

Parent Advisory Committee to the Superintendent (PACS)

October 1, 2008

Schools Represented:

Elementary Schools:

Alderwood
Birchwood
Columbia
Geneva
Happy Valley
Roosevelt
Silver Beach
Sunnyland
Wade King

Middle Schools:

Fairhaven
Kulshan
Shuksan
Whatcom

High Schools:

Squalicum

District Staff: Tanya Rowe, director of Communications and Community Relations

Note Taker: Nancy Merry, secretary to the Superintendent

Co-Chairs: Mary LeDonne and Pam Behee

District Update:

Tanya Rowe gave an update on the District, including:

- ³ The school year got off to a smooth start, including the opening of the new Wade King Elementary School.
- ³ The District is continuing a recognition program that started last year. There is a video on School Tube of last year's staff recognition (www.schooltube.com/video/10913/Bellingham-School-District-Annual-Awards-2008-Video). Contact Tanya Rowe at 676-6520 if you are interested in serving on the recognition committee.
- ³ The Community Open House was held for Wade King Elementary School on September 29 with approximately 300 in attendance.
- ³ Much is happening with facilities including the completion of seismic work at Columbia; the first phase of seismic work was completed at Larrabee, with the second phase scheduled for next summer; seismic work at Whatcom is beginning. The District will continue to keep families informed with regular updates.
- ³ Transportation Count Week is October 6–10. The transportation funding the District receives from the state for the entire school year is determined by the number of students who ride the bus to school at least three mornings during this week. The Herald will run an article on October 5 about bus transportation. If you would like to be interviewed for the article or if you have suggestions on how to market this campaign, contact Rowe at 676-6520. Rowe encouraged sharing this information at parent meetings.

Top 10% of Students Sub-Committee

Shuksan Middle School parent Dana Lindquist discussed her desire to form a sub-committee to consider students who are in the top 10% of their class but not necessarily part of the Highly Capable Program. She feels there is an emphasis on students who are not meeting standard, and

that students who are meeting standards are often forgotten. This parent sub-committee would serve as a forum to discuss, share and formulate questions to help the District know how to help these students. She posed the following questions:

- ³ How are these students doing?
- ³ Are they getting what they need?
- ³ What is working for them?
- ³ What do the teachers need to reach these students?
- ³ How are these students doing as they move from level to level?

There was discussion about creating other sub-committees focusing on the passions of those attending.

Meeting Topics for 2008–2009

Sharon Stahl led the group through a discussion of topics they would like to cover during the 2008–2009 meetings. Attendees were given dots to rank the most important to them. The group will probably also hear from existing task forces during the year, including the Graduation Requirement Task Force, All Day Kindergarten Task Force, World Language Task Force.

Following is a draft of the topics that were discussed and received the most votes:

1. Behavior issues
2. Equity issues
 - a. Programs
 - b. Funding
3. Individualized instruction
4. Math update
 - a. Standards
 - b. Curriculum
 - c. Professional development
5. Culminating Project
 - a. Publicize better in community
 - b. Have seniors do a public presentation
 - c. Put the video about Culminating Project on School Tube
 - d. Have Bellingham Herald talk to the PACS about how to get better publicity on school-related events.
6. School Budget 201
 - a. Have Assistant Superintendent Ron Cowan explain, as he did to the District Budget Advisory Committee, the District budget, including how the District receives funds and how expenditures are allocated. The PACS should share this information with parent organizations.
 - b. Equity among schools
 - c. Creating a District Foundation to raise funds districtwide
7. Committee/Task Force Participation
8. High school issues
 - a. Drugs and alcohol

- b. Student drop out
 - c. Lack of space in some classes
 - d. Coordinating the high school schedules
 - e. Class and teacher resources
 - f. Standard based reporting and what it means for college entrance
 - g. Electives
 - h. Dress code
 - i. Language
 - j. P.D.A.'s
9. After-school athletic programs
- a. Who is in charge?
 - b. How does it work?
 - c. How are coaches selected?
 - d. What is the purpose of athletic programs?
 - e. What is the funding source?
 - f. Could other sports be offered?
10. Sharing Fair
11. Safety zone
- a. Safety of students during recess and before/after school (ratio of supervisors per student)
 - b. Students returning to class after recesses
 - c. Safe walking zones and cross walks

Mary LeDonne and Pam Behee will meet with Dr. Vedra to review topics and select one for the November 5 meeting. It was also agreed that the on-line survey would be sent out again. Behee and LeDonne will also ask Dr. Vedra to give an update on topics such as AVID and the arts. It was suggested that it would be helpful for the speakers to have questions in advance so they know the areas on which to focus. In some cases, members would not want to just receive information, but to know how they could help enact change.

In other matters, Tanya Rowe, director of Communications and Community Relations, will work with administrators to update the District Website's list of committees and task forces and the process for applying to serve on one. Information includes whether the committee/task force is for internal staff or if it is open to the community and whether the committee/task force is being formed, ongoing, or completing work (www.bham.wednet.edu/staff/committee.htm). Dr. Vedra or Tanya Rowe will share updated information with members at the next Parent Advisory Committee meeting.

Group Sharing

LeDonne and Behee asked members to sign up for group sharing time for each meeting. Group sharing will be limited to three schools per meeting and will be an opportunity to share a best practice or to bring up a concern.

Members signed up for the following schools:

November 5:	1.	March 4:	1. Silver Beach
	2.		2. Alderwood
	3.		3.
December 3:	1. Happy Valley	April 1:	1.
	2.		2.
	3.		3.
January 7:	1. Fairhaven	May 6:	1.
	2.		2.
	3.		3.
February 4:	1.	June 3:	1.
	2.		2.
	3.		3.

Members are asked to share information from these meetings with their principal and parent organizations.

Future Meetings:

Meetings are from 9:15 to 11:15 a.m. at the Administration Building, 1306 Dupont Street.

November 5, 2008	March 4, 2009
December 3, 2008	April 1, 2009
January 7, 2009	May 6, 2009
February 4, 2009	June 3, 2009