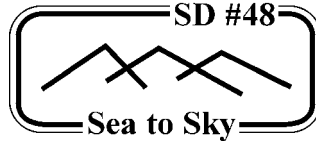


A - Audience comment/questions

P - Presenter response

page 1



## COMMUNITY MEETING @ HSSS

Tuesday, December 1, 2009

6:30 pm

Introductions: Rick Price,  
Vice Chair,  
Board of Education

Presenter: Rick Erickson  
Superintendent of Schools

Nancy Edwards  
Secretary Treasurer

Recorder: Magy Odorfer  
District Principal

A: It will take some time to train the staff to work with grade 8/9 and the time frame seems aggressive. Let's take the time needed to put together the best package for our kids, if this is the way we want to go. It took two years to figure out the Olympic calendar so let's take the time to do this right, if we are going to go down this road.

A: Costs for this reconfiguration?

P: Only cost is the bus driver.

P: Resource costs would be reduced with one set of text books. However, this decision is not one based on finances. No real staff savings, just reorganization.

A: Grade 10 is a difficult year and I would not want my child to switch schools for grade 10. Has the Bd considered a middle school model for grade 8 to 10 giving enough time to form the attachment to teachers, which is more important than with their peers? The 10s would have an option of moving on to HSS or staying at DRS.

A: We moved to Brackendale so our kids could go to DRS, it would be great for them to have the 3 years together at DRS where it is surrounded by forest. The teachers and the setting are great and it seems to work out for our kids. Please reconsider and don't make the change when grade 9s are looking forward to be the leaders.

A: After hard work the staff has built something beautiful and we threatening it now and it would take years to make it what it was before.

**A - Audience comment/questions**

**P - Presenter response**

page 2

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A: What are the programs that HSS grade 8/9s are not taking that DRS can take?

P: The HSS grade 8/9 students don't get the same number of electives as DRS. If you have more students you can offer more courses and choices for the students.

A: It makes sense academically and with the numbers. The research shows how important it is to make the adult connections and we need to look at this to make sure that we are paying attention to this especially in the transition years.

A: Pick-up and drop-off times what would they be? We need to be looking at this.

P: 7:30 am pick-up with a possible drop-off time of 3:30 -4 pm.

A: I would ask the board not to consider that grade 8 HSS students move next year to grade 9 at DRS.

P: The board is not considering this option, these students would be grandfathered – they would continue to be HSS students..

A: The DRS band is concerned about losing grade 10s who are very important role models and the quality of the band suffering without grade 10s. Take time in making this decision especially with talk about looking at elementary reconfiguration in the spring, so why not take a broader look.

P: There is no backstop or end time for the Bd to make this decision.

A: I have heard about transition and middle school, are we talking about the same thing?

P: It is a proposal for a transition program not a middle school model that the Board is now looking at.

A: The plan was that DRS eventually to become a grade 8 to 12 school with classrooms designed for this format. Perhaps in 10-15 years, maybe we would have enough students to support this community school. The kids in the south end are somewhat at risk, so to travel all the way up north increases their risk. The growth in Brackendale and Mamquam can move into DRS, so maybe the feeder schools set-up can change to increase the grade 8s in HSS. I'm surprised that people are willing to change something that is working at DRS.

A: At meetings like this the negative comments are usually the ones that get heard, but I think it's a good idea. It is great that my son can play band here and loves playing 2 instruments. This makes sense and works for some kids. Kids taking the city bus would be dropped off at 4:15 anyways.

A: Have the students been asked?

P: The board will take this under consideration, should we have a wider discussion with students ?

A: Large families will be separated, with some of students attending DRS and HSS, stretching us kind of thin with extra-curricular activities. How healthy is this? This is very rushed, is this money really going to be here to make these changes. We could get caught between a rock and hard place if make this decision. We have a long time to go before September and who knows what students will show up.

P: Projections are based on predictions and birth rates, enrollment numbers and other factors. The area attracts people who enjoy the recreation.

**A - Audience comment/questions**

**P - Presenter response**

page 3

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A: Are their experts who can talk to us about transition schools, what kind of courses can we put in, can we bring exploratory courses instead of options, gaining knowledge in multi-disciplinary courses with themes instead of subjects, team-building ideas ???? Let's plan it so we have a sense of what this could look like. How do you create a love for learning, life-long learning ??

P: Peter Dresher, Deputy Superintendent in Surrey is presenting at an upcoming conference on secondary students in the 21st century. He comments on what you need to look at to support grade 8 and 9 Transition Program students.

P: What do we have within our power that would enable schools to be exciting and engaging places where kids would enjoy coming and learning at, the kind of schools that you describe? We are hoping that in a very short time to graduate far more kids than currently. The risks of change are heard loud and clear.

A: There needs to be some real thinking around Outdoor Leadership, We already squeezing this community to run this resource rich program. It has been set-up for grade 10s, it's not really as rich at grade 9. There would be a whole bunch of challenges if it were set-up for grade 9s. It would set-up a conflict between grade 9 leadership and a grade 11/12 Outdoor Leadership. I don't think kids would take it twice. We need to really think about jeopardizing this program.

A: Why not move the Outdoor Leadership to HSS so all students can benefit from it at grade 10 ? So we need to provide benefits for all students in Squamish because we are one community, not just Garibaldi Highlands and Valleycliffe.

A: It would be a challenge to move the staff and resources to HSS.

A: These programs take time to prepare the students.

A: There is a jewel out there at DRS that needs to be protected.

A: It seems that you're being kind of selfish and hoarding these opportunities at DRS. We live here too and my child is going to this HSS. It seems that it's all about your kids and great teachers focussing on your kids. I would love my child to get this experience and other students would benefit from it. It seems that DRS students think they are better than the HSS students. You're sounding like a private school, Squamish really needs a middle school. The schools with K coming are going to get crammed. Grade 7s need to get out of elementary and into middle school that exist in Alberta. Grade 7s shouldn't be influencing the younger kids. I would love to offer DRS to everybody. That's why you send your kids to private schools with smaller classes and where they can get more attention. I would drive them to school at DRS.

A: We support HSS and the staff for the work they do.

A: My kids have gone to both schools; they loved DRS and HSS. I'm sorry with the DRS sound selfish. We just don't want to lose our grade 10s and won't be able to provide the quality.

A: What is the Outdoor Leadership (OL) program?

A: It is program for 26 grade 10s, in the first semester they take core subjects and the second semester has week-long kayaking and hiking program. It is a program of choice.

A: It is geared towards students who can afford it and it attracts all kinds of students, we try to accept all students.

**A - Audience comment/questions**

**P - Presenter response**

page 4

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A: It would work at HSS by the sounds of it.

A: This would need discussion about staffing.

P: It is a school based program, but parents can transfer students to any school as long as the school has space. So if a HSS student wanted to go to DRS for OL, if there was space then the student would be accepted. There is an application and interview process

A: As we create the future, let's figure out where the goal-post is and what success looks like.

A: We moved here to be close to the school, so if they miss the school bus it would be a problem for us.

A: Is there research on this?

P: It is middle school based research that we use.

P: Young adolescents benefit from programs that meet the unique needs of this age group.

A: What is Advanced Placement?

A: For top end students we could offer Honors courses in grade 10 can lead to Advanced Placement courses in grade 12. This prepares them for university. Enriched grade 8, 9 classes the opportunities are endless if we have more students.

A: What types of optional courses are at DRS?

P: Jazz band, band, after school programs.

A: You need three years prep for these specialty programs.

P: Not true, you can offer specialty options like jazz band or even jazz choir.

A: We are always able to find transportation for our kids to practices.

A: Something that is working well at DRS, then let's make the whole district better without major changes, being very careful.

A: I have a daughter in grade 10 and I have another daughter coming into grade 8. I'm scared about the dropping grade 8 numbers and students leaving for DRS. Sometimes it just gets too small, not enough kids for sports teams and elective choices, we are just getting too small.

P: This is what public education is all about, Dec. 9 is coming up, and it is not a drop dead date for any decision. The meeting notes will be on the district website from yesterday's DRS and today's HSS meetings. Student Engagement in their education, is one of the Bd's goals and engagement is what gets students excited and looking forward to attending school.