



PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL

Parents are vital partners in their children's education. Study after study show that parental involvement is a major factor in a child's academic success. B.C. parents have always found ways to support their children academically at home and now they have a legal right to volunteer at their children's schools. Volunteering may not be for everyone, but it's an exciting option for those parents who want to be more directly involved in their children's education. Some of the ways to become more involved with your child's education are:

- ▶ School Planning Councils
- ▶ Parent Advisory Councils
- ▶ District Parent Advisory Councils



SCHOOL PLANNING COUNCILS

The provincial government believes parents should have a say in their children's education because parents have valuable insights and opinions. To make sure this happens, the School Act has been amended to allow every school in B.C. to form a school planning council.

School planning councils are advisory bodies made up of:

- ▶ three parents
- ▶ one teacher
- ▶ the school principal
- ▶ one student from Grade 10, 11 or 12 where applicable

Responsibilities

The school planning council is an advisory body. The major responsibility of a school planning council is to consult the school community in developing, monitoring and reviewing school plans for student achievement.

School Plans

School plans focus on setting out strategies to improve students' intellectual development, but they also deal with other areas of student achievement, such as human and social development, and career development.

How to Become a Parent Representative

Parent representatives on school planning councils are elected by secret ballot each year by their parent advisory council. You must be nominated by a voting member of your parent advisory council to be eligible for election to the school planning council. If you wish to be nominated, contact your parent advisory council and tell them you would like to submit your name for consideration.

Contact Your School Planning Council

Contact your school planning council with questions, concerns or ideas about your school. Your school office will put you in touch with a school planning council member.

For more information about school planning councils, consult the [Guidelines for School Planning Councils](#).

PARENT ADVISORY COUNCILS (PACS)

According to the B.C. Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils, parental involvement in education results in greater success for students, better attitudes towards school and higher graduation rates. Participating in a Parent Advisory Council (PAC) is one opportunity among many to participate in your child's education.

Like District Parent Advisory Councils, PACs may choose to be members of the [British Columbia Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils](#).



Responsibilities

The PAC is the legislated parent voice at the school level advising on any matter relevant to the school. The PAC represents the collective view of parents of children in the school.

As a result of recent changes to the School Act, parent advisory councils are now responsible for electing parent representatives to school planning councils. They also work with school principals to promote effective two-way communication between the school, the parent community and School Planning Councils.

Parent Advisory Council Membership

All parents and guardians of children in a school are automatically members of that school's PAC and entitled to attend and vote at general meetings. A school's principal or vice-principal and a teacher representative may also attend PAC meetings. Some PACs, especially at the secondary level, have a student representative as well.

Contact Your Parent Advisory Council

Contact your local school to find out more about the Parent Advisory Council. You can also contact the British Columbia Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils on the Web or call them at 604 687-4433.

DISTRICT PARENT ADVISORY COUNCILS

District Parent Advisory Councils (DPACs) allow parents to have input into the education system at the school district level. They are a valuable link between local Parent Advisory Councils and the school board.

Like Parent Advisory Councils, DPACs may choose to be members of the British Columbia Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC).

DPAC Purpose

The DPAC is the legislated parent voice at the school district level, representing the collective views of PACs in a school district.

A DPAC advises the school board on any matter relating to education in the school district. DPACs advocate for parental involvement in the education system and give input into the development of education policy and curricula.

Forming a District Parent Advisory Council

Recent amendments to the School Act have made it mandatory for a DPAC to be created if a Parent Advisory Council requests one.

Contact Your District Parent Advisory Council

For further information, contact your local school district or BCCPAC.

Class-Size Limits Under the Education (Learning Enhancement) Statutes Amendment Act, 2006

This legislation balances the concerns that parents, teachers, superintendents, principals, vice-principals and school trustees have voiced at roundtable discussions by ensuring:

- ▶ no class in grades 4-7 will have more than 30 students, except with the consent of the classroom teacher and the approval of the principal and district superintendent. The rationale for exceeding the limit must be made public.
- ▶ the district average class size for grades 4-7 must not exceed 28 students.
- ▶ no class will have more than three identified special needs students, except with the approval of the principal and superintendent, and prior consultation with the classroom teacher.
- ▶ no class in grades 8-12 will have more than the current district-wide average maximum of 30 students except with the approval of the principal and superintendent, and prior consultation with the classroom teacher. The rationale for exceeding the limit must be made public.