

Minutes of the Acadia Road Combined Daycare Communicare Society

Nov 9, 2006, in the Administration Building

In Attendance (in bold; absent members are not in bold):

Infant Center		3-5 Centers	
Little Goslings:	Mary Wells, regrets	Acadia:	Katherine Todd Millar (VP Advocacy)
Toddler Centers		Little Raven:	Gabriela Sincaian Marcel Sincaian (Treasurer)
Sitka:	Miranda Burgess Jeremy Woolf	Pacific Spirit/ S7UMUX Kindergarten	Denise Lauritano Annie Moradain
Huckleberry:	Kelli Kadokawa	Tillicum:	Karon MacLean
Canada Goose:	Karuna Karunakaran	Lluvia:	Linda Quamme
Discovery:	Maria Ezhova (Chair)	Barish:	Jessica Irwin (Co-Secretary)
Lilliput:	Julie Bettinger (Co-Secretary) Jim Salzman	Summer of '73:	Reuben Ford Karen Bakker (VP Advocacy), regrets
Chuva:	Brit Lampe	Kids Club:	No representative
Staff		Other	
Director	Darcelle Cottons Bev Christian		

Visitors: None.

Please ask your council rep or senior staff members for contact information if you have any questions.

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1. Review of Minutes

Minutes: The minutes from the October 12, 2006 meeting have been approved. The misspelling of Katherine Todd-Millar's name has been noted and corrected.

2. Administrators Report

Darcelle's Report: There were three main items discussed in their last meeting. 1) Changes have been made on the policy for procedural fairness, and it will be published on the UBC Childcare website. 2) Parent satisfaction surveys: there is already an administrative process in which parents are involved at multiple levels, but have added a comment section on withdrawal forms, 3) Discussed the transfer policy, which is the transfer between age groups (not up in age) and there will be no changes to those policies. Parent Council helped develop all of these policies. An issue in the future will be looking at a parents' status in the university not just at the point of entry into the system, but throughout the time a child is enrolled. Will do a full policy review when and if the expansion happens. May be looking at multiple levels of fees or not offering care at the next level if no longer have status (if so, the policy would be grandfathered in).

Expansion: The roundtable was very successful—the report for the expansion has been published for two years, but now that it has been discussed with the VPs, there is now a general understanding of the need so now it is at Board 1 of the Board of Governors in November. Board 2 will probably occur in January. The letter writing campaign is very important right now as we are trying to expand while big budget cuts are coming, so we are competing with lots of other interests. The university needs to continue to hear how important daycare is for students, faculty and staff so that the funding for expansion comes through.

The expansion plan: Kids club will be torn down and replaced. A modular building will be constructed off site and kids club will be in the admin building over the summer. There will be 35 more spaces for Kids Club. Digging the ground for three more pods for six more centers. We want to build the centers large enough to convert in the future. The order of construction will be 3-5 first, then toddlers, and infant last. Working on talking with the province on licensing to get a 2-5 center based on the family groupings model: children learn more when in a more dynamic age grouping, with older children modeling, more empathy, and will train the staff in the model. Karon asked if policies for a 2-5 center could perhaps allow for more switching between centers to ensure a change of scene for the kids. Bev: We will have more staff in a 2-5 and may be able to do more individual programming with small groups of kids. It is designed for maximum flexibility for our centers to change as the demand changes. The model for the centers is Little Raven plus another 100 sq ft. We will build the infant center last because it is most effective—even though the demand for infant spaces is highest, it is the most expensive care and it won't work if we don't have spaces to move kids up to the next level. The total cost is \$1800 a month for infant care. Jeremy notes that inflation for construction is over 2.5% a month.

Siblings policy: At the moment, all infant spots go to siblings, so any new students or faculty or first time parents will never get care. This affects many university groups, but students are being highly impacted since they are transient and can only plan so far in advance. Will look at 40% student enrollment and see how it plays out in the system. We want to ensure that student access keeps up. How then do we ensure that the sibling policy doesn't skip students? Katherine: what we've noticed is that the students that got a space at the infant center are in graduate studies, and it is their second child.

Political agenda at provincial and federal levels: Next week is a Code Blue—a federal initiative is happening. The NDP are putting a bill on the table. It is important that all parents contact their individual MP's, and ask them to support the bill. No one really protested the loss of federal dollars for childcare and if our voices are not heard soon, we will be paying the consequences for years to come.

The crisis points at UBC Childcare are for getting into infant care and transferring between toddler and 3-5 centers in winter, but there are rumors that there long waits for all of our programs. The facts are that Lluvia Preschool does not have a waiting list and school age kids have little or no waiting list, and there are currently spaces in the grade one program.

PSK: Pacific Spirit Kindergarten. We are licensed for 32 and enrollment has never got that high. Right now we have 28, and have invited kids that are kindergarten age next year to join from Jan to June with no care over the summer. We are only taking four kids. We will be adding another full time staff to take the younger kids, and then hoping to move the toddlers into the spaces that are then made available in the 3-5 centers. Hopefully this will ease some of the transfer logjam for 3 year olds born in December, but there are still concerns for the placement of the 3 year olds born in January to March.

Action Items:

3. Concert program

Update by Maria: The concert will be Saturday, November 25 at 10:30 am. An advertisement for the concert was placed in 'the Resident' (the Acadia residents newsletter). Tickets will be \$4 at the door, with free entry for infants until a year.

We will need volunteers: two for ticket sale, one for equipment pick up, one to sell bake sale, and one for balloon sale. Council pays will pay for the sound equipment rental. Darcelle says that staff will be able to get the van on Friday to pick up the equipment. Motion to write a check to pay for the sound equipment rental for the Chris Roskelly concert up to a \$100. (Will charge it on the Childcare visa, so if more will do another motion next meeting). Seconded. Approved.

Action Items: 1) We need parent volunteers to bake goods and bring them to the concert, and 2) We need two more volunteers to work at the concert.

4. Info Night, update

Reuben's summary: We had a good turn out on Oct 26, with about 50 parents attending and the venue worked very well. We had seven school reps from 3 private and 4 independent schools plus Catherine Eddy. There was about a half hour of discussion, with the total time of the event from 7 to 8:40pm. The parents seemed to enjoy looking at tables first, then sit and listen, and then ask more questions later. People enjoyed being able to talk with the reps and see some of the info first, and seven was a good number. A very good mix of schools represented, although disappointed that UHill was not present.

Organization of event: email in early Sept with follow-ups. Invited 30 to get 7. Night was the same night as a Van School meeting. Have contact info in a file for next year, and some info changes but will be a good start for organizing next year.

Action Items: Start basic organization of the event for next year in early summer, and pass along contact info to next year's volunteers.

5. Stongs/Safeway Fundraiser, update

Karuna's update: 52 families participated, so about 25%. The total value of all gift cards ordered was \$24,750, with \$10,650 from Safeway and \$13,500 from Stongs. We received 8% back, so our net fundraising was \$1932. Since it was so successful, we should do this fundraising again in the future. Safeway only does this for a few months each year, and we do not have enough time before it ends to do another, but Stongs can be done at any time. Choices and Capers and other stores offer similar fundraising opportunities.

Perhaps in the future the council should take a risk and buy in advance, or have council top off the totals to make sure we get a high percentage back. Need overdraft protection? Need to deposit checks first!

Karon: What are we going to do with this money? Discussion included a woodworking center, the clay artist from last year, budget for enrichment divide among centers. We will ask our centers for a wish list.

Action Items: 1) Karen Bakker will follow up on giving the gift basket to the winner of the draw, and 2) Reps will ask their centers for a wish list of things that centers can share, and 3) Future fundraising will be on the agenda in January.

6. Advocacy

Update from Karen Bakker who not present, but her report is in italics below, and was read to council by Katherine Todd-Millar who was also present at the Oct 26th roundtable:

There are two points to address regarding advocacy:

*1. *Advocacy update*. All of the information including the minutes from the October 26th meeting has been posted on the Parent Council website. Please ask parents to download the minutes and read them if interested.*

Acceleration plans have been accelerated and a Board 1 approval is going forward to the Board in November. /The letter writing campaign is now crucial - we need support at all levels so that the university devotes scarce resources (in a year of budget cuts!) to the expansion./ _Please remind all of your parents to write letters now!_

Bev and Darcelle were at the meeting so can provide more information about it if necessary, including the revised expansion plans (which would involve 3 daycares, and a more limited use of UNA funds than previously indicated).

Darcelle: Further to the recommendations from the Round Table meeting last month, the access for UNA is a hot issue. UBC was advised by groups at the table that it needs to first deal with recruitment and retention, both important internal concerns. The daycare expansion plan is now in motion. The university is considering how to make sure that the issues facing students, faculty, and staff are addressed before taking care of the larger university community.

Katherine: The money from the UNA is from two main sources. IIC funds are from a developers tax and the AAC funds are from the tax from residents. IIC money is going to the new underground bus loop. Her informal survey conducted last month included talking with 57 residents of Acadia. The results from this informal survey were given to Brian Sullivan, and she is working with Jeff to make a more formal survey.

There was a discussion about who are members of the UNA and the daycare needs of residents of Village Gate Housing which is on-campus university employee rental housing even though the landlord is not UBC directly. Half of the residents of Hawthorne are both UNA members and University employees, and a majority of children in that neighborhood are the children of UBC employees. There is clearly a growing need for community daycare but the question remains if it needs to be affiliated with UBC.

*2. *Family friendly policies at UBC.* I am organizing a meeting on January 19th with senior UBC administrators. The plan is to brainstorm about family friendly policies. /I would like to ask each parent rep to raise this issue with parents via email, and at their next parent meeting. Please ask them for **specific** suggestions, and reply to me directly. Ask your parents: _what policies would help you as a parent to achieve better productivity and a more healthy work life balance?_ /Please do not distribute my email to individual parents, but rather collect their suggestions first.*

(job sharing, elder care, sick kid policies and services,)

Suggestions for parents to discuss include:

- 1. applying the tuition waiver to daycare fees (proposed in the People Plan)*
- 2. creating a 'FamilyCare' office which provides a reference service for nannies and babysitters, as well as emergency backup daycare (U of T provides this), and elder care services.*
- 3. creating a 'looking for child care' bulletin board where parents wanting to share nannies can find out about one another.*
- 4. More flexible work policies (e.g. more options for part time work).*

<p>Action Items: 1) Ask parents to participate in the Letter Writing Campaign, 2) reps should ask their parents for suggestions for more family friendly policies, and then the reps will forward the summaries to Karen Bakker.</p>

7. Webmaster

Update: We continue to have difficulty finding a volunteer to be webmaster if there is a requirement that the person attend council meetings. The council agrees that it is important the webmaster be present at meetings to update content. Karon MacLean is willing to continue to be webmaster, but she would be unable to return as president in winter term.

Action Items: The positions of webmaster and president remain open, and Karon is willing to fill either but not both.

8. Traffic

We have a reduction of spaces available due to the shuttle stop, and more striped areas have appeared. Traffic safety remains an issue, but we have no volunteers for the executive position.

Action Items: The position of traffic safety coordinator is open.

9. Misc.

Email tree update by Bev: We had training with the staff last Friday. Shortly we will be creating a list for parents to sign in order to gain permission to put emails on a blind email list, and then in the future, the permission will be asked when a new family joins the system. The system is like what many departments and organizations already have, and it is a vital tool to disseminate important information. A privacy statement will be drafted, and explanation of how important a tool for parent meeting minutes and daycare council meetings, and how it will not be used. It will take a while to enter all of the info into the database, and then council members will be trained in its proper use. Housing IT people are also working on changes to our childcare database that will allow for on-line payments of fees. On-line payments will likely become available in the winter months.

Kelli raised a safety issue: a break-in happened to her home on campus. The door was kicked in, and a few things stolen. The police reported that four similar incidents had happened in the neighborhood that morning. Katherine reports that she had the same thing happen, and there appear to be about four people doing petty break-ins on campus. They wanted other parents to be aware, and ask that people be on the lookout for suspicious behavior.

Action Items:

10. Set next meeting

Our next meeting will be a **special advocacy meeting**, and has been scheduled for **Thursday, December 7, 2006 at 7:00 pm** at the Main Office. **Everyone is welcome.**

Our next regular parent council meeting has been scheduled for **Thursday, January 11, 2007 at 7:00 pm** at the Main Office.