Dr Knox Parent Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes | October 15, 2025

1 Welcome & Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we held this meeting on the traditional and unceded territory of the Syilx Okanagan people.

2 PAC Agenda & Minutes

1. Approve the agenda

Motion to approve the agenda Motioned by Leslie Seconded by Kellie Passed

2. Approve the minutes from the September 17 meeting

Motion to approve the minutes Motioned by Erika Seconded by Kellie Passed

3 Principal's Update

Nina Ferguson, Principal

- Implementation Day Share Out
  - Implementation Day is the one day of the school year that administration (Principal, VP, and teachers as curricular leaders) plan entirely.
  - Two learning priorities:
    - Literacy – fostering the joy of reading and developing a deeper understanding of students as readers.
    - Adult Learner Identity – reflecting on who we are as readers and modelling this connection for students.
  - This year's focus areas were:
    - Indigenous Learning — exploring local Indigenous knowledge, First Peoples Principles of Learning, and truths of our local territory.
    - Power Strategies for Reading: strategies for comprehension such as inferring, visualizing, questioning, and making meaning.
    - Social Emotional Learning (SEL): focused on the five areas of CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning) with an emphasis on social awareness and foundational SEL principles.

        - Code of Conduct: rebranded with “We Are” statements (e.g., We are aware) to align school-wide expectations and encourage consistency across classrooms and conversations with students and parents.
    - Overall, it was a very positive day of learning and collaboration.
- Paul Davis on "Educating children and empowering parents on the topic of social networking and online safety!"
    - Initiative came through COPAC President Nicola, following strong interest from parents for guidance on online behaviour.
    - Paul Davis previously presented at Canyon Falls and was well received.
    - Tentative plan:
        - Two parent sessions (with the central session tentatively scheduled for January 19 at KLO).
        - A student session targeting Grade 7 and/or 9 (potentially with Grade 8).
    - Feedback and discussion highlights:
        - Suggest including Grade 8 students.
        - Consider linking with Knox Talks for broader engagement.
- School Admin "Knox Talks"
    - Proposed by administration as an opportunity for informal, two-way conversations with parents and guardians.
    - Inspired by COVID-era Friday morning Zoom sessions that allowed for casual discussion and connection at previous institution.
    - Possible formats include in-person sessions in the library (e.g., coffee and muffin chats) or virtual options.
    - Feedback and discussion highlights:
        - Parents appreciate the idea but suggest some initial structure or themes to guide conversation.
        - Could focus on topics raised by students (e.g., social media, e-bikes) and invite guest experts as needed.
        - Suggest using feedback forms to gather ideas for future sessions.
        - Desire for more two-way communication between parents and administration.
        - Student Talks (e.g., “Pizza with the Principal”) were also well received and could provide valuable feedback from students.
- Other Discussions
    - Discussion around cell phone removal policy:
        - Significant improvement in student behaviour and engagement.
        - Teachers report students are happier and more focused.
        - Example: one Grade 9 student shared that being without their phone has made them feel more present and able to learn.
        - Ongoing issues persist through off-campus platforms (e.g., Discord, Snapchat, Instagram), but overall outcomes are highly positive.
        - Administration encouraged parents to express appreciation to their children for adapting well to the policy.
    - General feedback
        - The group agreed there is no harm in trying new engagement opportunities such as Knox Talks to strengthen school–parent communication.

4 PAC FINANCIAL UPDATE

Leslie Atwell, Treasurer

1. Summary of School Requests (Attachment 2)
    a. Teachers were invited to submit funding requests for extracurricular or enrichment activities that benefit as many students as possible.
    b. A total of $37,750 in requests was received. The PAC has sufficient funds to support all requests but will only approve those deemed appropriate and beneficial.
    c. Requests:
        i. Bussing Costs – transportation for local Windscapes and BC Interior Jazz Festivals – $1,000 (~$10 per student).
        ii. Band Equipment – purchase of large instruments (e.g., tuba, bass clarinet) – $7,500. These are costly to rent or buy annually, so the intent is to fund one major instrument per year.
            - Question raised: Why focus on jazz instruments?
            - Response: The request reflects current program needs; families often purchase smaller instruments (e.g., flutes), but the school must supply larger ones.
        iii. Battle of the Books – prizes for Grade 7 participants – $1,000 (~$3 per student).
        iv. Literature Circle Books – new reading sets for Grades 8 and 9 – $1,000.
        v. After-School Art Club – supplies for 30–50 participating students – $750.
        vi. Weight Room Maintenance – equipment servicing and replacement for Strength Club – $8,000.
        vii. Bald Falcon Day – annual fundraiser event – $1,000.
        viii. WEB Program (Where Everyone Belongs) – leadership program welcoming Grade 7 students – $1,000.
        ix. Leadership Events – such as school dances and student-led initiatives – $2,000.
        x. LEGO Coding and Robotics Club – competition entry fees and materials – $1,000. The club previously reached the provincial level; funding supports continued participation.
        xi. Sports Uniform Replacement – $3,500.
        xii. Grade 7 T-Shirts – school-branded shirts for all new students – $4,000.
        xiii. House Teams – cross-grade connection and spirit-building activities – $3,000.
        xiv. Year-End Celebrations – $1,000 per grade (Grades 7–9) – total $3,000.
    d. Note: One request (a specialized pastry class project) was not approved, as it did not meet gaming fund eligibility criteria.
    e. Nina will notify staff whose requests were approved.
2. Financial update to Sept 30 and proposed budget for 2025/26 school year (Attachment 3)
    a. Financial status as of September 30:
        i. No significant changes since the start of the school year.
    b. Gaming Account:
        i. Funded by BC Gaming; can only be used for extracurricular purposes.
        ii. Approx. $20,000 carried over from last year, plus $20,000 received this year (~$40,000 total).
        iii. The PAC has two years to spend each grant so must spend at least the carryover amount this year. Would also like to spend as much of the new grant as possible.
    c. General Account:
        i. Funded through school fundraisers.
        ii. Current balance: approximately $1,000.
        iii. Also used for COBSS bursaries and similar community initiatives.

3. BCCPAC membership fees – hold as a budget line
    a. Membership fee will be maintained as a standing budget line item.
4. Budget Discussions
    a. Discussion included concerns about spending the full $20,000 rollover, and whether some items could set precedents for annual funding.
    b. Some noted that Student Affordability Fund support last year created a temporary cushion that will not continue this year.
    c. Suggestion to explore additional fundraising opportunities in the future.
    d. Acknowledgement that middle-school families tend to fundraise less than elementary, but modest efforts (e.g., Scholastics) can still yield results.
    e. Other notes:
        i. Some school expenses from last year were not billed back to PAC; this will be corrected going forward.
        ii. COBSS administrative fees have increased slightly.
        iii. Teacher Appreciation was celebrated October 6 (Implementation Day was Oct 5). Previous years included staff snacks and cards; a mobile barista visit this year was well received.

Motion to approve school requests and 2025/26 budget as discussed
Motioned by Erin
Seconded by Tiffany
Passed

5 PAC Business

Thank you cards for PAC shared with the meeting attendees.

6 COPAC Update

See Attachment 4

1. COPAC Guest Presenter
    a. The presentation will be distributed with these minutes.
2. Superintendent's Report
    a. The district is facing a budget shortfall of approximately $9 million, due to lower-than-expected enrolment.
    b. This marks the first year since 2014 where student numbers decreased compared to the previous year.
    c. Fewer students started in 2025 than completed the 2024 school year, contributing to reduced funding.
3. COPAC Executive
    a. COPAC is currently seeking a Secretary.
4. COPAC Events
    a. Hannah Beach Presentation: Understanding Adolescents from the Inside-Out. Scheduled for tomorrow at 7:00 PM (registration required). Over 480 participants already registered.
5. Neurodiversity Parent Events
    a. A past event has been held, with two more sessions scheduled for October 21 and October 28.

6. Mental Health Month
    a. Resources are available for families seeking support and information related to student mental health.
7. Multi-Language Family Resources
    a. Ongoing initiatives to provide translated materials and inclusive communication for multilingual families.
8. Screen-Use Research Participation
    a. Researchers are seeking parents and students aged 5–12 to participate in online discussion groups on screen use.
    b. Those interested can volunteer by emailing healthbridge@cw.bc.ca

7 Next Meeting

- The next PAC Executive meeting will be held in November,
- The next general PAC meeting will be held on February 18.
- Additional meetings may be scheduled if there is interest — please let the PAC know.
- A reminder and details for the February meeting will be shared in the school newsletter in advance.

Attachment 2 School Requests

Teacher or staff name	Amount of funding you are requesting	Item or event you are requesting funding for	Description of item or event and how it will benefit DRK students	Subject area that will be enriched by your request (choose one)	Grade(s) that will benefit from your request (check all that apply)	PAC Notes
Erika Sinhuber	$1,000	Bussing costs to local Windscapes and BC Interior Jazz Festivals	Roughly 120 Band and Choir 8 and 9 students will attend the local festivals. This allows them the opportunity to perform and showcase their musical diligence. They are able observe other student musicians from schools around the province, collaborate with professional musicians, and receive an assessment from an objective source.	Arts	Grade 7, Grade 8, Grade 9	
Erika Sinhuber	$7,500	Funding towards the purchase of new instruments.	Our Dr. Knox Middle School instrument inventory is aged. We have one tuba that is older than Ms. Mclane and Ms. Sinhuber... COMBINED! (And we are most certainly middle-aged.) Our fleet of instruments that were mostly built in the 1970s continue to service our student musicians today. We are able to discerningly purchase smaller instruments such as flutes and clarinets and trumpets and trombones inexpensively off of Facebook Marketplace, but we need more larger instruments such as bass clarinets.	Arts	Grade 7, Grade 8, Grade 9	
Julia Gubbels and Tanya Groetchen	$1,000	Battle of the Books	Money would be used to purchase books to support our larger grade 7 population, as well as prizes for the BOTB assembly. One of DRK's learning priorities is literacy, and we want to encourage students to enjoy reading and explore different genres/authors. BOTB is something that all of the grade 7 students participate in.	Literacy, Community building	Grade 7	
Julia Gubbels and Tanya Groetchen	$1,000	Literature Circle Books	To keep the momentum going from Battle of the Books in grade 7, most teachers use Literature circles in their grade 8 and 9 English classes. We would love to purchase new books to give students new options/genres/authors, as well as to support the increase in the number of students at the school.	Literacy	Grade 8, Grade 9	
Suki Vernet	$750	After-school Art Club	The After-school Art Club has been a very popular place for creativity and connection for many years. Last year we had a very robust membership, with 30-50 kids attending each session. Sessions we plan on offering will focus on: Drawing & Creativity, Jewelry Making & Crafts, Clay & Sculpture, Painting, and Functional art design (for example, designing and creating their own tote bag). The club will allow kids to explore the full middle school experience by trying new things, meeting kids of like interests, and extending their skills in art. The club will also provide art experiences for those kids who did not get art in their timetable as well as an equitable enrichment experience for any student interested.	Arts	Grade 7, Grade 8, Grade 9	
Andrew Beebe	$8,000	Weight Room maintenance and replacement	Much of our current equipment is broken and/or unserviced for the past 15 years, in our very basic school weight room where we run a daily morning strength club. This limits the effectiveness of a potentially rich activity for engagement and future development. The addition of some exercise equipment (after a brief survey of existing items) and replacement of cables, lubricating of various parts, and removal of broken materials would do much to advance our student health and wellbeing.	Strength and Fitness Club	Grade 7, Grade 8, Grade 9	
Amy Gunn	$1,000	Bald Falcon Day	Money will be used to purchase t-shirts & some prizes for participants as well as decorations for the assembly. T-shirts & prizes are great motivators for students to get involved in this event, which fundraises money for BC Children's Hospital Foundation throughout the month of May. We try to get any many prizes donated by local businesses as we can, with these funds as a back-up plan. We usually have 20-30 participants with the whole school benefiting from community-building during the assembly at the end of May.	Literacy, Community building, Other	Grade 7, Grade 8, Grade 9	
Amy Gunn	$1,000	WEB Program	The WEB Program supports Grade 7 students while providing learning opportunities for Grade 9 WEB Leaders & Grade 8 students who successfully apply to the WEB Program for the following year. It starts with Orientation at the end of August and continues throughout the year with events like the Waffle Breakfast (October) and other connecting points like Birthday treats. Grade 8 students who will become WEB Leaders next year start their training briefly in the spring. (I am asking for less than previous years because we will shift focus from Grade 7-only connections to school-wide connections after October.)	Community building, Other	Grade 7, Grade 9	

Teacher or staff name	Amount of funding you are requesting	Item or event you are requesting funding for	Description of item or event and how it will benefit DRK students	Subject area that will be enriched by your request (choose one)	Grade(s) that will benefit from your request (check all that apply)	PAC Notes
Amy Gunn	$2,000	Leadership events & activities	Leadership events & activities provide opportunities for school-wide connections and foster community building and belonging, which increases belonging, which increases attendance and academic performance. Examples include, but are not limited to: school dance, spirit days, and house teams events.	Community building, Other	Grade 7, Grade 8, Grade 9	
Cory Aitken	$1,000	Lego Code and Robotics Club	We would like to have the opportunity to enter two teams into the First Lego League competition. Dr. Knox Admin has agreed to fund one team. In the past the school district has funded this , but no longer does. The code club at Dr. Knox offers students to grow and display their skills to other students, and to compete with other schools in the district and province. This is a great opportunity for students who have a passion and interest in coding. Our club usually has about 30 members who all contribute and learn together.	Science & tech	Grade 7, Grade 8, Grade 9	
Nina Ferguson	$3,500	Uniform Replacement Annual	Sport Team Uniform Replacement	Active living	Grade 7, Grade 8, Grade 9	
Nina Ferguson	$4,000	Grade 7 T-shirts welcome	Grade 7 T-shirts welcome - annual	Community building	Grade 7	
Nina Ferguson	$3,000	House Teams	Creating Connections - tshirts, prizing, games, events	Active living, Community building	Grade 7, Grade 8, Grade 9	
Nina Ferguson	$3,000	Year End Celebrations	Year end celebrations, requesting $1000 towards each grade.	Community building	Grade 7, Grade 8, Grade 9	

TOTAL $37,750

Attachment 3 Financials to Sept 30, 2025

Dr. Knox Middle School Parent Advisory Council								
Budget vs Actuals - for the Period ended SEPTEMBER 30, 2025								
			GAMING ACCOUNT			**GENERAL ACCOUNT**		**School Account (for PAC)**
Income			**Actual (To date)**			**Actual (To date)**		**Actual (To date)**
Gaming Account								
Roll over from prior year			**$ 20,796.30**			$ 1,458.47		$3,390.00
Gaming grant			$ 20,080.00					
50/50 Profit			$ -					
Donations to PAC						$ -		$ -
Bottle return fundraiser (RETURN IT)								
Total Available $$ to Disburse			**$ 40,876.30**			**$ 1,458.47**		**$ 3,390.00**
Expenses		**Budget**	**Actual (To date)**	**Difference**	**Budget**	**Actual (To date)**	**Difference**	
School Requests (Gaming Account)								
Bussing for Band/Choir events (Sinhuber)		$ 1,000.00	$ -	$ 1,000.00				
Instrument renewal (Sinhuber)		$ 7,500.00	$ -	$ 7,500.00				
Battle of the Books (Gubbels/Groetchen)		$ 1,000.00	$ -	$ 1,000.00				
Literature Circle Books (Gubbels/Groetchen)		$ 1,000.00	$ -	$ 1,000.00				
After-school Art Club (Vernet)		$ 750.00	$ -	$ 750.00				
Morning Strength Club Equipment (Beebe)		$ 8,000.00	$ -	$ 8,000.00				
Bald Falcon Day (Gunn)		$ 1,000.00	$ -	$ 1,000.00				
WEB Program (Gunn)		$ 1,000.00	$ -	$ 1,000.00				
Leadership events and activities (Gunn)		$ 2,000.00	$ -	$ 2,000.00				
Lego Code and Robotics Club (Aitken)		$ 1,000.00	$ -	$ 1,000.00				
Sports Uniform Replacement (Ferguson)		$ 3,500.00	$ -	$ 3,500.00				
Grade 7 T-shirts (Ferguson)		$ 4,000.00	$ -	$ 4,000.00				
Creating Connections House Teams (Ferguson)		$ 3,000.00	$ -	$ 3,000.00				
Year End Celebrations (Ferguson)		$ 3,000.00	$ -	$ 3,000.00				
School Requests Subtotal		**$ 37,750.00**	**$ -**	**$ 37,750.00**			$ 20,796.30	
PAC Expenses (General Account)								
Teacher Appreciation					$ 500.00	$ -	$ 500.00	
Miscellaneous					$ -	$ -	$ -	
COBSS bursary					$ 1,050.00	$ -	$ 1,050.00	
Staff Gifts					$ -	$ -	$ -	
PAC Costs Subtotal					$ 1,550.00	$ -	$ 1,550.00	$ -
Net Amounts		**$ 3,126.30**	**$ 40,876.30**		**$ (91.53)**	**$ 1,458.47**		**$ 3,390.00**
			GAMING			**GENERAL**		
Bank Account Balances			**$ 40,876.30**			**$ 1,458.47**		**$ 3,390.00**
Outstanding cheques			$ -			$ -		$ -
Outstanding deposits			$ -			$ -		$ -
			$ -					
Actual Remaining Cash			**$ 40,876.30**			**$ 1,458.47**		**$ 3,390.00**