Dr Knox Parent Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes | October 14, 2026

PAC 2026/27 Executive

President	Courtney St. Martin (present)
Vice-President	Tiffany Thesen-Yee (present)
Treasurer	Kellie Garcia (present)
Secretary	Erika Lachance (present)
Co-PAC Rep	Chandra Ashlin (present)
Members at Large	Paulyn Chua (present)
	Jassie Kakoschke (present)
	Meghan Muhle (present)
	Erin Odermatt

1. Welcome and Land Acknowledgement

Presented by: Courtney St. Martin

Land Acknowledgement

- The meeting began with a land acknowledgement, recognizing that we are gathering on the traditional and unceded territory of the Syilx Okanagan people.

PAC Welcome

- Attendees participated in roundtable introductions

2. Approval of Agenda and Meeting Minutes

Presented by: Courtney St. Martin

Motion to approve October 14, 2026 Meeting Agenda
***Moved by**: Erika Lachance*
***Seconded by**: Tiffany Thesen-Yee*

Motion to approve September 23, 2026 Meeting Minutes (w amendments)
***Moved by**: Kellie Garcia*
***Seconded by**: Meghan Muhle*

3. Administration Update

Presented by: Presented by: Janet, Principal, and Rebecca Austin, Vice-Principal

Principal's Update – Janet

School Activities and Student Engagement

- Janet welcomed attendees and shared positive reflections on the school year so far, highlighting the many opportunities available for students to connect, participate, and build a sense of belonging.
- Student clubs continue to thrive, with strong participation in activities such as Dungeons & Dragons, anime, chess, and art. Staff sponsors have been instrumental in providing these opportunities during lunch hours.
- Athletics programs are also well underway, including field hockey, rugby, and cross-country running. Students have participated in recent competitions, with the Best of the West tournament taking place over the upcoming weekend.
- These extracurricular opportunities encourage students to explore shared interests, develop connections, and become involved in the school community.

Volunteer Criminal Record Checks

- Administration is working with office staff to ensure volunteer criminal record checks are completed and maintained.
- Criminal record checks are required for individuals volunteering with students.

Truth and Reconciliation and Social-Emotional Learning

- The school participated in activities recognizing the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day.
- A school-wide Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) lesson was delivered to students and staff, including teachers, Certified Teacher Assistants (CTAs), and administration.
- The initiative emphasizes consistent language and shared approaches to belonging, emotional regulation, community building, and conflict resolution.
- A second school-wide SEL lesson is planned.

Upcoming School Events

- **October 15 – School Open House (5–7pm):** Families are invited to visit the school, meet staff, and preview the new expansion wing.
    - Administration, teachers, student advocates, and community support representatives will be available.
    - The expansion has approximately 13 outstanding items remaining before completion, anticipated by the end of November.
    - A ribbon-cutting celebration is being considered once the expansion is complete, with an opportunity to invite current and former students.
- **Student Vote:** Students will participate in a simulated election the following week to learn about government, voting, and the electoral process.
- **October 28 – School Photo Retakes.**
- **November 4 – Take Our Kids to Work Day:** The school is seeking community members willing to host or sponsor student experiences.

- **November 10 – Remembrance Day Assembly:** A morning assembly is being planned to provide students and staff with an opportunity for reflection and remembrance.

Staff Professional Development and Implementation Day

- Staff participated in a recent Implementation Day focused on collaboration, curriculum development, and identifying meaningful opportunities for school improvement.
- The day began with land-based reflection and team-building activities, followed by a presentation from local Osoyoos educator Dustin Lewi.
- Discussions emphasized that meaningful change often begins through small, intentional actions and that individuals can influence positive change within their own areas of responsibility.
- Staff expressed strong interest in collaborative professional learning, with 21 staff members indicating an interest in participating in an after-school community of practice.
- Continued work is underway to explore learner agency and opportunities to strengthen student learning experiences.

Vice-Principal's Update – Rebecca Austin

Student Engagement and Reconnection

- Rebecca introduced herself and shared her appreciation for the school community, including the positive interactions she has experienced with families during student drop-off and pick-up.
- She highlighted growing concerns around student disengagement, particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic.
    - Chronic absenteeism can be an indicator of disengagement, but attendance alone does not necessarily identify the underlying challenges students face.
    - Middle school students may have fewer targeted support opportunities than students at other grade levels.
    - The school is exploring ways to bring together staff, families, and community organizations, including ARC Programs, Foundry, and the YMCA, to better support students.

Master Reconnection – Math Aspirations Pathways Pilot

- Dr. Knox is introducing a pilot program focused on reconnecting students who are experiencing significant disengagement from learning.
- The pilot will initially support five students identified through a school-based selection process.
- The program will run for 20 weeks, with 10 sessions, bringing students and their parents or caregivers together after school.
- Sessions will focus on:
    - Building positive relationships and a sense of belonging.
    - Celebrating successes and identifying opportunities for growth through activities such as "Wins and Wonders."
    - Developing practical skills and confidence.
    - Introducing students and families to community support providers in a welcoming environment.
    - Sharing a meal together to encourage connection and relationship building.
- The initiative emphasizes connecting families with people and trusted relationships before introducing formal programs and services.
- Administration recently met with community partners and is preparing to launch the pilot.

PAC Discussion

- **Student selection:** Administration explained that the pilot is not intended solely for students with poor attendance. Selection focuses on students who remain disengaged despite previous interventions, including communication with families, support plans, and traditional school-based strategies.
- Families may also identify a need for additional support for their child.
- The initial group will be limited to five students to allow the school to evaluate the approach and identify what works before considering expansion.
- **Similar programs:** Administration acknowledged that other schools use various intervention and referral models. This pilot differs by bringing support providers directly into the school and actively involving parents and caregivers.
- Funding has been allocated to support the initiative.
- Rebecca will share program information with the PAC Executive and provide updates as the pilot progresses.

4. PAC Financial Update

Presented by: Kellie Garcia

2026/27 Budget Review

- The previously discussed budget was provided to Janet for distribution to teachers and staff.
- The PAC Executive subsequently met with school administration to review funding requests and prepare the proposed budget.
- Due to the short turnaround, additional requests or adjustments may be considered later in the school year.

Funding Requests Reviewed

The proposed budget included the following requests:

- BCCPAC membership fees.
- After-school art club.
- School-wide events, including FLOCK and WEB Leaders activities.
- WEB leadership training.
- Math whiteboards and manipulatives.
- Battle of the Books competition prizes.
- Sports uniform replacement.
- Grade 7 T-shirts.
- Instrument renewal.
- Transportation for band and choir events.
- Physical activity and outdoor equipment.
- Grade 9 year-end celebration.

Discussion of Specific Funding Requests

Instrument Renewal

- Funding was provided for instrument renewal in the previous school year.
- Updated information is still being requested to confirm current needs.

- Administration indicated that additional instrument funding remains necessary, and the Treasurer confirmed that the budget can accommodate the request.

Band and Choir Transportation

- Although a formal request was not received this year, transportation funding was included based on previous years' needs.
- Administration confirmed that the funding would be appreciated and remains relevant to the music program.
- The Treasurer confirmed that the proposed budget can accommodate this expense, pending updated information.

Outdoor Equipment and Activity Carts

- The original request for a workout equipment refresh was reconsidered following discussion with administration.
- Rebecca proposed purchasing mobile equipment carts containing items such as basketballs, soccer balls, volleyballs, frisbees, and other recreational equipment for student use during lunch and recess.
- The carts would operate through a sign-out and return system, potentially managed by WEB Leaders as a student leadership opportunity.
- Administration suggested gathering student feedback through Student Matters to help identify preferred equipment and allow for future adjustments.
- The Treasurer agreed to rename the budget line "Carts & Outdoor Equipment."
- The proposed allocation was increased from $2,000 to $2,500 to support the purchase of two carts and recreational equipment.

Grade 9 Year-End Celebration

- Administration discussed the Grade 9 year-end celebration held during the previous school year, which cost approximately $4,000.
- Although the event was not included in the initial proposed budget, PAC members expressed interest in contributing.
- The Treasurer proposed allocating $2,000 toward the celebration.
- The budget line was updated to "Grade 9 Year-End Celebration."

School Mural Project

- Janet introduced a proposed school mural project that was not included in the initial budget.
- The PAC expressed interest in further discussion, noting that a dedicated fundraiser may be necessary to support the project.
- No funding amount was established during the budget review.

Funding Requests Not Supported

Food Fridays – Spanish Class ($900)

- The request was not included in the proposed budget because the activity would benefit only one Grade 9 class.
- The PAC emphasized prioritizing initiatives that benefit a broader group of students.

Battle of the Books ($2,000)

- The full request was not supported.
- Approximately $700 for competition prizes was included in the proposed budget.
- The remaining funding request was for books that would become part of the school's instructional resources. The PAC distinguished these expenses from extracurricular enrichment funding.

PAC Operating Expenses

COBSS Bursary

- The PAC reviewed the annual Central Okanagan Bursary and Scholarship Society (COBSS) contribution.
- The bursary is funded through the PAC's school account rather than the gaming account.
- The school account currently holds approximately $2,310, with funds originating from a previous one-time fundraiser initially intended to support permanent school benches.
- The Treasurer explained that the PAC maintains separate general, gaming, and school accounts, each with different funding sources and spending considerations.
- Although the school account has primarily supported the COBSS bursary in recent years, it is not necessarily restricted to that purpose.

Staff Appreciation and Gifts

- The PAC discussed the existing Teacher Appreciation and Staff Gifts budget lines.
- The Secretary explained that Teacher Appreciation had historically been intended to support staff recognition at the beginning of the school year, while Staff Gifts was intended for additional recognition throughout the year.
- Administration shared examples of opportunities to support staff wellbeing, including contributions to the school's Sunshine Club and small staff appreciation activities.
- The Treasurer proposed combining the two existing budget lines into a single category titled "Appreciation Gifts" and increasing the allocation by $1,000.

Budget Approval

Following discussion and revisions, the proposed 2026/27 PAC budget was brought forward for approval.

Motion to approve the 2026/27 PAC Budget, as amended
***Moved by**: Tara (parent)*
***Seconded by**: LJ (parent)*

The Treasurer confirmed that the PAC has sufficient funding to accommodate the proposed allocations while maintaining a financial buffer. Additional funding requests may be reviewed and approved throughout the school year as needed.

5. PAC Business

Presented by: Courtney St. Martin

COBSS Bursary Recipient Acknowledgement

- The PAC received a thank-you card and photograph from the recipient of the previous year's COBSS bursary.
- Courtney read the message aloud and shared the recipient's appreciation with attendees (attached).

PAC Communications and Website

- The PAC discussed opportunities to improve communication with families and increase awareness of PAC activities.
- Future meeting minutes will include a brief information and reminder section with relevant resources and announcements, such as:
    - A link to the Dr. Knox PAC website.
    - Volunteer criminal record check information.
    - Upcoming school events and reminders, including the Open House.

6. COPAC Update

Presented by: Chandra Ashlin

Parent Resources

- Guest speakers at the recent COPAC meeting introduced a free parent resource available through the library.
- The resource provides age-based information, videos, and guidance on a variety of parenting and family-related topics.
- Additional information about the resource and its funding or administration was not confirmed during the meeting.

Winter Coat and Boot Drive

- Chandra shared information about a winter clothing initiative being organized by elementary school teachers, with other schools invited to participate.
- The initiative aims to collect winter coats and boots for students and families in need.
- PAC members discussed whether Dr. Knox could participate through a broader district initiative or organize donations directly for students at the school.
- Administration indicated that a similar initiative may have been coordinated by a Dr. Knox teacher in the previous year.
- Discussion emphasized the value of making donated items available directly to students identified as needing winter clothing, while maintaining sensitivity and discretion.

Follow-up:

- Chandra will seek additional information about how the district initiative is being organized.
- Rebecca will look into previous winter clothing donation efforts at Dr. Knox.

- The PAC expressed a preference for supporting needs within the school community where possible.

School Trustee Elections

- COPAC discussions included questions about school trustee priorities and responsibilities.
- Areas identified included education funding and supporting students and families experiencing financial hardship, including challenges associated with rising unemployment.

Student Transportation and Bus Routes

- A parent raised concerns about revised school bus routes and students arriving late or close to the start of the school day.
- The parent indicated that concerns had previously been submitted to the transportation department without a response.
- Administration explained that school bus arrival schedules were adjusted to reduce the amount of unsupervised time before the first bell.
    - Previously, the earliest buses arrived around 8:04am.
    - The revised schedule aims for arrivals closer to 8:15am.
    - Administration has observed a reduction in unexpected student behavior's associated with the shorter waiting period.
- Janet acknowledged that some buses arrive close to the bell and confirmed that students are provided a five-minute grace period before being marked late.
- Parents noted that uncertainty around arrival times can cause anxiety for students concerned about punctuality.

Follow-up:

- Chandra will raise the transportation concerns with the district transportation representative at the next COPAC meeting on October 22.
- Families with additional questions or concerns are encouraged to email the PAC so these can be forwarded for discussion.

7. PAC General Discussions

School Website and Club Information

- A parent identified a non-functioning link to student club information on the school website.
- Janet confirmed that club information is available in the school newsletter and indicated that the website link can be updated.

Volunteer Criminal Record Checks

- A parent asked about the process for completing or renewing volunteer criminal record checks.
- Administration outlined the current process:
    - Criminal record checks must be renewed approximately every four to five years.
    - Parents can contact the school office to confirm the status or remaining validity of an existing check.
    - Volunteers requiring a new check can obtain the necessary forms from the school office.
    - Completed forms must be signed and accompanied by two pieces of identification.
    - The school covers the cost and coordinates submission for processing.

- Once the completed check is received, volunteers must provide it to the school for registration.

Gaming Account and Surplus Funding

- A parent asked about the amount of gaming funding carried forward from the previous year.
- The Treasurer reported approximately $8,000 in surplus gaming funds, in addition to the approximately $21,000 received annually.
- Unspent gaming funds may be carried forward to the following year.
- The Treasurer noted that budgeted amounts are not always fully spent, as some approved initiatives or purchases may not proceed.

PAC Meeting Frequency

- A parent asked why relatively few PAC meetings were scheduled for the school year.
- The Executive explained that the current schedule meets the PAC's required meeting commitments and that additional meetings can be arranged as needed.

School Trustee Responsibilities

- A parent asked about the role of elected school trustees.
- Discussion covered their responsibility for serving on the Board of Education, overseeing school district budgets, and participating in decisions affecting district operations and educational priorities.
- The Secretary provided additional information about trustee roles and responsibilities.

School Mural Project

- Janet shared preliminary visuals of a proposed mural design currently under review.
- Administration indicated that the artist is expected to visit the school in the new year.
- Feedback on the proposed design was welcomed, with further discussion anticipated as the project progresses.

-- Meeting adjourned at 7:53pm –

8. PAC Reminders

Stay Connected with PAC

Stay informed about PAC meetings, initiatives, and opportunities to get involved. Visit the Dr. Knox PAC website for updates and information.

Volunteer Criminal Record Checks

Planning to volunteer at the school? A valid criminal record check is required for volunteers working with students. Contact the school office to confirm whether your existing check is still valid or to begin the application process. The school covers the cost.

Upcoming School Dates

- **October 15:** School Open House, 5–7pm

- **October 28:** School Photo Retakes
- **November 4:** Take Our Kids to Work Day
- **November 10:** Remembrance Day Assembly

Questions or Suggestions?
Parents and caregivers are encouraged to share questions, ideas, or concerns with the PAC. Your input helps guide discussions and initiatives that support the Dr. Knox school community.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

All meetings begin at 6:30pm on Wednesdays

- November 18 - Executive Meeting, online
- February 17 - PAC Meeting, in library
- April 14 - Executive Meeting, online
- May 19 - PAC Meeting & AGM, in library

Full PAC meeting will be held if important issues arise, either from parent or school concerns.

Dr Knox Parent Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes | September 23, 2026

PAC 2026/27 EXECUTIVE

PRESIDENT	POSITION OPEN
VICE-PRESIDENT	TIFFANY THESEN-YEE (ACTING PRESIDENT UNTIL FILLED) - PRESENT
TREASURER	KELLIE GARCIA - PRESENT
SECRETARY	ERIKA LACHANCE - PRESENT
CO-PAC REP	POSITION OPEN
MEMBERS AT LARGE	PAULYN CHUA (REGRETS)
	JASSIE KAKOSCHKE (REGRETS)
	MEGHAN MUHLE - PRESENT
	ERIN ODERMATT - PRESENT

1. WELCOME AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- Land Acknowledgement
  - The meeting began with a land acknowledgement, recognizing that we are gathering on the traditional and unceded territory of the Syilx Okanagan people.
- PAC Welcome
  - Tiffany Thesen-Yee, Vice-President and Acting President, welcomed attendees and encouraged parents to continue participating in PAC meetings throughout the school year.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion to approve September 23, 2026 Meeting agenda
***Moved by**: Kellie Garcia*
***Seconded by**: Courtney St. Martin*

3. PAC EXECUTIVE

Presented by: Tiffany Thesen-Yee, Vice President (Acting President)

- The PAC Executive and school administration were introduced, followed by introductions from parents and other attendees.

- COPAC Representative
    - Chandra Ashlin submitted an application for the COPAC Representative position but was unable to attend the meeting.
    - Tiffany shared Chandra's submitted biography with attendees, and Kellie provided an overview of COPAC and the responsibilities of the PAC representative.

Motion to appoint Chandra Ashlin as the new PAC COPAC Rep
***Moved by**: Erin Odermatt*
***Seconded by**: Meghan Muhle*

- President
    - Kellie nominated Courtney St. Martin for the position of PAC President.
    - Courtney introduced herself and shared some background with attendees.

Motion to appoint Courtney St. Martin President
***Moved by**: Kellie Garcia*
***Seconded by**: Erin Odermatt*

4. ADMINISTRATORS UPDATE

Presented by: Tiffany Thesen-Yee, Vice President (Acting President)

Janet Williams, Principal – Welcome and Introductions

- Janet welcomed attendees and thanked parents for participating in the first PAC meeting of the school year. She emphasized the importance of parent voice and partnership with the school and described PAC as an important connection to the parent community.
- Janet introduced herself as the new Principal of Dr. Knox. She has 21 years of experience as a principal, previously taught at the secondary level and has also worked in elementary schools.
- The School District experienced approximately 34 administrative changes for the 2026–27 school year.
- Janet grew up in the Okanagan. She is familiar with Dr. Knox, and the transition students make from Dr. Knox to KSS and already knows a number of Dr. Knox students and families through her previous work at Dr. Knox's feeder schools.
- Janet identified student safety, belonging and inclusion as priorities. She emphasized the importance of ensuring students feel seen, valued and heard, particularly students who may otherwise feel marginalized or unable to advocate for themselves.
- The school has welcomed new WEB Leaders this year as part of the ongoing initiative supporting the goal that all students feel they belong at Dr. Knox.

- Janet looks forward to building on the work already underway at the school and learning directly from students about their experiences.

Elizabeth Isabelle, Vice Principal

- Elizabeth shared her background, including growing up in a bilingual francophone family in Montreal, studying in Toronto, working professionally in dance and operating a dance studio in Vancouver before pursuing teaching.
- Elizabeth has taught a variety of subjects and has worked at KLO and École de l'Anse-au-sable since moving to Kelowna approximately five years ago.
- Elizabeth introduced Learner Agency and Student Voice as a key school theme and area of focus for the 2026–27 school year.
- Student belonging and voice are particular areas of interest for Elizabeth. Beginning September 24, her and Janet Williams will host a weekly Student Matters lunch gathering on Thursdays that is open to all students.
- The gathering is intended to provide students with a safe and welcoming space to:
    - share what is important to them;
    - discuss their experiences at school;
    - identify things they would like to see changed or improved; and
    - develop ideas into student-led initiatives with support from staff.
- She emphasized that the intent is not simply to gather student feedback, but to help students recognize that their ideas can lead to meaningful and lasting changes within their school.
- The initiative aligns with the School District's broader focus on student agency and four areas of development:
    - Identity – helping students understand who they are, what matters to them and how they learn best;
    - Belonging – ensuring students feel connected and included while at school;
    - Mastery – supporting students in learning, inquiry and understanding the world around them; and
    - Efficacy – helping students understand that they have the ability to make a difference.
- Elizabeth noted that students have diverse needs and strengths, and the goal is to move beyond simply offering students voice and choice by helping them understand what they need, what they want and how they can contribute to change.
- Elizabeth shared Janet’s principle, that "doing is better than perfect,". She emphasized creating a school culture where students and adults are able to try new things, take appropriate risks, learn from one another, adjust when necessary and recognize that learning is an ongoing process.

Rebecca Austin, Vice Principal (regrets)

General Administration Updates

- **School Demographics**
  - Dr. Knox currently has approximately 1,095 students and a diverse learning community.
  - Administration shared the following approximate demographics:
    - 18% of students are enrolled in French immersion;
    - 13% identify as Indigenous;
    - 7% are linguistically gifted (ELL);
    - 8% have an identified learning disability; and
    - 7% have an ASD designation.
  - Administration noted that these demographics reflect the complexity and diversity of the Dr. Knox student population and reinforce the importance of recognizing individual student strengths, experiences and needs.
- **School Communications and Student Information**
  - Janet encouraged families to contact the school when communications or instructions are unclear. Administration welcomes feedback and will continue adjusting communications where needed.
  - Student demographic and verification information is now managed through an online portal. Administration is refining the verification process and will provide families with easy-to-follow instructions for reviewing their information and identifying any changes that are required.
  - Administration also acknowledged challenges experienced with the portal over the summer, including student schedules being made available before they were intended to be released. Janet noted that administration continues to learn and adjust as new systems and processes are introduced.
- **School Start-Up and Budget**
  - Administration reported that school start-up is progressing well and the administrative team is confident that planned programming and activities will continue as expected.
  - Knox operates with an annual budget of approximately $11.5 million.
  - School funding is primarily generated through Ministry of Education funding based on student enrolment, with additional funding associated with factors such as student vulnerability, international students and English Language Learners.
  - Approximately $10.5 million of the $11.5 million budget is allocated to staffing.
  - After staffing costs, just over $500,000 remains to support the school's other operating expenses.
  - Examples of expenses funded through the remaining operating budget include:
    - approximately $70,000 for student and staff supplies;
    - approximately $19,000 for Home Economics;
    - approximately $15,000 for library resources;
    - approximately $2,800 for photocopying;
    - telephone and postage;
    - student supervision; and
    - replacement furniture, computers and other school needs.
  - Administration noted that this leaves approximately $50,000 per month to support the operating needs of approximately 1,100 students and staff.
- **School Expansion**
  - Work on the Dr. Knox expansion remains underway.

- Administration has completed walkthroughs of the new spaces and identified approximately 36 outstanding items requiring attention.
- Some items, including desks, have needed to be returned or corrected, and administration is continuing to work with the contractor to complete the remaining work.
- Administration is hopeful that the expansion will be completed by the first week of November.
- Once the work is complete, the school hopes to invite current families and former students back to the school for a public unveiling and ribbon-cutting event.
- The event would provide an opportunity for the community to tour the new spaces, ask questions and see the results of the approximately $23 million expansion project.

5. PAC Business

Presented by: Tiffany Thesen-Yee, Vice President (Acting President)

- Families were directed to the Dr. Knox PAC website for PAC information and resources:
  - https://drk.sd23.bc.ca/parent-advisory-council-pac-drk.sd23.bc.ca
- Tiffany noted that additional updates and PAC business will be shared as the school year progresses.

6. PAC Budget Update

Presented by: Kellie Garcia, Treasurer

- Budget template is shared with the attendees
- **PAC Funding**
  - Kellie shared the PAC budget template and provided an overview of the PAC's funding sources and how funds are typically allocated.
  - The PAC expects to receive approximately $21,000 through the Gaming Grant in October.
    - Unspent Gaming Grant funding from previous years may be carried forward for up to two years.
    - Gaming Grant funding is subject to eligibility requirements that determine what expenses it can be used to support.
  - Additional current funds include approximately:
    - $2,300 in the PAC general account; and
    - $3,400 in the school account from previous fundraising.
  - Total funding available is currently estimated at approximately $28,000.
  - Tiffany noted that the PAC had considerably more funding available last year because Gaming Grant funds from the previous year had not been fully spent. That carry-forward will not be available at the same level this year, so the amount available for school requests will be lower.

- **PAC Expenses and School Funding Requests**
    - School requests represent the PAC's primary use of Gaming Grant funding. In recent years, the PAC has generally been able to support these requests without additional fundraising.
    - Regular PAC expenses also include items such as:
        - teacher appreciation;
        - the Central Okanagan Bursary and Scholarship Society (COBSS) bursary;
        - staff gifts; and
        - BCCPAC membership, which provides the PAC with voting rights at BCCPAC conferences.
    - Kellie reviewed the previous year's budget as an example of the types of requests typically received from the school and how the PAC considers them.
    - Funding requests must be reviewed against applicable Gaming Grant requirements, as not every school expense is eligible to be paid from Gaming funds.
    - The Executive will meet with school administration to review anticipated requests and develop a proposed 2026–27 PAC budget.
    - The proposed budget will be brought forward at the October 14 PAC meeting for discussion and approval.
    - All Dr. Knox parents and guardians are members of the PAC, regardless of whether they regularly attend meetings. Families were encouraged to attend the October meeting and participate in the budget discussion.
- **Fundraising**
    - The PAC discussed the possibility of introducing additional fundraising during the 2026–27 school year.
    - Fundraising could be used to support specific requests or initiatives that cannot be accommodated within available PAC funding or Gaming Grant eligibility requirements.
    - Where there is a specific project the school community would like to support, the PAC could communicate the need to families and organize targeted fundraising.
    - General fundraising at the beginning of the school year was also discussed as an option to create additional flexibility for future school needs.
    - The PAC's previous president noted a general fundraising initiative used at a different school, formerly referred to as Easy Give. This was noted as an example.
    - Approximately $899 was also noted from recycling fundraising.
- **Signing Authority**
    - With the appointment of Courtnie St. Martin as PAC President, PAC signing authority requires updating to reflect the new Executive.

Motion to change PAC signing authority to new President
***Moved by**: Tiffany Thesen-Yee*
***Seconded by**: Meghan Muhle*

7. COPAC UPDATE

Presented by: Kellie Garcia, Treasurer

- The first COPAC meeting of the 2026–27 school year was held in September.
- Chandra Ashlin was appointed as the new Dr. Knox COPAC Representative earlier in the meeting and will represent the PAC at future COPAC meetings.
- Kellie noted that there may be additional parent interest in becoming involved with the PAC Executive.
- The next COPAC meeting is scheduled for October 5, 2026.

Note: Information from the September COPAC meeting will be added following receipt of the COPAC meeting notes.

8. NEXT MEETINGS

Presented by: Tiffany Thesen-Yee, Vice President (Acting President)

All scheduled meetings will be held on Wednesdays at 6:30pm

- October 14 - PAC Meeting
  - In person, Dr. Knox library
  - 2026-27 PAC budget discussion and approval
- November 18 - Executive Meeting
  - Online
- February 17 - PAC Meeting
  - In person, Dr. Knox library
- April 14 - Executive Meeting
  - Online
- May 19 - PAC Meeting & AGM
  - In person, Dr. Knox library
  - Final scheduled PAC meeting of the school year

Additional full PAC meetings may be scheduled if significant matters arise during the school year that require discussion with the broader PAC, including matters brought forward by parents or school administration.

Parents and guardians are encouraged to attend PAC meetings and participate in discussions throughout the year.

9. PAC GENERAL DISCUSSIONS

- **Volunteer Criminal Record Checks**
  - A parent asked whether Criminal Record Checks need to be renewed in order to continue volunteering and participating in school activities.

- Administration advised that Criminal Record Checks generally require renewal every four years.
- Parents who are unsure whether their existing check is still valid can contact the school office to confirm whether renewal is required.

- **Student Supervision and Parent Volunteers**
  - A parent asked about the school's supervision budget and whether parent volunteers could assist with supervision as a way of reducing costs.
  - Administration explained that supervision during the school day is generally provided by staff, including CEAs who are already working at the school.
  - While volunteers can support the school in a number of other capacities, administration indicated that replacing staff supervision with parent volunteers would not be an appropriate avenue for reducing supervision costs.
  - The school's volunteer requirements and Code of Conduct also need to be considered when determining appropriate volunteer activities.
- **Dr. Knox Backpack Policy**
  - Parents asked administration to clarify the school's new expectations regarding backpacks and raised concerns about how the policy is affecting some students.
  - Administration explained that the primary reason for requiring backpacks to remain in lockers is space and safety. With approximately 1,100 students moving through the school, backpacks significantly increase congestion in hallways and classrooms.
  - Now that every student has access to a locker, administration and staff supported implementing the policy at the beginning of the school year.
  - Administration acknowledged that keeping backpacks in lockers also supports expectations around students leaving their phones in their lockers, although this was not identified as the primary reason for the policy.
  - Students are permitted to carry lunch kits, and administration emphasized that the policy is not intended to prevent students from accessing food, medication, menstrual products or other necessary personal items.
  - Administration noted that students have approximately 40 minutes for lunch and can access their lockers during that time. Staff have been encouraged to help students adjust to the new expectations rather than approach the issue as a disciplinary matter.
  - Administration also noted that approximately 400 students currently spend lunch outside. As colder weather arrives, more students will remain indoors, making space and congestion increasingly important considerations.
- **Access to Menstrual Products and Other Personal Items**
  - Parents raised concerns about the impact of the backpack policy on students who need discreet and reliable access to menstrual products, medication and other personal items throughout the school day.
  - Particular concern was expressed for students who are newly managing menstruation and may already feel anxious or self-conscious about accessing products at school.
  - Parents noted that requiring students to place menstrual products in a lunch kit or carry them visibly may create unnecessary embarrassment or stigma.

    - Allowing students to carry a small crossbody bag or fanny pack was suggested as a possible middle ground that would maintain the restriction on full-sized backpacks while allowing students to discreetly carry essential personal items.
    - Parents also noted that this could be applied consistently to all students rather than being treated as a gender-specific exception or requiring students to disclose a medical or personal reason.
    - Administration acknowledged the concern and indicated that the issue would be discussed further with staff.
    - Administration noted that students are currently able to access their lockers as needed and that staff can assist students who need menstrual products. However, the discussion highlighted broader concerns about students' comfort accessing products and school washrooms.
    - The possibility of PAC supporting menstrual products in school washrooms was also raised. It was acknowledged that students use different products and that providing products in washrooms may help with access but would not necessarily address every student's needs.
- **Student Feedback on the Backpack Policy**
    - Parents shared that some students find returning to their lockers during lunch frustrating because it reduces the limited time available to socialize with friends.
    - Parents noted that the backpack policy has become a significant topic of discussion within some students' social groups.
    - Administration reiterated that the policy is intended to address the realities of space and safety in a school operating with a large student population.
    - Administration also emphasized the importance of hearing directly from students about their experiences and anticipated that the new Student Matters gathering and other student voice opportunities would provide additional feedback.
    - Administration noted that restrictions on backpacks are also used at other middle schools.
- **School Washrooms**
    - The discussion regarding menstrual products led to a broader conversation about students' experiences using school washrooms.
    - Several parents reported that their children avoid using school washrooms because they do not feel safe or comfortable in them. Concerns included cleanliness, inappropriate student behaviour and students choosing to wait until they return home rather than use a washroom during the school day.
    - Parents noted that these concerns have been raised by students across different grades and are not limited to the newly constructed gender-neutral washrooms.
    - One parent shared a different experience, noting that their child was comfortable using some school washrooms while another child had previously avoided particular washrooms.
    - Administration explained that there is supervision in the hallways, including near the washrooms, and that administration regularly monitors these areas.

    - Administration encouraged students to report concerning behaviour to an adult so that it can be addressed and reinforced that acceptable behaviour and students looking out for one another are important parts of school culture.
    - Administration acknowledged that students avoiding washrooms for an entire school day is concerning and expressed interest in hearing directly from students to better understand their experiences.
    - Administration indicated that student feedback, including through the school's student voice initiatives, may help identify specific concerns and opportunities for improvement.
- **Grade 7 Transition, Lunch and School Environment**
    - Parents discussed some of the challenges Grade 7 students are experiencing while adjusting to a much larger middle-school environment.
    - Concerns included navigating lockers and lunch routines, determining where students can eat, moving through crowded hallways and balancing these expectations without missing class time.
    - One parent shared that their child has adapted by carrying food in smaller containers that can fit within a binder and eating in classrooms where permitted.
    - Administration acknowledged that transitioning into a school of approximately 1,100 students can involve a significant learning curve, particularly for students arriving from much smaller elementary schools.
    - Parents also raised concerns about interactions between younger and older students in crowded hallways.
    - Administration noted that the school has been experimenting with strategies such as dismissing Grade 7 students slightly ahead of older students to give them additional time and space in the hallways.
    - WEB Leaders and other school initiatives are also intended to help younger students transition successfully and feel supported within the school community.
    - Parents also expressed enthusiasm for the school store reopening, which may provide students with another option during the school day.
- **Food in the School**
    - A parent asked whether there are school-wide restrictions regarding food.
    - Administration confirmed that energy drinks are not permitted.
    - Whether students may eat during class is generally determined by individual teachers.
    - Dr. Knox is an allergy-aware school. Administration noted that more than 20 students rely on EpiPens and asked families to remain mindful of serious allergies when packing food.
    - Students who require an EpiPen are expected to have it accessible to them.
- **Basketball Court and School Enhancements**
    - A parent asked whether the school's basketball court will be reinstated following completion of the expansion.
    - Administration confirmed that the basketball court will return and noted that it now has an improved playing surface.
    - The current plan includes one basketball court. Parents questioned whether additional courts could be considered, noting the size of the student population.

- Administration agreed that two basketball courts would still be limited for a school of this size, but explained that additional recreation infrastructure would need to proceed through the School District's enhancement process rather than being undertaken directly by the PAC.
- The PAC may be able to support an enhancement application once it proceeds through the appropriate District process.
- Kellie noted that enhancement applications had been paused for several years and may now be moving forward under a different process. Administration confirmed that the system has changed.
- The possibility of supporting future school enhancements can be discussed further as part of PAC funding and fundraising conversations.

- **PAC Funding, Fundraising and Student Initiatives**
  - Parents discussed the amount of funding currently available to the PAC and opportunities to increase support for the school through fundraising.
  - Kellie noted that middle-school PACs generally have fewer regular expenses than elementary-school PACs and expressed interest in exploring additional fundraising opportunities.
  - Parents discussed the potential to support student-led projects and initiatives, including opportunities connected to the school store.
  - Administration asked about the process used in previous years to invite staff to submit funding requests to the PAC.
  - Kellie confirmed that staff are provided with a funding request form to identify items or initiatives for which they are seeking PAC support.
  - Funding requests are reviewed by the President, Vice-President and Treasurer in consultation with school administration before recommendations are brought forward as part of the proposed PAC budget.
  - Administration asked how staff would know if PAC funding had already been allocated or whether they had missed a submission deadline.
  - Kellie noted that the PAC has not previously had to turn away requests solely because available funding had been exhausted. Where a worthwhile request cannot be accommodated within the existing budget, it could instead provide an opportunity for targeted fundraising.
  - Musical instruments were identified as an example of a significant request supported in the previous year.
  - It was also noted that having a longer-term understanding of school items or resources that require periodic replacement could assist the PAC with future budget and fundraising planning.
  - The proposed budget presented at the October PAC meeting will provide parents with an opportunity to review anticipated requests, discuss priorities and consider whether individual requests meet applicable funding guidelines before the budget is adopted.
- **Field Trips and Other School Activities**
  - A parent asked whether PAC funding is commonly used to subsidize or support school activities such as field trips.
  - Administration and the Treasurer noted that the PAC does not typically fund field trips.

    - Other requests may be considered through the regular PAC funding request and budget process, subject to available funds and applicable funding requirements.
- **Yearbook**
    - Parents asked about the Dr. Knox yearbook and what students and families can expect.
    - Members familiar with the previous year's yearbook described it as a high-quality hardcover publication.
    - Administration confirmed that the yearbook is student-designed through the Grade 9 yearbook class.
    - Students contribute to the themes and design of individual pages, providing students with ownership and pride in the finished yearbook.
- **School Bus Transportation Fees**
    - A parent asked when families should expect to receive invoices for school bus transportation.
    - Kellie clarified that transportation fees are administered by School District Transportation, rather than through the PAC.
    - Questions regarding transportation invoices should therefore be directed to the School District.
- **Class Change Requests**
    - A question was raised about whether students can still request a class change if they did not hear back after submitting a change request earlier in the school year.
    - Administration advised that the class-change process has generally concluded and schedules have been finalized.
    - Families may still contact the school counsellor to ask whether a change is possible.
    - Changes may be considered where capacity exists, although administration noted that availability is now limited.
    - Even where a requested change cannot be accommodated, families may contact the counsellor for additional information about the student's schedule or why a change is not possible.

-- Meeting adjourned at 7:57pm --

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June 2026

Dear COBSS donor:

On behalf of Kelowna Secondary School and the 2026 Graduation Class, we extend our sincere appreciation for the award you have so generously donated. Students were thrilled to be presented with their awards at the KSS graduation ceremony on June 20, 2026. We are truly grateful for your continued support and commitment to our students' education.

Please enjoy the enclosed graduation photo of your award recipient.

With warm regards,
KSS Counselling Team and the 2026 Graduating Class



Maddison Hewitt
Dr. Knox Middle School PAC Award