

STRATHCONA ELEMENTARY PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Legislative authority preamble:

The British Columbia School Act provides that:

... it is the goal of a democratic society to ensure that all its members receive an education that enables them to become literate, personally fulfilled and publicly useful, thereby increasing the strength and contributions to the health and stability of that society;

And to assist in facilitating the achievement of those objectives the Act recognizes Parent Advisory Councils and provides further that:

..A parents' advisory council, through its elected officers, may advise the Board, and the principal and staff of the school or Provincial school respecting any matter relating to the school or the Provincial school.

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Constitution

Section 1 – NAME

The name of this Council is Strathcona Elementary Parent Advisory Council.

Section 2 – PURPOSES OF THE COUNCIL

The purposes of the Council will be:

1. To advise the school board, principal, and staff on any matter relating to the school
2. To promote the education and welfare of students in the school
3. To promote the interests of public education and in particular, the interests of Strathcona Elementary
4. To encourage parent involvement in educational activities and to support programs that promote parent involvement in decision making
5. To strengthen the role of parents in the education of their children by ensuring they know their rights and responsibilities, and by providing a forum for discussion of educational issues
6. To promote effective communication between the home and school
7. To provide leadership in the school community
8. To contribute to a sense of community within the school and between the school, home, and neighbourhood
9. To organize and support activities for students and parents to advise and participate in the activities of the Chilliwack District Parent Advisory Council if applicable
10. To advise and participate in the activities of the BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils if applicable
11. To facilitate financial support for the goals of the PAC as determined by the membership
12. The Council will operate as a non-profit organization with no personal financial benefit accruing to members.
13. The business of the Council will be unbiased in respect of race, religion, gender, politics, sexual orientation, and physical or mental ability.

Section 3 - INTERPRETATION OF TERMS

“Administration” means the Principal and Vice-Principal(s) of Strathcona Elementary School **“community organizations”** means groups that demonstrate an interest in education and are not already included in the scope of the Council’s constitution and bylaws

“Council” refers to the Strathcona Elementary Parent Advisory Council

“district” means School District No. 33

“DPAC” or **“district parent advisory council”** means the parent advisory councils organized according to the School Act and operating as a district parent advisory council in School District No. 33

“PAC” or **“parent advisory council”** means the parents organized according to the School Act and operating as a parent advisory council in Strathcona Elementary

“parent” is as defined in the School Act and means

- (a) the guardian of the person of the student or child,
- (b) the person legally entitled to custody of the student or child, or
- (c) the person who usually has the care and control of the student or child and, for the purposes of these bylaws, means the parent or guardian of a child or children enrolled in School District No. 33

“school” means any public elementary or secondary educational institution as defined in the School Act operating within School District No. 33

“school community” means anyone living or working in the catchment who demonstrates an interest in public education or an interest in your school.

Bylaws

Section 1 – MEMBERSHIP

1. All parents and guardians of students registered in Strathcona Elementary are voting members of the Council.
2. Administrators and staff (teaching and non-teaching) of Strathcona Elementary may be invited to become non-voting members of the Council. If a staff member happens to also be the parent of a student registered in Strathcona Elementary the status of voting member shall prevail under the assumption that they will abstain from voting on any matter directly related to their employment and/or professional gain.
3. Members of the school community who are not parents of students registered in the public school system may be invited to become non-voting members of the Council.
4. At no time will the Council have more non-voting than voting members.
5. Every member will uphold the constitution and comply with these bylaws.

Section 2 – GENERAL MEETINGS

1. General meetings will be held **not less than seven times during the school year**, on a regular schedule. The annual general meeting will be held in May.
2. Members may call a special meeting by presenting a request signed by at least five (5) members to the Chair, who shall call the meeting within ten (10) school days of receipt of the request.
3. At general meetings, members shall not discuss individual school personnel, students, parents, or other members of the school community.
4. Members will be given reasonable notice of general meetings. General meeting dates for the school year shall be set in September.
5. Where procedural problems shall arise which cannot be resolved with the Constitution, the rules contained in the latest edition of Roberts' Rules of Order shall govern all matters with final authority

Quorum

6. A quorum for general meetings will be three executive members and two voting members.
7. If at any time during a general meeting a quorum ceases to be present, business then in progress must be suspended until there is a quorum present or until the meeting is adjourned, rescheduled or terminated.

Voting

8. Except as provided elsewhere in these bylaws, all matters requiring a vote will be decided by a simple majority of the votes cast (50% +1).
9. In the event of a tie vote, the Chair does not have a second or casting vote and the motion is defeated.
10. Members must vote in person on all matters. Voting by proxy will not be permitted.

11. Voting is by a show of hands or, where requested by two voting members present, or for the purpose of elections, by secret ballot. A vote will be taken to destroy the ballots after ballots are used.

Section 3 – EXECUTIVE

Role of Executive

1. The Executive members will manage the Council's affairs between general meetings.
2. The Executive members will encourage and support parents and students with individual concerns to act on their own behalf, and provide information on the process for taking concerns forward.

Executive defined

3. The Executive will include the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Past Chairperson, DPAC representative, BCCPAC representative, and two (2) Members at Large.
4. In the event that all positions cannot be filled, the minimum to be viable is three; Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer.

Eligibility

5. All members of the Executive must have a criminal record check and sign the Statement of Understanding.
6. Any voting member of the Council is eligible to serve on the Executive; parents who are employees of School District No.33 and wish to serve on the Council must disclose their employment to the PAC membership PRIOR to annual elections and must refrain from voting on matters that pertain directly to their employment. Elected officials of School District No.33 or the Ministry of Education are not eligible to hold an Executive position.

Election of Executive

7. The Executive will be elected at each annual general meeting.
8. The Nomination and Election process is chaired by the Immediate Past Chairperson or a PAC member appointed by the Executive.
9. The Nomination Chairperson calls for nominations to a position. All nominees must be voting members of the PAC. The call is repeated three (3) times.
10. A vote is conducted by secret ballot if there is more than one nominee for a position.

Term of office

11. The Executive will hold office for a term of one year beginning July 1 and ending June 30.
12. No person may hold the same Executive position for more than two (2) consecutive years. In the event that an Executive position remains vacant due to lack of

nominated members, a past Executive member that has reached their limit of consecutive terms may be considered for the position if they are willing to continue.

Vacancy

13. If an Executive member resigns or ceases to hold office for any other reason, the remaining Executive members may appoint an eligible member of the Council to fill the vacancy on an interim basis until the next general meeting where the position can be officially filled by a vote from the Membership.

Removal of Executive

14. The Dispute Resolution Process (Section 12 of these bylaws) shall be the process used to remove an executive member

Section 4 – EXECUTIVE MEETINGS

1. Executive meetings will be held at the call of the Chair, or by request of a majority of Executive members.
2. Executive members will be given reasonable notice of Executive meetings.

Quorum

3. A quorum for Executive meetings will be a majority of the members of the Executive.

Voting

4. All matters requiring a vote at Executive meetings will be decided by a simple majority of the votes cast.
5. In the case of a tie vote, the Chair does not have a second or casting vote and the motion is defeated.

Section 5 - DISTRICT PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL AND EXTERNAL COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

District Parent Advisory Council representative

1. One representative to the Chilliwack DPAC shall be elected annually from among the voting members who are not employees or elected officials of School District No. 33 or the Ministry of Education

Election of DPAC representatives

2. Please see Section 3.7 through 3.10: Election of Executive.

Term of office

3. DPAC representatives will hold office for a term of one year.

Vacancy

4. If a DPAC representative resigns or ceases to hold office for any other reason, the Membership shall elect an eligible member of the Council to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term.

External committee representatives

5. The Membership or Executive may elect or appoint an eligible member who is not an elected official of School District No. 33 or the Ministry of Education to represent the Council on an external committee or to an external organization.
6. The representative will report to the Membership or Executive as required.

Section 6 – CONDUCT

1. All members must act solely in the interests of the parent membership of the Council.
2. Any information received in confidence by a member from school personnel, a student, parent, or other member of the school community is privileged and must not be divulged without permission of the person giving the information.
3. A member who is interested, either directly or indirectly, in a proposed contract or transaction with the Council must disclose fully and promptly the nature and extent of their interest to the Membership, and will offer to voluntarily refrain from discussion and voting on said item.
4. A member must avoid using his or her position on the Council for personal gain. No member may be remunerated for serving on the Executive or Committee, but may be reimbursed for expenses reasonably and necessarily incurred while engaged in the Council's affairs.
5. The Council will refrain from partisan political action or other activities that do not serve the interests of the school or the public school system.

Section 7 – DUTIES OF EXECUTIVE

The Chair shall

1. speak on behalf of the Council
2. consult with Council members
3. preside at Membership and Executive meetings
4. ensure upcoming events are communicated in advance of general meetings
5. provide a report at each general meeting outlining work done and issues considered since last meeting
6. appoint committees where authorized by the Membership
7. ensure that the Council is represented in school and district activities

8. ensure that Council activities are aimed at achieving the purposes set out in the constitution
9. be a signing officer for cheques and documents, if applicable
10. issue and receive correspondence on behalf of the Council
11. be familiar with the current Constitution and Bylaws of the Council
12. review draft minutes from prior meeting prior to posting
13. ensure that all relevant information regarding this position is passed onto the succeeding Chair by the June general meeting, and will be available in an Executive, non- voting, advisory role the following year as requested

The Vice-Chair shall

14. assume the duties of the Chair in the Chair's absence
15. assist the Chair in the performance of his or her duties
16. accept extra duties as required
17. be a signing officer for cheques and documents, if applicable
18. be familiar with the current Constitution and Bylaws of the Council
19. review draft minutes from prior meeting before posting
20. ensure all relevant information regarding this position is passed on to the succeeding Vice-Chair by the June general meeting

The Secretary shall

21. ensure that members are notified of meetings
22. record and file minutes of all General and Executive meetings and make copies available to all members
23. keep an accurate copy of the Constitution and Bylaws, and make copies available to members upon request
24. prepare and maintain other documentation as requested by the Membership or Executive
25. ensure safekeeping of all records of the Council by maintaining hard documents that can be accessed at Strathcona Elementary by the Membership at any given time
26. record the attendance at all General and Executive meetings
27. send draft minutes of General meetings to the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson for review and posting to the PAC website within ten (10) school days of the meeting, and final minutes within five (5) school days of acceptance
28. be a signing officer for cheques and documents, if applicable
29. be familiar with the current Constitution and Bylaws of the Council
30. ensure that all relevant information regarding this position is passed on to the succeeding Secretary by the June general meeting

The Treasurer shall

31. ensure all funds of the Council are properly accounted for
 - a. At the beginning of each year, prior to utilizing any PAC-only funds, the Treasurer shall inquire with the school regarding any remaining balance of PAC funds from the previous year's PAC fund account and ensure that those funds are utilized first.
32. ensure that proper financial records and books of account are maintained

33. provide a report on all receipts and disbursements at each General meeting
34. make financial records and books of account available to members upon request
35. have the financial records and books of account ready for inspection or audit annually
36. submit an annual report and financial statement at the Annual General Meeting
37. sign all cheques along with one other Executive member with signing authority; has ability to give consent for other Executive members with signing authority to sign in their absence for time sensitive matters.
38. be familiar with the current Constitution and Bylaws of the Council
39. ensure that all relevant information regarding this position is passed on to the succeeding Treasurer after completing the fiscal year end

The Past Chairperson shall

40. Help smooth the transition between Chairpersons
41. Serve as an advisor to the Chairperson
42. Provide continuity of leadership
43. Assume specific tasks or responsibilities as requested by the Chairperson\nThe DPAC Representative shall\n(a) attend all meetings of the Chilliwack DPAC and represent, speak and vote on behalf of the Council
44. maintain current DPAC registration of the Council as decided by the Membership provide a report on all matters relating to the DPAC at each General meeting\n(d) seek and give input to the DPAC on behalf of the Council
45. receive and relay all communications between the DPAC and PAC membership at General meetings
46. liaise with other parents and DPAC representatives
47. be familiar with the current Constitution and Bylaws of the Council
48. ensure that all relevant information regarding this position is passed on to the succeeding DPAC representative by the June general meeting

The BCCPAC Representative shall

49. act as a liaison between the PAC and BCCPAC
50. annually register PAC membership in BCCPAC as decided by the Membership (c) provide the PAC Executive with information from BCCPAC activities
51. attend and/or encourage parent attendance at BCCPAC Provincial Conferences (e) be familiar with the current Constitution and Bylaws of the Council
52. ensure that all relevant information regarding this position is passed on to the succeeding BCCPAC representative by the June general meeting

Members at Large shall

53. assist the Executives with ideas and support during meetings
54. assist the Executives when needed for projects or other undertakings
55. aid in communication with parents on the work of PAC
56. be familiar with the current Constitution and Bylaws of the Council
57. ensure that all relevant information regarding this position is passed on to the succeeding Member at Large by the June general meeting

Section 8 – COMMITTEES

1. The Membership and Executive may appoint Committees to further the Council's purpose and carry on its affairs.
2. The terms of reference of each Committee will be specified by the Membership or Executive at the time the Committee is established, or by the Committee at its first meeting, as the Membership or Executive decide.
3. Committees will report to the Membership and Executive as required.

Section 9 – FINANCIAL MATTERS

1. The financial year of the Council will be July 1st to June 30th.
2. The Council may raise and spend money to further its purpose.
3. The Executive will name up to four signing officers for banking and legal documents. Two signatures will be required on all of these documents.
4. All funds of the Council must be kept on deposit in the name of the Council in a bank or financial institution registered under the Bank Act.
5. The Executive will prepare a preliminary list of expenditures and present it to the Membership for review at the September meeting.
6. All proposed expenditures will be presented for approval at the next general meeting. Council money can only be spent if authorized by a motion passed at a general meeting.
7. Members at a general meeting may appoint an auditor.
8. If there is a surplus at the end of the fiscal year, 10% of the surplus will be transferred to the Technology Fund and 10% of the surplus will be transferred to the Playground Fund.
9. The Executive may spend up to \$100 for extraordinary circumstances. Expenditures must be disclosed to the Membership at the next general meeting.
10. Supplies for recurring events may be reimbursed by the approval of the Executive up to \$500. Amounts over that must be approved by the Membership.

Acceptance of Credit Card Processors

11. The Parent Advisory Committee shall have the authority to accept credit card processors as a form of payment for donations and other transactions, subject to applicable laws and regulations. The committee shall be responsible for ensuring the security of credit card information and complying with all relevant data protection regulations.
12. The committee shall be authorized to enter into agreements with credit card processors and to take any other necessary actions to implement this policy.
13. Any changes to the credit card processor agreement or policy shall be approved by a majority vote of the Parent Advisory Committee.

Section 10 – CONSTITUTION AND BYLAW AMENDMENTS

1. A review of the Constitution and Bylaws shall take place every three (3) years by a Committee consisting of at least three (3) members including one Executive member.
2. The members may, by a majority of not less than 75% of the votes cast, amend the Council's Constitution and Bylaws at any general meeting at which business is conducted.
3. Written notice of the meeting specifying the proposed amendments will be posted on the PAC website not less than twenty (20) school days before the meeting.

Section 11 – PROPERTY IN DOCUMENTS

All documents, records, minutes, correspondence, or other papers kept by a Member, Executive member, Representative, or Committee member in connection with the Council shall be deemed to be property of the Council and shall be turned over to the Chair when the Member, Executive member, Representative, or Committee member ceases to perform the task to which the papers relate.

Section 12 - DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

Every concern brought forward is immediately funnelled to the Chair. The Chair is responsible to gather any pertinent information. Every concern is documented and this log will remain with the Chair. It is recognized that sometimes a person needs only to receive some direction or information to resolve the situation. If it is deemed a "personality conflict", the concerned bearer is encouraged to go back to the individual to work it through. This would also be the case if a second concerned bearer came forward with the same issue. In case of a third concerned bearer bringing forth the same issue, Step 1 of the dispute resolution process is applied:

Step 1:

When there are three (3) grievances against the same PAC Executive member, brought forward by three (3) different members of the PAC, the Chair will use the Constitution & Bylaws, appropriate Policies, and be assisted by the Vice-Chair and other Executive Members who are responsible to research the issue as it pertains to the PAC. These two individuals (Chair and Vice-Chair) are to meet with the person in question to work through a resolution. At this point, if there is no resolution, the person in question may be asked to resign. Everything is confidential at this point, although the Administration is to be fully informed.

If the grievances are against the Chair, the concern shall be taken to the Vice-Chair to seek a neutral Executive member to take the place of the Vice-Chair and the Vice-Chair shall act as the Chair in the resolution process.

Step 2:

If Step 1 fails to resolve the issue, the concerned bearer is required to provide a written request for assistance. This is given to the Executive, where it will be addressed "In Camera", and possible solutions to the concerned are offered. At this point, if it is deemed

necessary, the individual may be asked to resign. If the individual agrees, the process is complete. The concerned, the resolution, and the action taken by the person involved are recorded in the minutes. These minutes are kept separate from the regular Executive minutes and everything at this point is confidential, unless the individual does not comply, and the situation proceeds to Step 3.

Step 3:

A resolution is put forward to the PAC general meeting stating the intention of removing (insert person's name) from his/her position. A seventy-five percent (75%) affirmative vote is needed to pass this resolution. Everything is recorded in the regular PAC general minutes.

Section 13 – DISSOLUTION

1. A written notice of dissolution must be distributed to the members at least 30 days prior to a general meeting at which a vote will be taken
2. The PAC can only be dissolved by a 75% majority vote of the members present at the Annual General Meeting
3. In the event of winding up or dissolution of the Council due to school closure, and after payment of all debts and costs of winding up or dissolution, the assets and remaining funds from the General Account of the Council may be distributed to another parent advisory council or councils in School District No. 33 having purposes similar to those of the Council, as the members of the Council may determine at the time of winding up or dissolution.
4. In the event of winding up or dissolution of the Council due to any reason other than school closure, all assets of the PAC after the discharge of all debts and obligations shall be transferred to the Superintendent of the Chilliwack School District. These documents and assets will be held in trust by the Chilliwack School District for the new PAC when it re-establishes itself.
5. Upon dissolution of the Council, all unused funds from the Gaming Account and assets purchased with gaming funds must be transferred to the Minister of Finance, or if those assets are not in a form that can be easily transferred to the Minister of Finance, then to another eligible organization within BC.
6. In the event of winding up or dissolution, all records of the Council shall be placed under the jurisdiction of the Principal of Strathcona Elementary or the Secretary-Treasurer of School District No. 33.

Adopted by Strathcona Elementary Parent Advisory Council at Chilliwack, British Columbia, on TBD

STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

I, the undersigned, in accepting the position of _____ on the Strathcona Elementary School Parent Advisory Council Executive, have read, understood and agree to abide by the Code of Ethics set out in this document. I have had a criminal record check completed and submitted to the School District No. 33 office. I also agree to participate in the dispute resolution process that has been agreed to by the electing body, should there be any concerns about my work.

Name of Executive Officer: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Phone Number: _____