

October 12, 2022

Message from Vernon/SD22 DPAC:

We are hearing that some voters in our district and across the province are confusing the new elector organization, *Parents Voice BC*, with the Vernon/SD22 District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC). *Parents Voice BC* does not represent the diverse parents in our school district, nor do they have any affiliation with the Vernon/SD22 DPAC, or any school Parent Advisory Council (PAC) or DPAC in our province. In *Parents Voice BC's* own words, they "support electing School Trustees who will listen to parental concerns as well as concerns from the wider community as a whole" yet their endorsed candidates in Vernon have made no effort to engage with Vernon/SD22 DPAC, who are the actual legislated parent voice in the district.

The Vernon/SD22 DPAC is the largest, and one of the most important partner groups working with School District 22 (SD22) and the Board of Education. We are the only partner group legislated under the School Act to "advise the board on any matter relating to education in the school district." DPAC Executive is elected to represent the collective voice of parents and remain nonpartisan. We participate on school district committees and volunteer our time. As a council, DPAC's mission is "to educate, inform, and empower parents to be partners in the education of their children." We advocate on behalf of all parents and students in our district and are available to advise all parents on how to best advocate for their own children.

Being nonpartisan, we will not endorse specific School Trustee candidates. We will, however, share which candidates have demonstrated that they value the legislated voice of parents in this district.

Together with Vernon Teachers Association and CUPE5523, Vernon/SD22 DPAC extended an invitation to all the candidates in Vernon and Coldstream to attend the Trustee Candidate Forum on October 3, 2022. None of the *Parents Voice BC* endorsed candidates attended, with two of the three candidates choosing to not respond to the invitation at all. One other Trustee Candidate attended the forum in the gallery but did not RSVP at the deadline set by the hosting groups. All other Trustee Candidates attended the forum to openly engage with the public.

Vernon/SD22 DPAC is committed to transparency. We strive to provide leadership to support, encourage, and develop successful PACs. We support parental involvement, skill development and the interest of public education in our district. We hope and expect to have a good working partnership with all elected Trustees and are disheartened that some will not demonstrate that they value the Vernon/SD22 DPAC in their candidacy.

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