



CSS PAC Special Meeting - Jan 27th, 2016

CSS Dual Campus Review Announcement – Q&A, Info & Discussion

Whiteboard Notes – transcribed by Shawna Cadieux

Motion:

The Cowichan Secondary PAC demands that the school board do not consider the creation of two separate 8-12 high schools for the 2016/17 school year. Caroline Kirman moved and Michell Chernoff seconded.

Scott VP CSS Quam Campus: The purpose of the conversation to discuss pros/cons small vs large schools

Charlie Coleman: In smaller schools, teachers get to know kids. Difference in cohorts due to size and numbers of years spent at the school.

Parent: When will a plan be implemented? Timing?

Rod: As conversation broadens it becomes apparent that it can't happen quickly.

Trustee: We can't leave families hanging.

Parent question: What is the cost of a dual campus model?

Rod: It shouldn't be prohibitive

Rhonda (teacher and union rep): A large conversation is needed. Everyone needs to be consulted and to feel they have a voice.

Parent: French Immersion? Will a new model serve FI more effectively?

Charlie: Makes sense to put all 8-12 FI students on one campus. (Danielle: Concern we will lose FI kids as they make their own choices).

Discussion around what two schools would look like: Is it premature to discuss details?

Trustee: Board's intent was not prescriptive. We wanted to spark a conversation.

Parent: Can we focus instead on making it safer for kids to walk between the two schools? Why do kids have to move between campuses? Why can't teachers commute instead of students?

Charlie: We had limited time to plan for merging Quam, Prevost and CSS. 8-12 school too small for 1500 students. In year 1 of reconfiguration we had 300 Gr8s and 300 gr9s. The school was crowded. Zero influence from older kids. In year 2 gr.9s commuted to James Street campus for ½ day of math and PE. It created a familiarity with Cow High for entering gr10 and helped to ease congestion. Gr10-12 commuted to Quam campus for music, dance and theatre. We've made it work but it is not optimal.

Parent: When we will see the assessment?

Rod: That will flow from the consultation.

Parent: When will Cow High receive a new high school?

Sara Lowe: More community support is required.

Rod/Jason: We are not on the ministry list and not a priority. There is a new MOE process – clearer and more transparent and predictable. PIR must be updated and contain more options.

Trustee: This process is on pause because of concern from parents. We are looking for ways to make things better. Rumours and a leaked briefing note is why we planned a special meeting. Briefing note was the beginning of a conversation, not just solving a problem. Looking for enhancements. Trying to improve for everyone.

Various other parent questions and comments:

Smaller schools can't offer as many options for students.

Would splitting into 2 schools hurt our chances of getting a new school in the long run?

How would these two separate schools operate?

Average Day for students – how much student movement?

Is this review premature?

Would 2 schools enhance or hurt the FI program?

Concerns about students choosing sports over arts and vice versa.

Timeframe for two schools?

What is the actual cost of remaining in a state of reorganization?

Admin has stated that the 2015/16 gr11s would stay at the James Street campus for 2016/17.

Two separate schools but still big student populations for each?

Admin advises cohort number will stay the time for the entire 5 years

This process doesn't need to be forced. Voices should be heard. Take time to make a decision.