

Howe Sound DPAC Park City Feedback Report

On behalf of DPAC I wrote to the Park City Record, the local newspaper for the Park City population. Park City hosted many of the events during the 2002 Olympic Games. Like Whistler, the main host was a nearby city, Salt Lake City. In my letter, I mentioned that we had been informed that PC schools were closed at the request of the parents. I asked three questions:

- How were the missed days made up
- What did the kids do?
- Were community facilities left open?

“The most consternation was from our dual income elementary school parents, and understandably so, and we do have many dual income families. I don’t remember any daycare horror stories, people seemed to make adjustments.” (Judy, parent and present School Board member)

We have been informed By the School Board 2010 Comm. that daycare camps were set up in schools and were so poorly booked, that they were cancelled. No one from PC has been able to corroborate this statement. We have to keep in mind that Whistler is not Park City. I have written another letter to the PC Record that asks for feedback on this one topic. DPAC has also requested information on PC demographics.

“We padded days at the beginning and end, eliminated days off for teacher professional development days/snow days, and shortened Christmas and Easter breaks. Our Presidents’ Day week is our traditional “ski week” so it was pretty easy to expand on that week off. I think we were off for nearly the entire month.” (Judy)

“Our last day of school was Friday, February 1. That gave the SLOC a week (February 2 - 8) to get set up in the facilities they were renting. We reopened February 26. The Olympics ended on Sunday, February 24. We used Monday (2/25) as a teacher workday for them to get their classrooms back together after the break.” (Nancy, Superintendent 2002)

One of the vacation differences is that U.S. schools have is a week long break in February – Presidents’ Week. We cannot negotiate Pro-D Days, but we can certainly look into using the Collaboration Days, if we have the permission of the HSTA.

“Some of the tickets were awarded in a drawing at each school. Those students were bussed to the events with school staff as chaperones and younger kids paired with older “buddies”. Unfortunately, I don't know who at the district arranged it. Other tickets were offered to parents and/or groups (like Boy Scouts) on a first come basis. Those were up to the parent/leader to provide transportation. All we had to do was request and hope to get what we wanted. Many tickets (if not most) were to less popular events like

Cross-Country skiing, women's hockey, Nordic Combined, etc. I believe they were offered from Visa in exchange for the city allowing a billboard ad during the Olympics, which was taken down right afterwards.” (Dawna, parent of 8 and 11 year old students)

Our families are interested in acquiring tickets as well. This sounds like a great idea. VANOC has told the 2010 School Board Committee that free tickets are not available. Therefore a sponsorship such as the one set up for the 2002 OG would be beneficial to local families and youth groups.

“My kids were in 1st, 6th and 9th grade in Park City Schools at that time. Closing the schools for a month was the best thing for our family, (the kids were able to ski every day on uncrowded slopes, fireworks every night, watching Olympic events) and really the only way it could have worked in the town. The security situation was intense and there was no way they could have operated school with busses and students, teachers, parents driving to and from school with all the Olympic transportation going on at the same time.”(Jamie, local parent)

Many of the e-mails I received hinted at the security around town. Still, all responses very positive about the experience.

“Like you, we have a number of community recreation programs that utilize the schools and they did in the Olympics as well. Four of our eight schools are clustered on one of the main roads into town and were in the direct transportation lane for the venues, so they were not available. The other four were available for use but I can’t remember what we did with those.” (Nancy, Superintendent 2002)

“I don't remember about the library but the pool remained open as it is not near the festivities. One of our rec clubs closed, but not all. The camps were mostly held on the outskirts of town. The main thing we did was give parents lots of notice that school would be closed (over a year in advance) This gave them time to prepare.” (Dawna, local parent)

One gets the feeling that PC is a much bigger community. It is interesting that the community still had access to their pool; I will work on information about the library and other community and school space available. It is imperative that we include the RMOW and other municipalities in these initial discussions. We cannot make decisions without understanding the intentions of VANOC, the Municipal Governments and the School District. Therefore, if we do not see municipalities represented at the SB Public Meetings, we should insist on municipal public meetings.

Cathy Jewett
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Howe Sound School District

February 13, 2007.