BCCPAC Representation Report

Submitted by: **Terry Berting, Director**
Name of Event: Provincial Steering Committee for the Healthy Family BC Schools Initiative
Date of Event: June 21, 2011
Location of Event: SFU Harbour Centre, Vancouver

Partners in attendance (about 20 people): Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Fraser Health, Interior Health, Vancouver Island Health, Vancouver Coastal Health (Northern Health absent), Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA), DASHBC, FISA, BCTF, FNESC, BCPVPA, BCSTA, BCCPAC, The Accacia Group (facilitators).

Purpose of meeting:

> *"To build on an understanding of the importance of shared accountability and commitment for the implementation of comprehensive school health within the context of Healthy Families BC."*
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> *"To explore how health and education can work together more effectively in schools and school districts using the comprehensive school health approach."*

The MoH reaffirmed its commitment to the Healthy Families/ Communities/ Schools agenda (almost) regardless of who is in power. It has been in the works for a long time and will continue. Re. Chronic Illness, Obesity, Diabetes etc; the government's #1 goal is Prevention, but clear and measureable outcomes must be shown.

All existing Healthy Schools programs will soon be accessible via the DASH portal; a "one-stop" access point for teachers, admin, health etc. DASHBC (Directorate of Agencies for School Health BC) has been hired to bring Health and Education partner groups together. The Ministry of Health is "knocking on the door of Education" and wants to know how to get in. Note that this initiative is somewhat different from any "hungry kids" initiatives.

Money has been freed up for Health to work with Education, but Health wants to tread carefully when coming into Education's domain. There was some interesting dialogue on this point. Some in Education made it clear that Health needs to *"learn our language if it wants to come into our schools, just as we would if we came into hospitals."* Health was somewhat surprised by the "territorialism" of Education, but was eager to learn more.

We were asked to come up with some sort of description or drawing or poem or song about the sector we were involved in. Interestingly, a common theme in Education was that of a protectionist, elitist "castle" with large walls around it. Those in Health reminded us how very different Acute Care is from Public Health Care. Acute care is seen by many in the sector to be glamorous, new, exciting and immediate; *"it's where everyone wants to be."* On the other hand Public Health is much less glamorous because it is long-term, and results are not immediate. It is *"slow moving."*

An important question was then asked of everyone: **How do you see your organization participating in the Healthy Schools initiative?** How supportive is BCCPAC and what will we do to show that support? What do our members say about it? Some other important questions were:

- What will the financial component look like; will Health contribute?
- If bringing something into the Ed system, what will go?
- How much local input will there be?
- How will parents be supported in this?
- How do we overcome the territorialism within each sector?

By the end of the day, everyone involved realized that forming a framework for Health and Education to work together will take some time, but as long as it grows from the ground up, the relationship can be strong. The Ministry of Health is looking for guidance as to how to implement this at a local level; how about starting with some sort of signed agreement between the two ministries. A *"robust business case"* needs to be created to show why we need to do this.

The next meeting will be in a few months.

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