

Jamieson PAC General Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, Nov. 28, 2018

In attendance:

Executive members:

Grace Chan

Flo Lum

Kim Lai

Wanda Chow

Alex Dow

Jacqueline Tiong

Edwin Lee

Janice Yip

Cindy Ling

Mei Ling Kwong

Lily Cheng

Absent: Kathy Tran

General members: Sabrina Gill, Tracy Lim Abaya, Anne Chiu, Janet Lee, Roxanne Louie, Stella Heo, Hanshin Kim, Caroline ?, Johnson Lee, Jiaowei Liu, Kenny Sham, Mei Ling Khong, Crystal Liu, Anne Yu, Jo-Ann Fong, Derek Chong, Winnie Leong, Eric Lim, Holly Lee, Jinyi Yoo, Erin Chen, Vania Ng, Ginny Chiu, Phuc Tinh (Nha) Nguyen, Erwin Wong, Jane Saborio, Heidi Shuter, H. Hailey Graham, Jason Wong, Franco Orr

Grace calls meeting to order at 6:38 pm

Approval of Agenda, and Minutes of the Sept. 12 and Oct. 11, 2018 PAC General meetings

*Kim motions to approve agenda and Sept. 12, 2018 minutes, seconded by Jacqueline, carried
Jacqueline motions to approve Oct. 11, 2018 minutes, seconded by Cindy, carried*

Principal's Report: Chris Wong

School move back to Tisdall site took place over Nov. 11 long weekend. Teachers were each given one day of unpacking time. All teachers cycled through that time within first couple weeks. Still doing some general unpacking in storage areas and library. School move went relatively smoothly. Parent feedback on seismic project in general is welcomed.

As we approach end of Term 1, report cards are being readied. For teachers using traditional report cards, they will be distributed on Dec. 19. Those on Communicating Student Learning pilot project for new format report cards will distribute them twice a year with the first on Jan. 31 (Divisions 1M, 2, 4, 7M, 11, 13, 16, 17 and 18).

A number of schools across VSB are partaking in pilot project, so no disadvantage to any student when applying to high school programs.

Grace Chan raises concerns about Advanced Strings Program:

We are happy for Chris and his new opportunity to leave Jamieson to become District Principal of Educational Planning, but couldn't come at worse time for us. She expressed concerns about the lack of an Advanced Strings program for grades 6 and 7 students which has existed for many years.

Chris clarified that the strings program has not changed curriculum-wise. In-school strings is still offered to all intermediate students. It operates on prep model in which strings classes are taught by Mr. Colpitts while other teachers receive their 100 minutes of prep time. That has not changed. Students receive two strings classes a week. There are no plans to change this.

The change is that in Term 1 the extra-curricular Pops Orchestra did not run. Mr. Colpitts offered Cellobration, a cellos-only group, instead as an extracurricular program.

The Pops Orchestra has been an extra-curricular program, outside Mr. Colpitts' teaching allocation. He has been providing the program with volunteer time like other teachers do with other extracurricular programs like team sports. It is up to the teachers whether or not they would like to offer the extracurricular activity/program.

Pops and Advanced orchestras are based on student interest, while the regular strings program is given to all students. We can't have more than 30 students per class during class time, so such orchestras would be allowed only as extra-curricular offerings.

A parent says this has been a longstanding issue but it has been solved before, why not now? The Advanced Strings orchestras are award-winning and extremely important to our school and community and have gained the school a reputation for music excellence.

Chris noted, in response to a parent question, that outside grants cannot pay for a teacher's time.

Ours is a very unique program. I know of the importance of the program.

Parent: The extra-curricular program has changed in last couple of years after VSB funding cuts removed prep time for Mr. Colpitts himself.

Chris: Parents can pay for an external group or instructor but not for a VSB teacher to teach an extra-curricular program.

Grace: We would all understand if Mr. Colpitts can't do it. But I believe there's a strong willingness to provide the program. However, I'm not hearing from administration that there is support for that piece. It doesn't make sense to use VSB rules and policies to allow the program to erode.

Chris: Will do what I can to support him. But it is a teacher's decision whether or not to operate such an extracurricular program.

Jacqueline Tiong suggests that the new incoming principal be invited to the Winter Concert. She noted that at the recent Stringvitational Concert at Magee secondary, the orchestras from Magee and Killarney are significantly smaller than in past years, possibly a result of the elimination for elementary strings

programs in the district due to VSB budget cuts.

Chris: I will do so and express importance of the program to the school. Don't think any former administrator is not aware of its importance.

There is understanding from the district of its importance through the concerts held last year. I have not had a chance to speak to new principal yet but hoping to bring her in earlier, before the new year, so there can be more in-depth transition, and understanding of the school community. Perhaps will invite PAC chair to help express importance of program.

A parent asked that Chris advocate for Jamieson's Advanced Strings program in his new role as VSB District Principal.

Flo Lum asked how Chris can help and what does he need to help make the program happen?

A parent requested that Chris stand up and advocate for the program. She wants to know what the PAC and parents can do to help Chris and Mr. Colpitts start up the Advanced Strings program again?

Chair's Report: Grace Chan

Fall fundraising: sold \$47,000 worth of gift cards, mostly led by Winnie Leong. Net profit will be about \$3,000.

Cineplex certificate sales doing well. Will be on sale at Winter Social. Poinsettias will be ready for pickup at social on Nov. 30. Silent auction received more than 150 donated items already.

Treasurer's Report: Kim Lai

Everything on target so far.

Adjournment

Grace motions to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 pm, seconded by Jacqueline, carried