

DPAC Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 19, 2025

6:30-8:16 pm

via Zoom

Attendees: Marina (chair), Jason (treasurer and QBES), Raani (secretary), Jennah (Director), Maleah (Director and CEAP/PASS), Carlie (EOES), Erin, Geraldine (EES), Rebecca (KSS), Felicia, Brianne, Holly, Jovonne, Lisa, Tracy (SES), Kavitha (BES), Jacquie, Ashley, Corrie, Megan (AES), Sarah (NBES)

Guests: Trustee Austin, Associate Superintendent Gillian Wilson, Principal of Early Child Sheila Morrison, Matt Woods (MATA)

1. Call to Order

- Meeting called to order by the Chair
- Land acknowledgement
- Verification of quorum (3 voting members)

2. Introductions

- Introductions were made.

3. Approval of Agenda

- Motion by Maleah seconded by Jennah, approved by all.

4. Approval of November Minutes

- Motion by Rebecca, seconded by Maleah, October minutes approved by all.
- No one opposed the meeting being transcribed.

5. Trustee Update - Julie Austin

- Trustee Austin was in attendance but due to time constraints did not share a report.

6. Mount Arrowsmith Teachers Association (MATA) and CUPE

- Matt (MATA) was in attendance but due to time constraints did not share a report.

7. Chair's Report

- Really impressed with the support from everyone! Thank you!
- **Integrated Child and Youth (ICY) Team** - The Program Lead position was ordered to be reinstated by the Ministry of Health. Kudos to all the PAC Chairs for signing our advocacy letter!
- **IEP Information Session** is confirmed for Feb. 5. The time is TBC. The district will provide an overview and opportunity for parents to submit questions. The goal is to learn from this session and continue to improve these in the future.
- **DPAC Executive Meeting with MLA Higginson** confirmed in January. This is an opportunity for PACs and parents/caregivers to share your questions here. Trustee Austin mentioned that MLA Higginson was a school trustee for three terms and chair of the trustee association.

8. Treasurer's Report

- **Gaming Account Balance** as of November 19, 2025: \$4,262.94
- **General Account Balance** as of November 19, 2025: \$16,398.32
- BC Gaming Summary Report was submitted today.

9. Old Business

- **BCCPAC and DPAC Coalition membership**
 - Jennah spoke to both organizations (BCCPAC and DPAC Coalition) and looked at some articles.
 - Recommendation from the Executive is we join both. Here is the [pros and cons](#) document that was provided to members in advance.
 - Cost for BCCPAC membership is \$200 and provides access to resources and ability to vote.
 - DPAC Coalition - they are an informal group helping districts with similar issues to lobby, it's unclear who they are representing, no cost to join. There's a possibility to try and connect with Vancouver Island/midisland DPACs.
 - Our bylaws say that DPAC will maintain close ties to BCCPAC.
 - ***Motion by Marina: That DPAC become a BCCPAC member for \$200 and affiliate with the DPAC Coalition at no cost in 2025/26.***
 - ***Motion seconded by Maleah***
 - Discussion: To influence change it's important to have a vote and need to consider bylaws and do we need a DPAC BCCPAC representative.
 - Vote
 - a. YES: CEAP/PASS, EES, QBES, EOES, AES, KSS
 - b. NO: NBES, SES
 - c. ***Motion adopted, DPAC will join BCCPAC and DPAC Coalition***
- **QSD Trustee letter**
 - [Background and recommendation](#) information sent ahead of meeting
 - ***Motion put forward by Marina: That the Qualicum School District DPAC endorse and co-sign the November 13, 2025 letter advocating for redirecting funding from private schools to public schools.***
 - **Seconded by Maleah and Jennah**
 - Discussion:
 - CEAP/PASS - Want the freedom to choose the learning environment for our kids, not a one size fits all, not funding private schools narrows choices, want to protect educational choice, parents not institutions should not have the final say in their children's education.
 - QBES - did a poll on whats app and facebook. Will be voting based on poll results. Parents are uncomfortable with wording including all independent schools not just high end prep schools getting funding. Concerned we are capturing schools in this letter that we don't mean to.
 - MATA - Funding for independent schools is predominantly for private schools charging a significant amount of money. The public system is for everyone but we aren't always provided the funding

to provide the support for everyone. When you pay taxes for public institutions, everyone should have access to that. Clearly the public system is not open for everyone. We are big believers in public education. The choices can still be out there but because the money is tight, the money should be for public education. There are smaller private institutions, and there could be some clarity around that.

- Trustee Austin - good discussion. The point of the letter is to expand this conversation to the provincial level. Elite prep schools take away the choice for a lot of parents due to cost. Minister Beare said don't ask for more funding. This isn't asking for more funding, it's asking for funding to be redirected to address some of the needs not being addressed in public education.
- Question: Unclear if there is a category in legislation for private schools. The schools we are talking about fall under the independent schools like Arrowsmith Academy, Coast Karma.
 - a. All private schools fall under the independent school act. Independent schools are given either 50% or 35% of provincial per student funding depending on how much tuition fees they charge.
 - b. Only about 5% of the half a billion go to niche schools. 95% is going to higher end schools.
- KSS - would be helpful if there was a presentation about how these funds would be used and how they would help the public system. If all of our public schools could offer everything all the kids need, that would be great. If we fight for this, what does this mean?
- MATA - The province used to spend 4% of GDP on public education. Currently the province spends close to 2% on public education. We are more inclusive now. Schools do what they can to keep kids in school and are doing that with less money and less support. I know how expensive school has gotten with student fees. Used to not be costly to parents. Let's get the conversation started and then get to the details. Private schools are also getting subsidies for bussing so don't have the full picture of what public funds private schools are getting.
- QBES - is there a possibility of rewording the letter to clarify the language.
 - a. Trustee Austin is in support of narrowing the focus to not include niche schools in the letter but other trustees pointed out that public schools would be able to meet the needs that niche schools are providing if they had the funding.

- MATA - this is a trustee letter. BCTF has resolutions to ask their president to discuss this with the minister as well.
- CEAP - Concern that moving funding from private schools does not guarantee that the money would go to public schools.
- Vote:
 - YES: SES
 - NO: CEAP/PASS, NBES, BES, EOES, QBES, AES, EES
 - **Motion failed, DPAC will not be co-signing the trustee letter**
- **DPAC Food Program Working Group** - Sign up to join [HERE](#). A meeting is being planned next week. To provide input into your availability click [HERE](#).
- **DPAC Inclusion Working Group** - Sign up to join [HERE](#).
- **Food Safe Training** - DPAC funding available to cover [food safe training](#) for two PAC representatives at each school.

10. New Business

- No DPAC meeting in December.
- January 21 DPAC meeting items for discussion. Please review these documents in advance:
 - [DPAC Social Media Policy](#)
 - [DPAC Media and Press Release Process](#)
 - [Notetaker Support Person Proposal](#)
- To keep meetings moving, we could look at using [consent agendas](#). Will discuss this at our January meeting.

11. School Food Program Presentation - Gillian and Sheila

- Video recording is available [HERE](#)
- Slide deck is available [HERE](#).
- Two funding sources - national and provincial funding
- National funding can only be used for food programs during the school day, is stricter in its uses, can be used for food safe equipment/environment (industrial)
- Provincial funding has more flexibility and there is a separate funding for food program capital projects like kitchen renos
- We have over 4000 students in the district
- 2025-26 goals
 - Provide school meal programs that meet the needs of ind schools and reduce stigma
 - Find ways to enhance what schools are already doing
 - Expand variety of healthy options
 - Use local products as much as possible
 - Limit packaging and reduce waste
 - Develop plans to upgrade infrastructure
 - Federal food allocations
 - Capital from provincial funding - multi-year plan to do this as we don't have staffing to do it all at once
- What schools are doing:
 - 6 schools have meal programs provided by fully qualified and experienced school meal workers
 - BSS
 - KSS
 - PASS/CEAP

- BES
 - EES
 - SES
- QBES and AES receive meals from KSS
 - Remaining schools have hours added to an existing staff member who provides meals, snacks, and/or “top-ups” (if they eat their lunch and are still hungry) to any student who needs it.
- The slide deck goes through the programs available at each school.
- BUDGET
 - Feeding futures \$498,412
 - National food program \$148,180
 - National food program carry forward \$65,196 (fridges, freezers)
 - Total = \$711,788
 - Principals meet as a group to decide how to allocate funds along with social index factor.
 - Total funding by school provided in the slide deck.
 - KSS funding includes funding for QBES and AES meals since they are made in the community kitchen at KSS.
 - School meal workers salaries come from the food funding.
 - Student numbers do not include international students
 - There is food funding for after school programs.
 - Hands and Hearts is partly funded from provincial funding
 - Social workers have money for gift cards
 - Some district staff hours for Sheila come from food funding
- The district heard that there is a need for some grab and go type of food that is barrier free. Will be putting some fridges with glass doors in common areas with food kids can take. Working on finding locations for these in each of the schools.
- Challenges
 - Replacement staff and logistics of covering absences
 - Available space to store supplies and prepare food
 - Bulk ordering can be more cost effective but minimum order requirements, delivery costs, and storage is a major issue
- “Free and lower-cost food in Oceanside” list compiled by Island Health. There are resources available outside of school hours. List is available in the slide deck.
- QUESTIONS
 - Why do some schools have more staffing and less food costs and some schools have less staffing and more food costs?
 - All schools have varying needs
 - Some have local groups supporting in various ways
 - Varying number of students in need of food each day
 - Space for equipment
 - Some schools have PACs that organize lunches
 - Elementary school programs - school wide or for students in need?
 - Available to all students to reduce stigma
 - Third year of this program.
 - Need to make sure a universal program works with budget
 - Have not been directing schools to do anything, have been asking them what they want to do.
 - Looking at surrounding districts - is there a clear goal for our district like when there was a middle school and everyone could go get a bowl of soup and bun. What is the vision?

- Excited about the working group, need the staffing and facilities.
- How do we get this in all of our schools is a great goal.
- In Nanaimo they have loaves and fishes and a food share hub.
- Trying to meet the needs where we currently are, looking forward to the working group.
- How many students are getting meals to know where we are starting today?
 - Don't have this number but could look into it.
 - Looking to Indigenous council for recommendations to make sure we are supporting indigenous students appropriately.
- Comment: Not a lot of community based options in our community for food support. Our area is under salvation army food bank and they have had a lot of empty shelves. Loaves and Fishes food is available to our Oceanside families, low barrier as long as folks can go pick up their basket. There are some groups that have chosen not to be put on the Oceanside list and don't have stable federal funding to support. There are go fund mes to fund many local programs. Organizations are receiving less food program funding and being told that this funding is being redirected to school districts. This puts more pressure on school districts to meet needs.
- Comment: Looking at index and needs, many families are time poor, working multiple jobs/long hours and don't have the time to make the lunches or do the shopping, etc.
 - District recognizes that there are "working poor" families.
- Question about using gift cards vs food in the Hands and Hearts program
 - The program can bulk buy more food than with gift cards.
- Suggestion: The working group or DPAC could look at doing a parent survey.
- SOS - district was told by the SOS to encourage families to reach out to the SOS for help even if the barriers for support might limit them
- **Food Program Working Group** - If you are interested in continuing the conversation please join the food program working group and fill out the poll [HERE](#) on what time works best for you to meet next week. Everyone is welcome to join!

12. Next Meeting

- Wednesday, January 21 at 6:30 pm

13. Adjournment - 8:16 pm

Future Meeting Topics / Action Items

- Discuss information, resources, training parents/caregivers would like to see offered/supported by DPAC.
- Future Topics for discussion:
 - Accessibility Working Group updates
 - RDN busing
 - Fieldtrip busing equity costing - follow-up in January
 - School Boundary Discussion

- Food Program working group
- Inclusion working group

Have a topic you'd like to discuss? Email us at gsd.dpac@gmail.com

DPAC Meeting Schedule for 2025/26

Meetings are scheduled for the third Wednesday of each month at 6:30 pm.

- January 21
- February 18
- April 15
- May 20