- a. **Application to become a non-profit** society – At the November meeting, the PAC voted to apply for non-profit status. A \$100 application fee is required. Name will be George Jay Parent Advisory Council.

*Motion to spend \$100 to apply for non-profit society status – Zeta seconds – Motion carries 17 yes, 1 no.*

- b. **Demographic information for grant applications** – Sam's day job involves working with census and other publicly available demographic data. Such data could be useful for George Jay community in understanding how demographics have changed and in applying for grant funding. Reached out to district for needed data to define catchment easily – waiting for answer. City did a recent demographic study for North Park that might be helpful. Action item: Leslie to reach out to North Park Neighbourhood Association about study report. George Jay is only school in district with the same English and French catchment area.

9. **Treasurer's Report** (Zeta) – shared budget and bank statement on screen. Received \$70.06 more from Monks fundraiser. Wreath sales brought in over \$4000 for a profit of \$1291.45. New cheque from Restorative Justice also received. Spending this month has mainly been for 2019/20 Special Funding Program items, 2019/20 staff Gaming Grants, and HAWC fruit and veg program. \$645.95 received from Halloween grab bag refunded into account used to pay for those items. Wreath/swag sales helped by ability to do e-transfers, many orders received this way. A big thank you to Geneva, who drove all the way to Courtney for the wreaths, for leading this very successful fundraiser!!

10. Secretary's Report (Roberta)

- a. **Special Funding Program subcommittee** report – 11 applications received for 2020/21 program. School found funds to support 4 applications, leaving 7 that the PAC could

fully support with the \$3000. Fantastic applications from the staff showing a lot of thought, dedication, and exciting ways to teach. Some staff still struggling to spend their 2019/20 Special Funding Program amounts (COVID stress etc...). Suggest extending deadline for this.

*Motion to extend time to spend the 2019-20 grants to end of March 2021 - Leslie seconds – Motion carries 16 yes, 0 no.*

b. **Bylaws** subcommittee report – 5 new or revised bylaws suggested by subcommittee. These minutes serve as notice of the intention to vote on these new bylaws at the 13 January General Meeting.

- Suggested replacement bylaw 9.5. Up to three times per year, the Executive, by majority vote of the Executive, shall have the authority to spend up to \$200.00 not explicitly included in the current budget between regular meetings without a resolution of the general membership. Such an expenditure may not create a deficit in the bank account. The Secretary will make a written record of the motion and vote.

*Discussion* – Meant to allow time sensitive spending to be dealt with by Exec. An example would be an emergency gift to a family suffering a tragedy. Number of times and total spending would be limited to prevent possible abuse.

- Suggested replacement bylaw 4.3 All matters requiring a vote will be decided by two thirds majority of the votes cast (67% plus 1), including a change to the constitution or bylaws or to force a member of the Executive to resign.

*Discussion* – At Oct meeting, a motion on Facebook passed by 1 vote but was not implemented as members felt this was not enough consensus. This bylaw would ensure PAC works to obtain consensus on issues we enact. Also, will help with ensuring representativeness of PAC actions when many parents can't attend meetings.

- Suggested replacement bylaw 6.3 When addressing outside organizations or social media on behalf of the PAC, Executive members must ensure that the position or opinion expressed has been ratified by the membership at a previous general or extraordinary special meeting. Exact wording need not be approved.

*Discussion* – Meant to clarify that Exec has ability to carry out advocacy that is approved in principle. Confusion on this arose during Sept meeting discussion on Active Transportation letter.

- Suggested replacement bylaw 10.1 Conflicts arising between members of the PAC involving matters concerning the PAC will first be addressed at a meeting of the Executive and the parties involved. The PAC will only engage in this process if the parties experiencing conflict choose to participate in the conflict resolution process.

*Discussion* – Meant to clarify responsibility of the Exec if members do not want to engage in process.

- Suggested new bylaw 11.3 The PAC will keep the following records (physical or electronic) accessible to the Executive of:
  - a) Statement of directors and registered office of the PAC as provided for under Section 12 of the BC Societies Act
  - b) Records as required under Section 20 of the BC Societies Act.

*Discussion* – Include a requirement to keep and pass on passwords of PAC role-based accounts

11. Member-at-Large Report (Leslie) – Staff have faced significant challenges this year with new protocols and general anxiety over COVID, but have rose to that challenge and showed their wonderful dedication to our school community both academically and emotionally. Plan to provide a December Staff Appreciation Event. Café Fantastico to donate coffee. PAC will purchase treats – individually wrapped by Café Fantastico, along with some fruit. A decorated cart will bring coffee treats to the different classrooms to ensure physical distancing.

*Motion to spend \$175 on **December staff appreciation event** – Sonja seconds – Motion carries 17 yes, 0 no.*

12. **Strategic planning committee update** (Jo Addison) – Committee has met once. Members besides Jo are Melanie Postle (principal), Lila Lund (Inclusive Learning), Joanne Buxton (EAG), and David Hovis (District). Supporting school mission statement is a first priority: making George Jay a safe, healthy, and kind community. Mel and Lila are working on rolling out a clear process for when behavioural incidents arise at the school. These will clarify expectations for what behaviour management tools and language will be used when issues occur. These will be shared with parents on school website. Electronic safety is a growing concern with increased device presence at school. District has no policy on phones at school. Admin will look at establishing clear messaging to families surrounding devices. School will be sponsoring counseling program on kids with anxiety in new year. Areas for students to calm and reduce sensory overload are needed. Mel planning a walk-through with the district to identify spaces. Action items: Roberta to send VCPAC survey to Jo and update website to show that Jo is PAC representative on Strategic Planning committee.

13. **Equity and Diversity subcommittee report** (Zeta / Naomi) – met with Lisa Gunderson. Planning to identify a date to book Lisa Gunderson for a parent education session in the spring. Subcommittee will be refining its initial goals. Possibilities include: an anti-racism policy for the school, broader participation / diversity in parent engagement in the PAC. Planning a survey (in multiple languages to hopefully increase engagement) to parents on inclusion. Some discussion of the barriers to parents in engaging with the PAC. We could consider switching to different nights each month for PAC meetings.

14. **Information on Child Sexual Abuse and Trafficking** (Zeta)

Canadian Centre for Child Protection (<https://protectchildren.ca/en/resources-research/>) has lots of free resources on this issue. Scope of issue: 1 in 10 Canadian youth experience abuse; 1 in 3 girls and 1 in 6 boys are estimated to have unwanted sexual contact before age 18. On-line safety very important to preventing youth trafficking. Predators are contacting

youth through gaming and social media platforms that allow direct messaging. Grooming process can be weeks to years. Fear of losing access to technology is a huge obstacle to kids disclosing these contacts. Taking away technology as a punishment contributes to this kind of fear. Centre offers a 2.5-hour, on-line, self-paced course. PAC education budget could support parents taking this course. Send Zeta an e-mail to participate.

*Motion to spend up to \$100 from the parent education budget to fund up to 10 parents to take on-line course "Commit to Kids: An Introduction to Safeguarding Children from Sexual Abuse" - Andrea seconds motion – Motion carries 14 yes, 0 no.*

15. Adjourn meeting at 8:06pm.

Next general meeting is scheduled for 13 January 2020 at 6:30pm

## George Jay Active Transportation Site Visit

24 November 2020

2:00-3:05pm

Outside at school

### **In attendance**

Executive: Andrea Walker Collins (President), Roberta Hamme (Secretary)

Parents: Kate Berniaz

Staff: Melanie Postle (Principal), Sarah Winkler (Vice Principal)

City: Hailey Steiger-Tang, Neil O'Connor, Fred Billingham

### **School Streets Program**

*Issue:* Congestion during drop-off / pick-up times has increased. More parents coming with kids to school and less room to stand, since parents cannot enter schoolyard. Vehicle congestion contributing to safety problems.

*Program:* Close street next to school to all traffic except local residents, encourage active transportation in association with street closure. City would provide portable barriers (pylons) that volunteers would place in the street. These could be moved by one volunteer to allow cars through and stored in school when not in use.

*Implementation:* Suggest 1-week trial first. Time this during period of better weather to encourage active transportation that week. City would work with school to inform neighbours via letters and posted signage at apartment buildings at least 1-week ahead of time, often more effective if message comes directly from school. Recent downtown COVID street closures have created more of an expectation of this. Volunteers needed for the entire time of closure to move barriers for local neighbour cars to exit, especially because drop-off coincides with peak commute time. Could add moveable pylons in street centre too to encourage slow speeds.

*Queens:* This is the more congested area. Frequent illegal parking in round-about. A challenge here would be the larger apartment buildings along this street may need lots of access through the blocked off street.

*Princess:* Would not block off entire block, allowing access to staff parking lot. Fewer homes would make this an easier street to close in some ways.

### **Other suggestions near school:**

Bollards on Princess where bikes enter schoolyard need some maintenance. Several have been run over repeatedly.

Add additional no-parking signage at Queens St. round-about.

Parking signs on Chambers next to school should be updated to only allow short periods at drop-off/pick-up times and 3-hours during day to prevent all-day parking there.

Extend sidewalk on East side of Cook on school into street as has been done in North Park Village. This area is heavily congested as families seek to reach either side of school without going through school grounds.

**Other suggestions in neighbourhood:**

Attendees very supportive of city plans for traffic calming / diversion on Chambers. This street is a key connection to George Jay, Central, and Vic High.

Ramp at Camosen and Johnson is very narrow, preventing easy use by bicycles. Recommend updating to encourage this as a biking connection.

Add crosswalk lines at intersection with 4-way stop sign at Pembroke and Chambers.

Discussion of how to encourage driver support of active transportation along Cook. Issues include: drivers not stopping until well after stop lines on side streets, drivers racing to get ahead where 2-lanes narrow to 1-lane, unsafe passing of bicycles where bicycles should be encouraged to take full lane through the North Park Village, parking right to corners blocks driver-pedestrian sightlines.