

Tab 20 ~

BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils

In this **Tab 20**, you will find

| | |
|---|---------|
| Purposes of BCCPAC | Page 2 |
| About BCCPAC | Page 3 |
| Membership | Page 3 |
| Funding | Page 4 |
| Conferences, Events, and Workshops | Page 4 |
| Written Resources and Website | Page 5 |
| Website and Forums | Page 5 |
| Strategic Plan 2002—2005 | Page 6 |
| Statement of Policy and Resolution Tracking | Page 6 |
| Committees | Page 6 |
| District Associates | Page 7 |
| BCCPAC Guidelines for District Associates | Page 9 |
| BCCPAC Member Services | Page 10 |
| BCCPAC Advocacy Project | Page 10 |

BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils

BCCPAC aims to improve public education for all students by including and supporting parents. The word *including* means two things:

- that we involve parents in the work of the organization
- that we advocate for the public education system to include parents at all levels.

BCCPAC is recognized by the Ministry of Education and education partners as the collective provincial voice for parents and guardians of students enrolled in our public education system.

Members of BCCPAC are PACs and DPACs in BC who apply for and are granted membership. BCCPAC also has Honourary, Life, and Associate Members.

BCCPAC is a charitable non-profit organization registered under the Society Act.

Purposes of BCCPAC

BCCPAC's Vision

To improve public education for all students by including and supporting parents

BCCPAC's purposes, set out in its constitution, are twofold:

- to advance the public school education and well-being of children in the province of BC
- to carry on activities to promote and enhance meaningful parent participation in an advisory role at the school, school district, and provincial levels.

These purposes are elaborated as follows:

To advance the public school education and well-being of children in the province of BC by:

- exercising leadership in developing and expressing collective parental views, as identified through parent advisory councils
- informing and educating parents, children, and the public on key issues impacting children, schools, and education
- promoting excellence and equal opportunity in public education

Research shows that parent involvement is related to less absenteeism, improved achievement, and a better perception of school and classroom climate.

Renihan & Renihan, The School Trustee, February 1994

- fostering cooperation and understanding between parents and educators in the education and guidance of children and youth
- consulting with and advising the Minister and the Ministry of Education on policies and programs
- liaising with other national and provincial organizations representing students, parents, teachers, school support staff, principals, administrators, school trustees, and the broader community
- promoting research in education and the dissemination of research results

To carry on activities to promote and enhance meaningful parent participation in an advisory role at the school, school district, and provincial levels by:

- supporting school and school district parent advisory councils in developing and maintaining their advisory role
- providing information to enable and enhance the members' participation and decision-making in education
- providing leadership development
- promoting effective communication and consultation between parents, students, and school administration and staff
- providing relevant information to prospective members

The constitution also says

Membership and activities of the Society shall be free of commercial, partisan, sectarian, racial, and gender bias.

About BCCPAC

BCCPAC is

- governed by a volunteer board of nine directors elected annually by the membership, and the past president
- managed by a committed full-time and part-time staff
- assisted by contract workers and volunteers.

Membership

BCCPAC represents a membership of over 1,000 PACs and DPACs from every school district in the province. Collectively,

we represent the parents of hundreds of thousands of children in BC.

BCCPAC has five classes of members:

Regular members are PACs in good standing. Regular members have full voting privileges at annual general meetings and can take advantage of all services.

DPACs can also be members, can take advantage of services, but do not have voting privileges.

Honourary members are individuals, not affiliated with BCCPAC, whose exemplary activities warrant recognition. Honourary members are approved by the Board of Directors and ratified at the annual general meeting.

Life members are individuals whose service to BCCPAC warrants recognition. Life members are also approved by the Board and ratified at the annual general meeting.

Associate members are individual parents or guardians of children in the public school system who apply for associate membership. Associate members may attend conferences, purchase resources at member rates, direct queries to BCCPAC, and use the services of the BCCPAC Advocacy Project.

BCCPAC ensures

- that parents have a voice in their children's education
- that the BC public education system remains focused on the needs of children.

Honourary, Life, and Associate Members do not have voting privileges

Funding

BCCPAC receives funding from government, membership fees, conference registration fees, sales of resources, advertising, sponsorship, and project funding.

Conferences, Events and Workshops

- ✓ BCCPAC holds two *annual conferences* for members—a Fall Leadership Conference, held at different locations throughout BC, and a Spring Conference and Annual General Meeting, usually held in the Lower Mainland.

BCCPAC supports parents as they navigate the education system and exercise their and their children's rights in education.

- ✓ We hold *Regional Events*—customized leadership sessions designed to meet the needs of PACs and DPACs in different regions of the province.
- ✓ We offer an up-to-date *PAC Ed Education and Development Workshop Series* to assist PAC and DPAC volunteers to develop individual and collective leadership skills to participate effectively in their school communities and the public education system.
- ✓ We collaborate with education partners in sponsoring and organizing educational and leadership events.

Written Resources

BCCPAC produces a wide range of written resources, including

- Brochures
- *IMPACT*, a quarterly newsletter
- *Speaking Up! A parent guide to advocating for students in public schools*
- *Call it Safe*: Two parent guides for dealing with harassment and intimidation in secondary schools and bullying in elementary schools
- Leadership Manual
- Advocacy Manuals for DPACs and appointed advocates
- Issues Bulletins explaining current educational issues
- Practice Notes
- Discussion papers and submissions
- Press releases
- News Bytes
- Inclusive PACs and DPACs Series

BCCPAC Website
www.bccpac.bc.ca

Some of these resources are available in several languages. Check our website or call the BCCPAC office.

Website and Forums

We maintain an extensive up-to-date website, with hundreds of pages of information and analysis, resources, announcements, links, forms, and archived material.

Our website offers discussion forums for use by members and the general public to submit questions and offer opinions on educational matters of all kinds.

Strategic Plan

Using effective communication, BCCPAC will serve the members and be their voice.

BCCPAC's Board of Directors develops and updates a strategic plan containing goals and objectives for service to members, representation, advocacy, and other areas of importance to BCCPAC members.

The current Strategic Plan is available on our website.

Statement of Policy and Resolution Tracking

BCCPAC invites parents to participate on Resolution Strategy Teams to plan effective action on recently approved resolutions. Consult our website or the BCCPAC office for details.

At every annual general meeting, BCCPAC members approve resolutions proposed by member PACs and DPACs from all parts of the province. These resolutions reflect the collective views of parents on educational issues, and guide BCCPAC's actions, decisions, and public positions on key issues.

All approved resolutions are collated into BCCPAC's *Statement of Policy*, available on the website or from the BCCPAC office.

Also available on the website is detailed information on the steps BCCPAC has taken to put each resolution into action, called *resolution tracking*.

For more information on **BCCPAC's Resolutions Process**, see **Tab 21**.

Committees

Effective committees contribute greatly to the success of any volunteer organization.¹

BCCPAC's *internal* committees assist with governance and organizational issues. BCCPAC also participates on *external* committees organized by education partners, government ministries, and advisory groups.

¹ See **Tab 12, Role of Committees in PACs and DPACs**.

A note on external committees

BCCPAC invites volunteers from member PACs and DPACs to participate on external committees. Through these committees, volunteers represent the parent voice to our education partners, government ministries, and groups serving children and youth.

Opportunities arise throughout the school year and cover such diverse topics as

- curriculum and assessment
- special education
- sports
- community link programs
- youth violence
- young worker safety

A list of external committees and new opportunities, together with application forms, are available on our website.

District Associates

BCCPAC District Associates, or DAs, are the communication link between BCCPAC and its member PACs and DPACs.

District Associates are chosen by member DPACs. Their mandate and job description are determined by the DPAC using guidelines developed by BCCPAC (see page 9). Duties commonly include

- communicating BCCPAC information to PACs and the DPAC
- consulting PACs and the DPAC on current issues
- communicating PAC and DPAC views to BCCPAC
- processing BCCPAC forms
- promoting membership in BCCPAC
- attending BCCPAC conferences.

How does a parent become a District Associate?

The DPAC elects or appoints a DA according to its bylaws and notifies BCCPAC. The selected individual must complete a registration form which must also be signed by two executive members of the DPAC. The registration form is mailed to all

DPACs and PACs when they register or renew their BCCPAC membership. It can also be downloaded from our website.

Who pays a District Associate's fees for attending BCCPAC conferences?

If the DA has been identified as the *Designated Delegate* for their district, BCCPAC will reimburse travel expenses according to its policy. The conference registration fee and accommodation expenses are the responsibility of the member PAC or DPAC.

Should a District Associate be a member of the DPAC Executive?

Yes, this is recommended. However, it is up to the DPAC and should be decided by the DPAC members.

Can a District Associate delegate responsibilities?

DAs in large school districts may need help with such tasks as collecting AGM resolutions or proxy forms, identifying parents for BCCPAC committees, and promoting membership in BCCPAC. The DA is ultimately responsible for the work delegated to others.

BCCPAC Guidelines for District Associates

The role of the District Associate is to enhance communications between member DPACs, PACs, and BCCPAC. This is a vital role in bringing to BCCPAC the cumulative voice of its members. These combined views will comprise a great deal of the representational voice of parents in this province.

- Be a conduit for information and inquiries to and from BCCPAC.
- Make contact with individual PACs, including an annual letter of introduction to PAC presidents.
- Ensure BCCPAC information is received by PACs, for example, newsletters, bulletins, and surveys.
- Report monthly to DPACs as appropriate.
- Be available to attend BCCPAC conferences.
- Help identify district parents for BCCPAC committees.
- Process BCCPAC forms and applications, for example, membership forms, AGM resolutions, proxy forms, and conference registrations.
- Promote the value of BCCPAC membership.
- Field inquiries from PACs and DPACs on BCCPAC member services (call the BCCPAC office for information when necessary).
- Submit an annual report to BCCPAC.

BCCPAC Member Services

BCCPAC's Member Services Committee helps member councils, as well as individual parents, obtain the information and resources they need to represent parents effectively in their schools and districts.

When parents call Member Services, they can expect to receive timely, informed assistance from BCCPAC's office staff or a director.

- If the caller needs written materials, a staff member will mail or fax them, or direct the caller to the BCCPAC website.
- If the question is about policy or process, the caller will be referred to the Member Services Chair who will arrange for a Committee member to return the call.

If the caller is experiencing conflict or has a personal issue, they will be referred to the BCCPAC Advocacy Project toll free message line at **1-888-351-9834**.

BCCPAC Advocacy Project

What makes BCCPAC advocacy so successful is the way we assist the adults involved to focus on the best interests of the child.

*Janet Phillips,
BCCPAC Provincial
Advocate*

The BCCPAC Advocacy Project is a parent-driven movement to help parents and students be heard in our public education system and solve problems in a positive way.

The project began in the Qualicum School District in 1993, and went province-wide in 1994 when BCCPAC received funding from the Ministry of Education.

The project focuses on assisting local DPACs to create their own advocacy projects. Through the provincial and local projects, BCCPAC has helped thousands of parents advocate for students, and has produced a wealth of information for PACs, DPACs, parent advocates, and individual parents acting on their own.

For more information on the BCCPAC Advocacy Project, see **Tab 11, Speaking Up ~ The BCCPAC Advocacy Project**.