

**Parent Advisory Committee to the Superintendent (PACS)**  
Key Communications

Amber Asbjornsen and Elizabeth Walther (co-chairs)  
Thursday, May 19, 2022

Parkview Elementary School

Each school has two representatives on this committee.

**Welcome and Introductions**

Co-chairs Elizabeth Walther & Amber Asbjornsen

The group met at Parkview Elementary.

**Superintendent update**

**Budget:** We are finalizing our [budget plans for 2022-23 school year](#). The state legislature finished its work earlier this year, and they have earmarked funds in some key categories: rebranding work for schools retiring Indigenous mascots, which is what we have done at Bellingham High School; nurses and mental health staff; enrollment stabilization; and cost of living salary increases for staff. To cover the salary increase, we need to redistribute funds from our local levy. Class sizes are returning to pre-pandemic levels; our library media specialists and instructional coaches are going to each teach one class, and we are not filling some vacant positions through attrition. We plan to invest in middle school campus monitors, an elementary intervention team and expand AVID and International Baccalaureate (IB) among other things.

**Recognition:** Dr. Baker also shared other updates related to our recent staff appreciation week and an event the board held with Latinx families at Shuksan Middle School. The event, which is called a linkage, led to powerful reflections on how much progress has been made across our schools over the last 12 years to better connect and engage with our Latinx families. Many families shared gratitude, and Dr. Baker recognized Executive Director of Family Engagement Isabel Meaker for her work and leadership.

**Bell times next fall:** Dr. Baker asked for feedback from parent representatives on a proposal to refine bell times 2022-23 school year.

- Middle schools will dismiss at 3:50 p.m. on regular school days
- Middle and high schools will have early dismissal on Thursdays about twice a month (an increase from eight to 18 early dismissal Thursdays for secondary)
- Elementary will continue to have early dismissals every Thursday.
- Dismissal times will change on early dismissal days.
  - o Elementary schools will be dismissed at 12:15 p.m.
  - o Middle schools will be dismissed at 1 p.m.
  - o High school will be dismissed at 1:45 p.m.

Parents asked Dr. Baker about child care options for elementary students and alignment across our schools for after school enrichment. He shared that that is a big body of work and that our new director of athletics and activities is working to make some improvements. Other PACS members wondered about the impact of secondary students being released earlier into our community and filling their afternoons. Dr. Baker said he believes many of our community partners and athletics/activities would adjust their schedules to meet the new dismissal times.

Parkview Principal Mylo Allen took PACS members on a tour of the new school.

### **Announcement**

Aug. 20 is our back-to-school event at Bellingham High School, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. We are looking for a parent/guardian representative and administrator.

*This is the last meeting of the school year. We will see you next year!*