

Parents' Advisory Council Constitution & Bylaws

Adopted: [Date]

How to Use This Template

This template is designed for Parents' Advisory Councils (PACs) in British Columbia. Sections and clauses shown in blue brackets like [THIS] are placeholders to be replaced with your PAC's specific information.

★ *GUIDANCE NOTES (like this box) appear throughout the document. They explain options, legal requirements, and questions to consider. Delete all guidance notes before adopting your final Constitution & Bylaws.*

★ *Items marked OPTION A / OPTION B present two common approaches. Choose one and delete the other.*

★ *The School Planning Council (SPC) was eliminated in BC in approximately 2015. This template contains no SPC references.*

PART ONE — CONSTITUTION

Section I — Name

The name of this Parents' Advisory Council (PAC) is [insert name].

The PAC will operate as a non-profit organization with no personal financial benefit accruing to members.

The business of the PAC will be unbiased in respect of race, religion, gender, politics, sexual orientation, and physical or mental ability.

Section II — Mission Statement

Guidance: Your mission statement is optional but recommended. It focuses your PAC's work and helps new members understand your purpose. Involve your membership in drafting or reviewing it. Keep it to 2–4 sentences.

Section III — Purposes of the PAC

The purposes of the PAC are:

1. To promote the education and welfare of students at the school.
2. To encourage parent and family involvement in the school, and to support programs that promote such involvement.
3. To advise the school board, principal, and staff on any matter relating to the school.
4. To promote the interests of public education and, in particular, the interests of [School Name].
5. To provide leadership in the school community.
6. To contribute to a sense of community within the school and between the school, home, and neighbourhood.
7. To provide family education and a forum for discussion of educational issues.
8. To assist families in obtaining information and communicating with the principal and staff about their child's progress or other concerns.
9. To help maintain the highest safety standards in and around the school.
10. To communicate with and participate in the activities of the Surrey District Parents' Advisory Council

Guidance: The list above reflects a range of typical PAC activities under the School Act. Your membership should decide which purposes are most important. You may add, remove, or reorder these to reflect your community.

Section IV — Definitions

In this Constitution and these Bylaws:

"AGM" means the annual general meeting of the PAC.

"District" means School District No.36.

"DPAC" means the District Parents' Advisory Council for School District No.36 (Surrey).

"Executive" means the elected officers of the PAC as set out in these Bylaws.

"General meeting" means any meeting of the PAC open to all members.

"Member" or "parent" has the meaning set out 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 and attending [School Name].

"PAC" means the Parent Advisory Council.

"School" means a public educational institution as defined in the School Act.

PART TWO — BYLAWS

Section 1 — Membership

Voting Members

11. All parents and guardians of students registered and attending [School Name] are voting members of the PAC.

OPTION: Some PACs exclude parents/guardians who are also employees at the same school from voting membership, making them non-voting members instead. Consider whether this is appropriate for your community.

Consider: one vote per person, or one vote per family?

If you wish to allow virtual participation and voting, add language explicitly permitting it.

Non-Voting Members

12. Administrators and staff (teaching and non-teaching) of [School Name] may be invited to become non-voting members of the PAC.
13. At no time will the PAC have more non-voting than voting members.
14. Members of the school community who are not parents of students attending the school may be guests at a general meeting of the PAC.
15. Guests attending meetings are at the discretion of the PAC Chair and Executive team.

Compliance

16. Every member will uphold the constitution and comply with these Bylaws.

Section 2 — Meetings of Members

General Meetings

17. General meetings will be conducted with fairness to all members.
18. General meetings will be held not less than [] times during the school year. One of those meetings will be the AGM.

OPTION A (minimum): 4 general meetings per year plus the AGM.

OPTION B (recommended): Monthly during the school year, with exceptions in July, August, winter break, and spring break.

Specify when the AGM is held — many PACs hold it in May or September.

Consider whether you want to permit virtual or hybrid meeting formats and, if so, say so explicitly. Sample language is included at Appendix A.

19. The AGM will be held in the month of [May / September / other].
20. Elections of the executive for the following year will take place at the AGM.

Conduct at Meetings

21. At general meetings, members will not discuss individual school personnel, students, families, or other members of the school community.
22. The PAC will refrain from partisan political action or other activities that do not serve the interests of the school or the public school system.

Notice of Meetings

23. Members will be given reasonable notice of general meetings. Non-receipt of a notice does not invalidate the meeting proceedings.

Guidance: A calendar of meetings distributed at the beginning of the year satisfies reasonable notice.

Notice can be sent by newsletter, email, school communication platform, or website.

Some PACs specify a minimum notice period (e.g., 7 days). Consider what works for your community.

Section 3 — Proceedings at General Meetings

Quorum

24. The quorum for general meetings is [] members present for the meeting.

Choose OPTION A or OPTION B and delete the other.

Option A: A fixed number of voting members (the template suggests 5-7 as an example). Practical for smaller PACs where a percentage could be unpredictably low or high.

Option B: A percentage of voting members (the template suggests 10% as an example). More representative for larger PACs, but can be harder to calculate on the fly.

A quorum is the minimum number of voting members required to conduct business. It cannot be waived.

For small PACs, a fixed number (e.g., 5) is practical. For larger PACs, a percentage may be more representative. Many BC PACs use 5 voting members.

25. If at any time during a general meeting a quorum ceases to be present, business then in progress must be suspended until a quorum is present or until the meeting is adjourned.

Voting

26. Except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, all matters requiring a vote will be decided by a simple majority of the votes cast (50% plus 1).

27. In the case of a tie vote, the chair does not have a casting vote and the motion is defeated.

28. Members must vote in person. Voting by proxy will not be permitted.

29. Except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, voting is by a show of hands or, where requested by two voting members present, by secret ballot.

30. A vote will be taken to destroy ballots after every election.

If wanting to allow voting virtually/ electronically for online or hybrid meetings, include wording to explicitly allow it

Section 4 — Executive

Role of Executive

31. The executive will manage the PAC's affairs between general meetings.

Composition of Executive

32. The executive will include the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, DPAC Representative and such other positions as the membership determines.

Guidance: At minimum, fill the positions of Chair (or President), Secretary, and Treasurer. Many PACs also elect a DPAC Representative (this must be by secret ballot as per the School Act). You may include Members-at-Large as needed.

Consider whether co-roles (e.g., Co-Treasurer or Co-Fundraising Coordinator) would reduce workload and improve accessibility.

Note: The terms 'Chair' and 'President' are interchangeable. Choose one and use it consistently.

Eligibility

33. Any voting member of the PAC is eligible to serve on the executive.

OPTION: Many PACs explicitly prohibit employees or elected officials of the school district or Ministry of Education from holding executive positions, to avoid the appearance of bias.

Election of Executive

34. The executive will be elected at each AGM.

35. Elections will be conducted by a person appointed by the membership (e.g., the nominations committee chair or another member).

36. All voting members present at the AGM are eligible to be nominated for elected positions.

37. The call for nominations will be made at the general meeting in [April / month before AGM]. Nominations will remain open until the AGM. One final call for nominations will be made from the floor before the chair closes nominations. A candidate must consent to their nomination before elections proceed.

Term of Office

38. The executive will hold office for a term of one year beginning [start of your fiscal year].

39.

40.

Choose OPTION A or OPTION B and delete the other.

Option A: No limit on consecutive terms.

Option B (recommended): A specified maximum number of consecutive years in the same position (the template leaves the number blank for the PAC to fill in — two, three, or four years are common choices).

Term limits encourage turnover and bring in new perspectives but can also create instability. Many PACs do not impose term limits. Some limit the Chair or Treasurer specifically. Consider whether restrictions should apply to all positions or only specific ones (e.g., Chair, Treasurer).

OPTION: You may also add: 'No more than [one / two] members of the same immediate family may hold executive positions at the same time.' Include this if your community considers it appropriate.

Vacancy

41. If an executive member resigns or otherwise ceases to hold office, the remaining executive members may appoint an eligible voting member to fill the vacancy until the next AGM.

Removal of Executive Member

42. The members may, by a majority of not less than 75% of the votes cast, remove an executive member before the expiration of their term of office, and may elect an eligible member to complete the term.
43. Written notice specifying the intention to make a motion to remove the executive member must be given to all members not less than 14 days before the meeting. Non-receipt of notice does not invalidate the proceeding.

Remuneration

44. No executive member may be remunerated for serving on the executive, but may be reimbursed for expenses reasonably and necessarily incurred while engaged in the PAC's affairs, within the approved budget.

Section 5 — Executive Meetings

45. Executive meetings will be held at the call of the chair. At least one meeting will be held before each general meeting.
46. Executive meetings may be held in person, electronically, or virtually.
47. A quorum for executive meetings will be a majority (50% plus 1) of executive members.
48. Executive members will be given reasonable notice of executive meetings.
49. All matters requiring a vote at executive meetings will be decided by a simple majority (50% plus 1) of the votes cast.
50. In the case of a tie vote, the chair does not have a casting vote and the motion is defeated.

It is recommended to have an Executive meeting before every General Meeting,

- some PACs may choose to do more of the business over a group chat on like WhatsApp or similar,
- at minimum it would be a good idea to have an in person meeting at the start of the year and a wrap up one following the AGM.
- If you are having general meetings every other month, then maybe hold an Exec meeting on the months there isn't a general meeting.

Section 6 — DPAC Representative

51. One representative to the DPAC may be elected annually from among the voting members of the PAC who are not employees or elected officials of School District No. 36 or the Ministry of Education.
52. The DPAC Representative will hold office for a term of one year.
53. The election of the DPAC Representative **must** be by secret ballot.
54. If the DPAC Representative resigns or otherwise ceases to hold office, the membership may elect an eligible member to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term by secret ballot.

The School Planning Council (SPC) was eliminated in BC in approximately 2015. No SPC provisions are required.

Under the School Act, every PAC is entitled to elect one member to be its representative to the DPAC.

*The election **must** be by secret ballot (School Act, section 8(6)).*

Section 7 — Conduct of Executive and Representatives

Code of Ethics

55. On election or appointment, every executive member and representative will agree to abide by the following Code of Ethics:

- Uphold the constitution and bylaws, policies, and procedures of the PAC
- Perform their duties with honesty and integrity and in the interests of the PAC
- Work to ensure that the well-being of students is the primary focus of all decisions
- Respect the rights of all individuals
- Take direction from the membership and executive
- Encourage and support members with individual concerns to act on their own behalf, and provide information on the process for taking concerns forward
- Strive to be informed and only pass on information that is reliable
- Respect all confidential information
- Support public education

Representing the PAC

56. Every executive member and representative must act solely in the interests of the PAC membership when representing or purporting to represent the PAC.

Privilege

57. Any information received in confidence by an executive member or representative 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.

Disclosure of Interest

58. An executive member or representative who has a direct or indirect interest in a proposed contract or transaction with the PAC must disclose fully and promptly the nature and extent of that interest to the membership and executive.

59. Such executive member or representative must avoid using their position for personal gain.

Communication

60. All correspondence sent, or content posted on social media accounts on behalf of the PAC, will be consistent with positions agreed upon by the PAC.

61. Executive members will avoid social communications that could be misconstrued in a way that damages the school's or PAC's reputation.

62. Each executive member is personally responsible for what they communicate on social media, whether in their PAC role or on personal accounts where they identify their PAC role.

Section 8 — Duties of Executive and Representatives

Chair

The Chair will:

- 63. Speak on behalf of the PAC.
- 64. Consult with PAC members.
- 65. Preside at membership and executive meetings.

66. Ensure that an agenda is prepared.
67. Appoint committees where authorized by the membership or executive.
68. Ensure that the PAC is represented in school and district activities.
69. Ensure that PAC activities are aimed at achieving the purposes in the constitution.
70. Be a signing officer.

Vice-Chair

The Vice-Chair will:

71. Support the Chair.
72. Assume the duties of the Chair in the Chair's absence or upon request.
73. Assist the Chair in the performance of their duties.
74. Be a signing officer.

Secretary

The Secretary will:

75. Ensure that members are notified of meetings.
76. Record and file minutes of all meetings.
77. Distribute meeting minutes to members within days of each meeting.
78. Keep an accurate copy of the constitution and bylaws, and make copies available to members upon request.
79. Prepare and maintain other documentation as requested by the membership or executive.
80. Ensure safekeeping of all records of the PAC.

Treasurer

The Treasurer will:

81. Be a signing officer.
82. Ensure all funds of the PAC are properly accounted for.
83. Disburse funds as authorized by the membership or executive.
84. Ensure that proper financial records and books of account are maintained.
85. Report on all receipts and disbursements at general and executive meetings.
86. Make financial records and books of account available to members upon request.
87. Have the financial records and books of account ready for review annually.
88. With the assistance of the executive, draft an annual budget.
89. Ensure that another signing officer has access to financial records and books of account in the Treasurer's absence.
90. Submit a summary of financial records at the AGM.

DPAC Representative

The DPAC Representative will:

91. Attend all general meetings of the DPAC and represent, speak, and vote on behalf of the PAC.
92. Maintain current registration of the PAC with the DPAC.
93. Report regularly to the membership and executive on all matters relating to the DPAC.
94. Seek and provide input to the DPAC on behalf of the PAC.
95. Receive, circulate, and post DPAC communications.

Members-at-Large

Members-at-Large will:

96. Serve in a capacity to be determined by the PAC at the time of election, as needed and agreed upon.

Consider if there are positions your PAC needs that could be coordinator positions (e.g., fundraising, hot lunch, social media/communications) that Members-at-Large could serve in.

Section 9 — Committees

97. The membership and executive may appoint committees to further the PAC's purposes and carry on its affairs.
98. 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.
99. Committees will report to the membership and executive as required.

Consider which standing committees your PAC needs (e.g., fundraising, hot lunch, special events, dry grad, gr7).

Ad hoc committees may also be created for specific, time-limited tasks.

Committee terms of reference should specify: purpose, membership, authority, and reporting requirements.

Section 10 — Financial Matters

Financial Year

100. The financial year of the PAC will be [this should be in your current C&B, if starting from scratch, common PAC fiscal years are Sept 1-Aug 31 or July 1 - June 30].

Power to Raise Money

101. The PAC may raise and spend money to further its purposes, as authorized by the membership.

Bank Accounts

102. All funds of the PAC must be kept on deposit in the name of the PAC in a financial institution registered under the *Bank Act*.

Signing Authority

103. The executive will name at least three signing officers for banking and legal documents. Two signatures will be required on all banking and legal documents.

The Chair and Treasurer may be signing officers, if your Chair is a dual citizen (especially a US dual citizen) it may not be ideal to have them as a signer, so it could then be other executive team members, VP, Hot Lunch Coordinator, Secretary, etc. Have it be minuted in your meeting minutes who the PAC is authorizing to be a signer on the bank accounts.

Annual Budget

104. The executive will prepare a draft budget and present it to the membership for review and approval at the [first general meeting of the school year / before the current budget expires].
105. Without an approved budget, the executive does not have authority to make expenditures.

Non-Budgeted Expenditures

106. The executive will present all proposed expenditures beyond the current approved budget for approval at the next general meeting.

PACs may allow the Executive to vote on smaller expenditures between meetings that can't wait and then present those at the meeting. Recommend having a low but reasonable limit on this. For example, maybe you will allow your Executive to vote on expenditures up to \$1 per student between meetings (so for a school of 300 students it would be \$300, for a school of 700, that would be \$700) This may be more applicable to Elementary PACs than Secondary.

Treasurer's Report

107. A treasurer's report showing current account balances and a summary of income and expenses will be presented at each general meeting.

Financial Review

108. Option A or B below

*Choose OPTION A, OPTION B, both, or neither depending on your PAC's size and needs.
Option A: An internal review conducted at the beginning of each school year by two executive members who did not have signing authority for the year being reviewed. If two such executives aren't available, eligible PAC members may volunteer to fill that role.
Option B: Members at a general meeting may appoint an external auditor.*

Note: If your PAC holds a BC Community Gaming Licence, you must comply with the Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch financial reporting requirements, which may require a financial review.

Section 11 — Constitution and Bylaw Amendments

109. The members may, by a majority of not less than 75% of the votes cast, amend the PAC's constitution and bylaws.
110. Written notice specifying the proposed amendments must be given to the members not less than 14 days before the meeting.
111. Where the proposed amendments exceed one page, they need not be given to every member individually but must be posted in a conspicuous place in the school or otherwise made accessible to all members.

The School Act requires PAC bylaws to be made in consultation with the principal. Consider notifying and consulting with the principal when undertaking significant amendments.

BCCPAC recommends reviewing your constitution and bylaws annually.

Section 12 — Property in Documents

112. All documents, records, minutes, correspondence, and other papers (whether in electronic or paper format) kept by any member, executive member, representative, or committee

member in connection with the PAC shall be deemed the property of the PAC and shall be turned over to the chair when that person ceases to perform the task to which the documents relate.

Section 13 — Dissolution

113. In the event of winding up or dissolution of the PAC, and after payment of all debts and costs of winding up or dissolution, the assets and remaining funds of the PAC shall be distributed to another parents' advisory council or councils in School District No.36 having purposes similar to those of the PAC, as the members of the PAC may determine at the time of winding up or dissolution.

114. In the event of winding up or dissolution, all records of the PAC shall be given to the principal of [school name].

The School Act requires PAC bylaws to include rules governing dissolution (School Act, section 8(5)).

The dissolution provisions are sometimes described as 'unalterable' in older templates.

Consult with your DPAC or seek legal advice if you wish to vary the distribution of assets.

Adoption

Adopted by Parents' Advisory Council at _____, British Columbia, on _____.

City date

_____ Chair / President — Signature

_____ Chair / President — Printed Name

_____ One Other Executive Member — Signature

_____ One Other Executive Member — Printed Name & Position

APPENDIX A — Additional Provisions to Consider

The following are additional clauses some PACs include in their bylaws. Review these with your membership and add them to the main document if appropriate. Delete this appendix before adopting your final bylaws.

Conflict of Interest

An executive member or representative who has a conflict of interest, or the appearance of a conflict of interest, in relation to any matter before the PAC will disclose the conflict, withdraw from discussion, and not vote on the matter.

Accessibility and Inclusion

The PAC will make reasonable efforts to ensure that meetings and communications are accessible to all families, including consideration of timing, childcare, language, and meeting format (in-person, virtual, or hybrid).

Dispute Resolution

Concerns about the conduct of an executive member may be raised with the Chair (or Vice-Chair if the concern involves the Chair). The Chair will attempt to resolve the concern informally. If the concern is not resolved informally, the matter may be brought before the executive and, if necessary, to a general meeting in accordance with the removal provisions in Section 4.

Meeting Format (virtual/hybrid)

General and executive meetings may be held in person, virtually, or in a hybrid format. Members participating virtually will be counted toward quorum and may vote.

Signing Authority — Electronic Transfers

Where the PAC uses electronic banking or e-transfers, the executive will establish internal controls requiring dual authorization for all transfers.

Nominations Committee

A nominations committee appointed annually before the AGM. Consider how this would look for your PAC. Nominations and the election at the AGM should be accepted and run by someone not running for a position. This could mean having nominations go to an online form that multiple people have access to, an email address managed by multiple people. At the AGM, if you need to, you could ask your admin to run the election if there isn't an Executive member whose term is ending and they aren't running again.

APPENDIX B — Checklist Before Adopting Your C&B

Before presenting your constitution and bylaws for adoption, confirm the following. Delete this appendix from the final adopted document.

- All [PLACEHOLDERS] have been replaced with your PAC's specific information.
- All guidance notes (blue shaded boxes) have been deleted.
- All OPTION A / OPTION B choices have been made; unused options have been deleted.
- The document has been reviewed by the principal (required under the School Act).
- Written notice of the proposed adoption was provided to members at least 14 days in advance.
- A copy will be filed in the school office.
- A copy will be filed with the Surrey DPAC
- A copy will be filed with the District Sec-Treasurer's office
- All executive members and representatives have signed or agreed to the Code of Ethics.