

Jessie Wowk Elementary School
PAC Meeting Minutes

Monday, December 1, 2025 5:30pm
In person @ Wowk library

Meeting called to order: 5:30pm

In attendance: April, Arnold, Michelle, Candy, Mabel, Belle, Joy, Natalie, Charles

Regrets: Crystal, Karen, Victoria

Previous November meeting minutes reviewed & approved

1. Land Acknowledgment (April)

- Reflection inspired by dandelions often grow in neglected or less cared for spaces but still provide support for other life
- Connected to roles in supporting learners who may be growing, and helping children see their own potential
- Meeting opened with land acknowledgement, recognizing that the school community gathers on the unceded traditional territories of the hən̓q̓əmin̓əṃ-speaking peoples, where the Musqueam people continue their cultural traditions

2. Introductions- Welcome to a new attendee

- A new PAC member, Charles, introduced himself:
Parent of a kindergarten student

Welcomed and noted appreciation for another voice around the table

3. Budget Update (Michelle)

- Current account balance: approx. \$55,549.55
- Outstanding payables: PAC still owes the vendor roughly \$4,000 (possibly more once all invoices are in)
- Playground funds:
 - PAC is setting aside \$25,000 specifically for the playground
- Available general funds:
 - After the \$25,000 playground amount, approx. \$26,549 remains available for other PAC-supported activities
- Gaming funds:
 - After funding Ultimate and Will's Jams, approximately \$600 remains in the gaming account
- Noted that PAC aims to stay at a surplus and avoid going negative; this informed previous decisions not to approve more than ~\$3,000 in certain spending requests
- Planned spending:
 - Winter Celebration approx. \$1,500 (food, balloon twisting, photo booth, DJ/disco, supplies)

- Lunar/Chinese New Year event approx. \$400 for the candy/sugar-art program plus additional costs (e.g., fortune cookies)
- Disco ball purchased for the Winter Celebration cost around \$200 (approx. figure mentioned), discussion about brightness and whether to keep or return if it's not suitable

4. Playground Project & Fundraising (Arnold, April)

- Cost updates from Dave (playground supplier/facilities)
 - Phase 1 (landing pad, slides, climbers, related pieces)
 - Without community install: approx. \$80,000
 - With community install: approx. \$69,000
 - Phase 2 (zipline area)
 - Approx. \$46,000
- With the current \$25,000 set aside, plus funds raised via previous events (e.g., Walk-a-thon), PAC estimates playground funds are nearing \$28–29K in total (exact amount to be confirmed with the school/district, as some funds sit in a district account from specific fundraisers like the Walk-a-thon)
- Donations & accounts
 - Families can donate through the school district online donation system (selecting Jessie Wowk and specifying “playground” in the notes for a tax receipt)
 - Directly to PAC (but tax receipts are harder to provide this way)
- Playground company is helping PAC draft pledge and donation letters to send to businesses
- Parents need a clear fundraising target (e.g., \$50,000) and an understanding of how much has already been raised so it does not feel like starting from zero

Discussion items:

- Question raised about placing playground funds into a high-interest savings account to earn some interest instead of leaving everything in the regular chequing account
- In past funds remained in chequing due to the need to write frequent cheques and uncertainty about final playground costs
- Whether the district-donated playground funds are kept separate from PAC's bank account
- Clarifying the total raised so far specifically for the playground
 - Suggestion: Ask Crystal (school office) and the TD bank side what options exist to separate playground funds into a savings-type account.
- Charles suggested approaching companies while they are setting budgets for the upcoming year, as it can be a good time to request support
- Idea discussed to recognize large donors on a donor board near the playground

Planned Actions:

- At the Winter Celebration, a bulletin board will
 - Show 7–8 sample playground design options provided by the vendor
 - Label each design with a number in the corner
 - Include QR codes for voting (families choose their top three options) and donations
 - Show a fundraising “thermometer”/gauge for the \$50,000 target and current progress

- After the event, information will also be shared via school's weekly communication and PAC channels (WeChat groups, etc.)
- PAC would like to create a poster or infographic summarizing all the events and items supported by PAC funds this year (e.g., Winter Celebration, Chinese New Year activities)
- The goal is to help families see that PAC fundraising is actively supporting the school, not just requesting more contributions
-
- City wooden playground and petition letter:
 - There is a separate city-owned wooden playground
 - A letter has been drafted regarding concerns or changes related to that equipment
 - PAC will review and comment on the draft first, then share a final version
- There was discussion of turning it into an online petition (hosting the letter online and sharing a link)

5. Hot Lunch Program (Mabel & Michelle)

- Current status- PAC currently runs hot lunch two days per week
- Concern brought up that two days might already be a lot in terms of workload and waste
- Some students report that parents do not want them to bring food home, so they throw it away instead
- Teachers encourage students to bring uneaten items back so families know what is actually being eaten
- Teachers are not required to supervise lunch while students eat
- Noon-hour supervisors and administrators manage supervision and transitions
- Challenging to check for reusable utensils or to enforce washing utensils if left at school
- Hard to monitor sorting of waste and recycling in every class
- Suggested student "lunch leader" roles to help monitor waste and recycling, but there are concerns about putting too much responsibility on students
- Improved communication to families about sending reusable cutlery
- Encouraging lunch containers and leftovers to be brought home
- Perhaps a third-party vendor option (e.g., "Libby Kitchen"):
- Another PAC shared that their school uses a service where families order directly from a vendor's website, and the vendor sometimes gives a percentage back to the school
- Concerns for Jessie Wowk include:
 1. Logistical issues (missing or incorrect orders)
 2. Lack of staff capacity to manage distribution and problem-solving
 3. Additional garbage and packaging
 4. Less direct PAC fundraising than the current PAC-run model
 5. Changing the schedule to "eat first, then play" would require a staff decision and a larger process
- There will be no additional hot lunch days at this time
- Menu changes:
 - Subway is not very popular and often ends up in the garbage
 - A&W is being considered as a replacement for Subway
- Any major menu changes will likely occur in April rather than at the start of the school year

6. Upcoming events & Fundraising: (Natalie, Michelle)

Winter celebration:

- Planned for Thursday, December 12 (to be confirmed with district rentals and custodial requirements)
- PAC is contributing approximately \$2,000 to support the event as a community-building celebration
- balloon twisting, DJ, dance party, dance competition - best dancer
- Grade 7s run markets and game booths to raise funds for their graduation
- They have been asked not to bring store-bought chips, cakes, etc. to resell
- The focus is on handmade crafts, simple activities, and basic food items they prepare (such as baked goods, hot chocolate...etc.)
- Two dance sessions: approximately 4:00–4:15 p.m. and 4:45–5:00 p.m.
- “Best dancer” prizes (two winners per session)
- Gym lights will be dimmed but exit lights and some side lighting will remain on for safety
- Benches will be arranged into a “disco floor,” with reflective or protective coverings to prevent tripping
- 50/50 tickets will be sold beforehand via an online form
- 50% of the pot to the winner; 50% to the playground fund
- Additional \$50 EB Games gift card prize
- Draw to take place around 5:00 p.m.; winners need not be present if contact information is recorded
- Reading corner next to the book sale
- Celebrations includes - Balloon twisting, photo booth, DJ & Dancing
- Food - Pizza, sushi, finger foods, drinks & bake sale items
- Parent volunteers are needed before and after the event for set-up and clean-up
- Some former students (now grade 8/9) are returning to help

Lunar New Year Event:

- Tuesday, February 17 (day after Family Day)
- Full-day event in the gym
- Each division will have a scheduled session with activities
- Sugar art activity - Guest sugar artist will work with students throughout the day
- Sugar art is part of cultural heritage tradition from China
- Artist is trained and now brings the art to schools and events
- Students will each make a small mandarin orange out of sugar
- Items use a corn-syrup-like sugar mixture at a low, warm temperature, which is safe for children to handle
- The sugar pieces will be wrapped so students can bring them home; PAC will encourage them to show parents before eating
- Small crafts related to Lunar New Year
- Simple games such as using chopsticks to pick up marbles
- Students are encouraged to wear red
- Dumplings will not be served this year; fortune cookies will be used instead for a fun treat
- PAC will sponsor the sugar-artist program (around \$200+)
- A bulk purchase of fortune cookies (cost-effective source to be determined)

7. Principal's update: (April)

Will's Jams

- Will Stroet will be working with classes on songwriting
- December 15 and 16: classroom songwriting workshops
- December 18 at approx. 1:15 p.m. performance where students present their songs, and Will performs a mini concert for the whole school
- Cost has been negotiated to \$3,000 plus tax and is covered by gaming funds (approximately \$600 remains afterward)

School story and focus

- Ministry has asked schools to have specific literacy and numeracy goals
- Jessie Wowk's focus this year is reading comprehension, deepening student thinking
- Across the Steveston-London family of schools, many are focusing on similar areas (comprehension and deeper thinking skills)

Upcoming Opal Focus Group UBC & BC Children's Hospital

- Jessie Wowk has been invited to participate in a parent focus group
- Research project called "Shaping Outdoor Play and Learning in B.C." with Dr. Marianna Brussoni
- Jan 12th @ 4:30pm - 5:30pm, directly before next PAC meeting
- Participants: PAC executive and regular PAC attendees
- Participants receive a \$50 gift card
- Parents interested in participating should email the principal to sign up

Meeting adjourned: 6:32pm

Next PAC meeting: Monday, January 12, 5:30-6:30pm