

Van Tech PAC Meeting Minutes

Agenda; September 29, 2020, Via Zoom

Upcoming meeting dates on the [website](#).

PAC Executive: Amy Chuang (Chair), Sharon Henderson (Treasurer), Kyla Epstein (Secretary)

Attendees: ~45 Van Tech Parents/Family Members

Guests: Robert Moro (Principal), N/A (Teacher Rep)

1. Welcome & Introductions (Amy Chuang)
 - Welcome to the first PAC meeting of 2020/21!
 - Land acknowledgement to honour the territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh
2. Chair Remarks (Amy Chuang)
 - We are pleased to have you
 - Feel free to send your questions over the year into chairvt@gmail.com
 - We don't do fundraising other than what we get from the gaming grant which is currently unsure for the 2020/21 year
 - Role for your PAC is to communicate between the parent/family community and the administration
 - Primary concerns are ensuring education during this year and also safe and healthy
3. Teacher Rep Report (N/A)
 - No report
4. Treasurer's Report (Sharon Henderson)
 - Have good bank balance (~\$18K) from last year
 - Still waiting to hear about a grant for this year
 - Only a few funding requests from last year - usually ones that are the same year over year
 - Normally by this time of year we have lots of funding requests from the school departments but because this year is so unusual we haven't received any
 - Most of the funding for things like field trips won't be necessary due to the current situation
5. DPAC Announcements (Amanda Hillis, DPAC Vice Chair)
 - DPAC = District Parent Advisory Council
 - Any parent can attend DPAC meetings
 - Kyla is the current rep from Van Tech to DPAC so votes on your behalf
 - PAC 101 coming up this Thursday
 - See [calendar](#) of what's coming up
 - DPAC provides great workshops and other resources for parents/families
 - We will be getting an update about the VSB budget in the coming months

- All folks welcome to attend - register for online link
6. General Announcements & Acknowledgements (Amy Chuang)
- We try and bring in workshops usually in the year
 - We can source online options for presenters or speakers at our PAC meetings if you have topics you're interested in
7. Principal's Report (Robert Moro)
- Great to see everyone online!
 - Joined by Vice Principals: Sonja Rondestvedt and Sangeeta Kauldher
 - Start to school year was somewhat complicated but was a smooth start all things considering
 - Students have caught on to new timetable
 - Students quickly learned protocols for COVID guidelines for health and safety
 - Many used to protocols from the spring
 - Impressed with how well new students caught on

Sangeeta Kauldher

- Reporting for this upcoming year
- Moving to proficiency scales for grade eights; similar to elementary school
- For grade nines - letter grades
- Grades 10-12 - percentages and letters as typically do
- What's different
 - Were moving to two reporting periods: one in January & June
 - With quarter system....maintaining this plan for two reporting periods
 - As parent - will receive 8 report cards
 - Two formal reporting periods per course
 - About half way (5 weeks) and then at end of 10 weeks
 - Planning on sending messaging out later this week with exact dates

Sonja Rondestvedt

- Will be updating code of conduct for students
- Will start with student forums to gather information
- Will have discussions with community - including parent
- Messaging this week we will be asking for parent/family input
- Will also be reaching out more broadly
- Will be seeing messaging later this week

Rob Moro

- Thank you to both VPs!

8. SPECIAL: Town Hall with Principal Robert Moro and Vice Principals Sonja Rondestvedt and Sangeeta Kauldher

This section is composed of responses to pre-submitted questions

- Primary - letter that went home yesterday about member of school community that tested positive; timeline of what happened

- Sunday night - Director of Instruction at VSB contacted Principal - starts a chain reaction - start to put letter together - Principal calls staff meeting first thing Monday morning; share news and communicate key points - positive test, VCH takes over process, contact tracing, they decide who needs to be contacted, they do all calls, they then inform individuals that need to be directed on next steps; told staff that contact tracing was done by end of Sunday night so anyone not contacted didn't need to worry; continued to maintain health & safety protocols in school; continued to stress with students what they need to do; need to protect privacy of individuals, limited to amount of information that could provide; trying to minimize speculation; we know folks can be absent for a number of reasons; stressed with students not to speculate; let staff know that letter would be sent to parents and then staff could discuss those key concepts discussed at staff meeting
- Been receiving calls and concerns; continue to inform everyone that have good protocols in place; confident that doing a great job at the school
- Concern about the RVs parked around the school
 - In contact of COV staff on this matter
 - They have a process that they go through; starts with a letter, if don't move, then tickets issued, if still there, work with other agencies to get RVs towed
 - Some of this process gets delayed if the owners of the RVs are part of Carnegie Centre and are trying to relocate and find housing
 - Know concerns around illegal activity; if see any, please report it to police
 - Community policing centre aware of situation and watching for illegal activity
- \$85 Grad Fees; what is covered?
 - Normally would go towards rental of the facility for grad
 - Last year held the event at the school
 - Some expenses towards decorations
 - Prom opportunity for photos - even last year for photos
 - Lawn Signs
 - Banner
 - Grad video
 - Gowns, caps, etc.
 - Engraving trophies
- How is VT dealing with social distancing?
 - Staff always reminding students to maintain distance
 - Put tape in hallways to create pathways - keeping students on either side against lockers to keep 2m between
 - Have signage; limits to number of people in rooms - including washrooms
 - In classrooms have rearranged desks or students sit in same area
- Will there be athletics?
 - PE dept is keeping students active in their PE courses

- For teams...BC school sports has various phases that they move through; their phase two does allow for intra-school activities with cohorts
- VSB has not moved to that phase; still in phase one so no teams
- Will reconsider this after Thanksgiving
- Potential for 'skills clinics' for sports
- No competitions with other schools
- Even 'skills clinics' can be tough because coaches are often volunteers from community; not currently allowed on school grounds
- VT Athletic Director has called out to VT staff to see who may be able to help out
- Grade 8s: how can they make social connections?
 - Typically would have had programming for this
 - This year not possible
 - Student council looking at putting some activities together
 - Hope to focus on grade 8s - some interaction online
 - Ways to get to know each other
 - There are chances in classes to get to know each other as well
 - Quarter systems means they will switch soon and get a chance to meet more folks
 - We will do what we can to support this
 - Concentrate more with core competencies in Grade 8 Career Ed; can also do it through this learning
- School Fees
 - Usually includes guest speakers such as cyber safety, Safe Teen, etc.
 - Student council events comes from here as well as support clubs
 - This year...unique situation; not sure how things will shape up
 - Looking forward to creativity from students
 - Generally fund items that support the general student body

This section covers additional questions asked at the meeting

- Will there be clubs this year?
 - There will be
 - Must follow guidelines
 - Lots will look at doing things online
 - Working with the clubs to figure things out
- Will the structure for the remote course be revisited? Leaving big gaps of time for kids to be self-managing. What are the expectations for delivering this remote class?
 - Can understand frustration
 - Teachers trying to redesign how to deliver one year in condensed form; some better than others/stronger with the technology
 - Communicated to teachers that need to make contact with students at least 3x/week
 - This contact can vary based on the course or the teacher

- Have built in flex time so that is where a teacher needs to be available for the remote course or for students to contact the teacher
- Have let teachers know that if want to have a remote/live time; can use the morning flex times so we know kids are available
- Asked all teachers to record if they do offer remote/live so all students can access
- If have concern with offering; please reach out to the teacher to get a sense of why things are happening the way they are
- How can students keep up with their coursework if they are required to go into isolation but are not sick and cannot attend school until cleared by a doctor?
 - Just like any time that students are away for legitimate reasons
 - Teachers must provide information about what missed; provide students assignments and engage in learning opportunities
 - Teachers are not expected to teach remotely what doing in F2F
 - Very course dependent
 - Can impact student in condensed model
 - Teachers asked to post online so that students can access assignments online
 - Some teachers involve technology at a different level
 - Maintain learning opportunities
- With over 400 schools nationwide declaring COVID cases what additional protocols are you going to put in place to protect our kids, teachers and community
 - Take direction from VSB and VCh
 - If need additional measures we will do so
 - Until then we will maintain current status
- My son noticed a student regularly coming to his class who coughs constantly and appears to be sick (wears mask). Do the health protocols state to students/staff, do not come to school if you have symptoms for any illness. Concern with the cold and flu season coming up, we won't be able to tell Covid from other illnesses, and students still coming to school.
 - General rule - if sick, don't come to school and seek medical advice
 - Have some students that have allergies or other reasons why appear to be sick; may be in the school
 - Messaging for all - including staff, if sick, get guidance
 - Reminder of daily health assessment checklist for child every morning
 - If staff notice a student with symptoms; call the office for first aid can do an assessment and call home if needed as well as isolation room
 - Do have students with allergies so may be in school
- How many students are at VanTech? And are any students doing only online courses? Can you comment on if there are students in need to access online technology?
 - Approx 1600 VT students
 - Not all in building at same time

- Technology - did device handout for students who need technology tools
- Asking students to use Tech Hub in the library if possible
- If needed at home - because no device at home - can hand out devices; have limited number
- Need to have some devices in school for teaching/learning
- If student in need, please let counsellor or administration know
- For students fully online - very few doing all courses online; some students not coming back right now, kept their timetables; doing [VLN](#) for Q1 and could return in Q2
- Tell me more about your anti-racism work in a virtual school world and what you are actually committed to. Given the systemic anti-Black and Indigenous/people of colour discrimination being highlighted in the media, what changes will you make to raise awareness and support students of colour.?
 - Need to reflect on this
 - Not sure we've thought about this fully for online
 - Had PD on Friday regarding systemic discrimination
 - Need to think more about this
- If there is a covid case, may we know which class as I am worried that it was spread before testing is done and symptoms may not show up until later and more students in the class will be positive?
 - Common concern
 - VCH is doing what need to do
 - They evaluate situation and contact those that feel need to have additional steps
 - Each case is different
 - Case from yesterday was a one-day exposure on Sept 21 so VCH gave medical directions based on this and other information from interviews
- How many students are doing only online courses?
 - Not sure of the current numbers
 - Grade 9s & 11s - approx 10
 - Grades 8s & 10s - approx 12 total
- Noticing regular groups of Van Tech students gathering in the underground parking lot of an apartment off Broadway. No one is social distancing, maybe 1 or 2 wears a mask, but there are more than 6 to 10 students or more huddled and smoking/vaping. What is your advice on who to call about this?
 - Challenging question since not on school grounds
 - On school grounds the staff will remind students
 - Some students feel like in own bubble socially
 - When we see it we remind them of the rules; we emphasize this for them
- If the Covid situation worsens, do the students have the option to do their 2nd, 3rd or 4th term courses on VLN online?
 - Don't see why this would be an issue
 - Could have impact on their timetable
 - For some students had to move things around to use VLN in Q1

- Hoping to keep students connected - hope they can be with each other at school
 - Did try and keep students in yearly cohorts - especially grade 8s together for core subjects; didn't work
- Hello, I want to put it out there that as a parent and community member we do not want the folks living in campers around Tech to be targeted to move along during this clear housing crisis. Our daughter reports no issues. Just to flag there are differing opinions on this difficult issue.
 - Challenge of course
 - Duty to maintain safety for all students
 - At this point in hands of the COV
 - Can contact VPD SLO - who is visible in the area
 - Approach - just keeping an eye and contacting police if needed
- I have also noticed outsiders using the tennis courts in the morning during school hours? It is my understanding that no outsiders are allowed on school grounds, does the school administration have the right to ask them to leave?
 - During school hours for school
 - After hours - public area
 - During school hours; not out there policing the courts but if made aware of an issue can deal with it
 - Trying to be good neighbours
 - School facilities - can be rented if needed (e.g. soccer fields); apparently not currently renting
 - School hours 830-330
- Do all Van Tech classrooms have windows that open to the outside? Will windows be kept open during the colder weather to ensure good airflow?
 - Ventilation system is working properly and no issues
 - Up to teachers to open windows; temperature is an issue as well
 - Working with all classroom teachers around windows
 - Some were stuck; working with maintenance to get those opened
 - Continuing to review as part of building health & safety checklist
- Is Van Tech asking VSB for Federal funds to support outdoor learning?
 - Talking about this a lot
 - Music class has been outside using grassy knoll
 - Accessing spaces where possible
 - Teachers have some wish lists
 - Been looking to use Trout Lake
 - More to come on this area
- Are there sinks in all classrooms to wash hands or is sanitizer provided for no sink rooms?
 - Many have sinks
 - Any class without sink provide hand sanitizer
 - VSB been great at delivering it on a weekly basis
 - Have a few automatic ones

- Entry points have hand sanitizer stations
- With the reduction of in-class instruction from 5 hrs per day to 1.5 hrs per day, are staff concerned that they will not be able to adequately teach course curriculums? Will you re-evaluate the schedule after the first quarter?
 - Haven't yet heard from any teachers that won't be able to cover curriculum
 - But this is all new to everyone; time will tell
 - VSB is monitoring the situation; not sure if changes will come
 - At this point haven't had any serious concerns yet
- In previous years, students were in class for 2-3 hours in the morning and 2-3 hours in the pm. With the face to face class only being 1 hr and 45 min and the online not requiring instructors to be in contact with clients everyday, has this reduced the workload on instructors? Are the extra hours available to them meant to be used to facilitate the tech curve they are riding? Are teachers using time to develop materials?
 - At this point it varies depending on the teachers and the course
 - Can assure you that teachers are very busy
 - Flex time is meant to support students in remote mode and becomes part of their prep to prepare lessons and mark also used for cleaning
- Will provincial exams be put on hold?
 - Working on a school to run provincial assessments safely
 - Province has given additional session throughout the year and additional week in June to run them for the students
 - So can run them in smaller groups
 - They will be online; e-assessments
 - Looking at ~12 students per room for running them
 - Putting in final details
 - Details will be coming out for the different grades and their assessment requirements
 - One Grade 12 (literacy) assessment has been cancelled for this year
 - Looking at Grade 12s (or 11s) who didn't write them in Grade 10 - do those in November
 - Grade 10s - looking at numeracy in January and literacy in April
 - Then if missed or want to rewrite - can do in June

9. Wrap Up & Adjournment (Amy Chuang)

- Thank you to Rob, Sonja, and Sangeeta for everything!
- Thank you to everyone who attended - please join us for the next meeting.

Next Meeting: October 27, 2020, 7pm, Zoom