

Minutes

Vancouver Talmud Torah PAC

January 16, 2017 @ 7 pm in Old Gym

Attendance:

PAC Executive: Jordana Dodek - PAC Co-Ordinator, Gretchen DuMoulin - PAC Co-Coordinator/Social Coordinator, Nicolle Wade - PAC Co- Coordinator/Ruach Coordinator, Stacey Levitt - PAC Fundraising Co-chair, Candice Stein - PAC Fundraising Co-chair, Roni Greif - Treasurer, Sandra Harris – Ruach Rep Grade 6, Kim Garaway – Ruach Rep Jnr Kindergarten, Tamara Stein - Ruach Rep Preschool, Shelley Balshine - Ruach Rep Grade 4, Angela Adler - Ruach Rep Grade 5

PAC At Large: Sara Karby, Kim Israel,

Regrets: Jaclyn Dayson - Ruach Rep Preschool 3, Karen Bichin – Ruach Rep Kindergarten, Haley Crooks – Ruach Rep Grade 1, Jessica Forman - Ruach Rep Grade 2, Kerry Benson - Ruach Rep Grade 5, Aimee Promislow - Ruach Rep Grade 7, Robin Freedman - Minute-Taker

School Representation: Cathy Lowenstein, Jenn Shecter-Balin, Ellen Wiesenthal, Rabbi Kasten

Approval of Minutes:

Previous meeting minutes approved, no amendments

School Survey Address:

Cathy Lowenstein, with assistance from Ellen, Jen, and Rabbi Kasten, addressed parents questions over the school survey sent out last June 2016. The following comments were made:

Approximately 30% response rate (110-120 out of approx. 300 families responded to the survey);

VTT is always working as a team and seeking to improve while providing excellence in teaching;

VTT is a candidate school and will complete accreditation in 14 months where every program is reviewed to meet the high standards of qualifying as an accredited school;

Key focus will be on making curriculum more meaningful to students in an already strong academic program;

Judaics and Hebrew will continue reflecting on curriculum scope and sequence and putting together more purposeful unit plans;

Focus groups are in the works for reviewing music, art, band, etc;

Parental involvement ranked last place for "What's Important to You" in Survey; Hanukkah concert next year will be a different format with more Hebrew; Parents questioned how much out-of-school tutoring is occurring; Leadership has no way of tracking;

Dual Language Curriculum students may be behind academically initially but catch up to Full English Curriculum students by middle school years and are generally better prepared/more well-rounded (i.e.: Leadership programs for building confidence);

Parents questioned why VTT is declining in FSA ratings; Cathy explained how the testing works; indicated that many private schools have only top-tiered English as a first language students writing the exam; VTT is a community school that lets all students including ESL write the exam;

Rabbi Kasten is settling in and hoping to engage more with parents to form solid relationships with families in the school; he will continue with weekly morning prayer study for any families who wish to participate and may also host an afternoon session; will host a PAC Talk with possible topics including "ABCs of Passover"/"Cool Ways to Host a Seder"

Ideas to reinforce community from other Hebrew day schools included: Weekly Table Talk sheet/Kabbalat Shabbat every Friday with dancing/singing/ruach where outside friends of families welcome/Mondays Havadalla

Movie Night Update:

Chaired by Debbi-Jo Matias (regrets - presented by Gretchen)

RSVP has been low; ideas to get greater participation include: charging an additional \$5 at the door (current charge is \$5 per person or \$15 for families)/using an art easel to display posters since taping them to walls in not allowed/advertising during morning announcements/promoting at school assembly/grade 7 students going class-to-class

Changes to movie include no age/grade limit for "Storks" and removing "Miss Peregrine's School for Peculiar Children" to a more age-appropriate selection for Grades 6+7 students - "Ferris Bueller's Day Off"

Winter Dance:

Chaired by Kim Israel

Beach Bash theme

Jordan Zwicker from Beyond Sound dj-ing

Tikki Lounge for parents

New VTT mascot will be introduced at dance; Contest - Name Our Mascot where each grade comes up with a name

10 families generously sponsored the decor

Photographer that could have donated services is away - does anyone know a photographer who would donate or charge very nominal fee to photograph the event (photos used not only to document but also for next year's fundraising calendar initiative)

Charitable Tax receipts offered?

PAC Talks:

1st talk given by Allison Setton + Sandra Harris on February 8th at 7

RSVP

Money Management for Families - real tips for ages 2 on up

Highlights include Budgeting/Allowance/How to Have Money Talk/Jewish values

Handouts will be provided with links to activity sheets

New Fundraising Initiative Proposal:

Co-chaired by Stacy + Candice

Spring Bizarre/Shuk on a Sunday

Proposed date + time: Sunday, May 28th from 4-6 pm

Goal: Money for Playground Equipment Bonus: PAC can raise money without spending money

Free entry includes free hot dogs, veggies, and lemonade

Families donate "like-new"/"gently used" items

(books/toys/stuffies/barbies/lego/games/art supplies/household items/clothes/uniforms/etc)

Businesses can purchase table for \$200 and sell their goods

Students/Parents/Teachers go shopping in new gym by purchasing bags to fill (small \$5 / medium \$10 / large \$20)

Angel bags available for pre-purchase distributed by Jenn Shecter

Raffle tickets sold for chance to win donated prizes

Parent and Grade 6/7 volunteers for face painting, bubble station, animal balloon making, walking magicians, selling raffle tickets, selling shopping bags, manning tables, distributing hot dogs

Collection bins set up 2 weeks before event

Sponsorship \$100/family

Plea:

Grade Reps need to be attending meetings and taking back information to their classes in regular monthly email blasts and hallway chats

Next Meeting:

Thursday, February 23, 2017 at 7 pm in Old Gym