

CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

April 25, 2016  
1:00PM

Principal – Madhuri Pendharkar

In addition to the feedback submitted by the consultation committee from the school, the Superintendent noted the following additional feedback that were shared at the meeting with the school's consultation committee:

The discussion at the April 25<sup>th</sup> meeting included:

- It is a family. EA, special needs students are integrated 27 linguistic groups into a culture that represents a diverse community. Staff feel safe and welcome, 55 years old as a school. Always been diverse.
- Parents have had a long connection of caring and support. Parents know that staff really care about students, students are safe, ease of supervision, and students walk to school safely.
- The School builds community, the community builds the school. Playgrounds were built by the PAC with new structures and an upgrade focusing on natural play. Families use the grounds and play areas on weekends and after school. The site is extraordinary.
- Parents also mentioned that the school functions as an integral part of the community – especially for the 280 reasonably affordable housing units. There are intergenerational relationships with people in the neighbourhoods.
- There is fear that this sense of community will be lost. There is such potential if this continues.
- Safe, walkable neighbourhood for students no major roads to cross. Lee sits on a picturesque almost 8 acres parcel of land. The school is sheltered from main roads with pedestrian access on all sides. This fosters the concept of safe access to the school, a safe playground and field area and a quiet learning environment for the children. It enables adults to easily supervise large numbers of children when necessary. It also enables parents to empower children with more responsibility for their personal safety due to the sheltered nature of the space. The playground includes a recently constructed adventure playground, spacenet, and other built-in play structures that accommodate a large number of students. Recent walk-to-school initiatives have shown more than 250 children are able to walk to Lee.
- Staff really helps families through difficult times.
- Teachers, EAs and Principal are sensitive, this is the Lee way.

- Personal connections with families – exceptional involvement with families.
- Celebrated their 50 years anniversary in 2010 – it was so well attended by alumni because Lee was so influential in their lives.
- Lee has after school care which support working families. Extra classrooms have been rented to a daycare/preschool/afterschool care program. This addition to our community makes the school more accessible to working parents, providing seamless transition to Kindergarten and to afterschool care. The preschool helped fundraise for the playground.
- Great Hall was a new addition, modern wing could help with new families coming to Lee. This modern wing provides a large corridor which can be used as an open space along with five classrooms which have plumbing and are ideal for primary grade children. They require no additional seismic upgrades. Of the 21 classrooms at Lee, 13 require no seismic upgrades. In addition, the gym has previously been upgraded.
- PAC has worked hard to be financially responsible over the long term – so there was stability while the PAC continues to support the school with purchases and activities for students. The PAC and School have had a very good working relationship. The PAC is progressive and proactive. Along with past projects, the PAC has demonstrated a fiscally prudent approach to fundraising. They have a contingency fund to cover two years of PAC expenditures. As such, they have \$30,000 to deal with PAC turnover, wish list items and other pressing matters.
- In recent years, the PAC has completed the playground project which resulted in a \$125,000 improvement to the school. The project was not restricted to play equipment. Instead, it looked at the entire play experience and focused on the play environment. This included the construction of a berm which integrated with the equipment. In addition, boulders were incorporated into the design to enhance the imaginative play for the children. Lastly, native tree species were acquired to complete this massive project. In addition to this large endeavor, PAC has provided sound systems, iPads, charging stations, projectors, MacBooks, cameras, Apple TV, 50 inch TV, Smartboard, various other technology items, sports jerseys, books for the library and resource group, sports equipment, drinking water station, establishment of a hardship fund among other items along with funding programs, classroom allotments and field trips. The PAC, School and Parents/Caregivers work together to create a safe and enriching environment for our students.
- PAC had worked with the City to expand Ash Street to create a safe path to walk or bike to school. The school organized a Walk to School event. Parents appreciate that their children can walk. In the on-going walk/bike to school Active Transportation Initiative, 201 students participated in week one. In the weeks two and three, participation went up to 250 students. That represents over 80% of all students. Walking builds community.
- The community cares about their school – and just because they can't attend the consultation open houses doesn't mean that they don't.

- Parents acknowledge that the anxiety around this is very high – and is not just about the short term – it could make them question whether if they are moving schools anyway, it might be a good time to leave the district to somewhere more affordable.
- Rideau Park families left but given space (still used)
- Look at Lee as a large green space that if it closed would leave a big green space but no central community hub. It currently has the only playground North of Williams between No 4 Road and No 3 Road with the recently removal of the Rideau Park playground structure.
- Lee is a flexible space - a building that could add extra students and be fully functional quickly. It could potentially accommodate students from other schools within a 15 minute walking distance. Lee's operating capacity is 457 and is projected to average (between 2014 and 2028) student enrollment of 318. That would provide space for 139 displaced children who have had their schools closed. Currently no portables are used at Lee.
- According to the last five years of FSA testing, Lee ranks 133 out of 757 schools in BC. That is in the top 18 percentile.

Questions from the Committee were as follows:

*French Immersion cohorts do they stay.*

Answer: As much as possible.