

**Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) to the Superintendent Meeting**  
**February 25, 2016 – Lowell Elementary Music Room**  
**Key Communications**

Each school has two representatives on this committee. Attendees introduced themselves and shared their connections with the school district. Dawn Brand and Grace Munson are co-chairs.

**Remaining 2015-16 meeting dates:** 3/24, 4/21, 5/19

**Superintendent's Update**

- **Operations and technology levies:** Voters approved both our operations and technology levies in the special election on Feb. 9, and they passed at record rates (74-75%). These levies make up about 25% of Bellingham Public Schools budget and help pay for a variety of programs, staff and technology.
- **State legislature and budget:** The state legislature is in a short session. Lawmakers appear to be making plans and setting the stage for the next session to take a deep dive into how to change our state-funding model for K12 education. Our assumption is that the state will not try to fix the education budget any time soon.
- **Start/end times and high school schedule:** Dr. Baker anticipates making an announcement to our community soon about upcoming changes to start and end times and our high school schedule. We've spent a lot of time processing these prospective changes with our staff over the last five months, especially the high school schedule. Our high schools currently are on a six-period day, and we are strongly considering an eight-period (4x8) schedule to allow for more electives for students. There's a lot to like about the eight-period schedule, which includes bringing calmness to a student's schedule and creating more balance and time for homework. We are still doing our due diligence with researching the seven-period schedule. No schedule is perfect, and there are some concerns from staff that we're working to solve/process. Changes would go into effect in 2017-18. There is great energy around the state about starting high school later and more districts are following suit, based on strong medical research that teenagers need more sleep. Our high schools would start at 8:30 a.m. (currently high school starts at 7:45 a.m., zero hour starts at 6:30 a.m.), elementary would start at 8 a.m., (currently elementary starts at 8:30 a.m.) and middle school would stay the same (9:15 a.m.). Dr. Baker and Assistant Superintendent Steve Clarke both fielded questions from parents about earning college credits in high school (via College in the High School, Advanced Placement, Running Start), stress/balance of our students, the importance of being well-rounded and the implementation/timing of the new schedule.
- **Facilities:** Happy Valley Elementary's new building is going up, Parkview Elementary's renovations to their cafeteria and stage/music classroom are underway, and there's a lot of planning this winter for Sehome and Options high schools and our high school turf fields. We plan to break ground on Options and Squalicum's turf field this spring/summer.
- **Leadership Changes:** Bellingham High School principal Jeff Vaughn has announced his retirement, and we are now in the process of looking for his replacement. Michelle Kuss-Cybula is officially the principal of Sehome High School, and the current Assistant Principal of Sehome, Nancy Barga, is going to be in a support administrative role with Options High School next fall. We are also looking for a Director of Teaching and Learning to lead the implementation of our new 1:1 technology initiative.

**Lowell Information and Tour**

- Lowell Elementary School Principal Mary Sepler talked with the group about the recently completed renovations and addition of the school, as well as her first seven months as principal. Ms. Sepler and two Lowell parents led the group on tours of the school. Ms. Sepler and Dr. Baker answered questions about enrollment, 2013 bond, facilities' budget, history of the school, use of flexible space and Promise K.

**Announcements**

- 7:30 – 9 p.m., March 15 at Squalicum High School: Parents Matter is hosting Having Difficult Conversations with Your Teenagers.
- 6:30- 8:30 p.m., Feb. 25 at Fairhaven Middle School is hosting a MAD Hope night and suicide prevention evening for families and eighth grade students.
- Encourage other parents to come to PACS. It's a great opportunity for learning for families.

The meeting adjourned at 11:26 a.m.

**Next Meeting: March 24, 2016 at 9:30 a.m.**

