

DISTRICT COPY



Constitution

of the

**Abbotsford District Parent Advisory Council
School District No. 34**

Last Amended May 24, 2012—Approved October 25, 2012

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CONSTITUTION

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Section I - NAME

The Name of the Association shall be the "Abbotsford District Parent Advisory Council, School District No. 34"

Section II - NON-PROFIT

The Abbotsford District Parent Advisory Council, School District No. 34, will operate as a non-profit organization with no personal financial benefit.

Section III - NON-DISCRIMINATION

The business of the Abbotsford District Parent Advisory Council, School District No. 34, shall be unbiased towards race, religion, gender or politics.

Section IV - PURPOSE

The purpose of the Abbotsford District Parent Advisory Council, School District No. 34, is to support, encourage and improve the quality of education and the well-being of students in School District No. 34 (Abbotsford) by:

1. Exchanging ideas and information among Parent Advisory Councils in School District No. 34.
2. Providing information regarding educational and community matters to parents and Parent Advisory Councils.
3. Providing Parent Advisory Councils' and/or parent representation to educational decision-making organizations affecting the School District.

Section V - AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims and objectives of the Abbotsford District Parent Advisory Council, School District No. 34, shall be:

- To promote the interests of public education by fostering cooperation and communication among parents, students, educators and school district representatives.
- To advise the School Board on parental views about the school districts' programs and policies.
- To communicate with PACs about school district policies, programs and activities.
- To provide leadership in developing and understanding the rights and responsibilities of parents within the education system.
- To assist parents and PACs in accessing the system.
- To assist its members in obtaining information about school, district and provincial programs and policies, and in communicating with district representatives.
- To liaise with partner groups and community organizations.
- To promote a positive image of the public school system within the district.

Section VI - INTERPRETATION OF TERMS

- The "Council" refers to the Abbotsford District Advisory Council, School District No. 34, which is recognized by the Board of Trustees of School District No. 34 to be an umbrella group of - Parent Advisory Councils formed or to be formed in each local school.
- "Parents" refers to the parent(s) or guardian(s) of a child(ren) in School District No. 34.
- "District" refers to School District No. 34.
- "School(s)" refers to any public educational institution within School District No. 34.
- "S.D. No. 34" refers to School District No. 34.
- "Parent Advisory Council" refers to any organized group of parents recognized under the British Columbia School Act - Bill 67, Division 2, Section 8.
- "Representative" refers to parents appointed by a school Parent Advisory Council to represent them at the Council (see Section VII).

Section VII - MEMBERSHIP

- Voting membership of the District Parent Advisory Council comprises representatives appointed or elected by individual school Parent Advisory Councils with one vote per Parent Advisory Council.
- General meetings are open to the public.
- No member of the council shall in his/her individual capacity be liable for any debt or liability of the Council.

Section VIII - MEETINGS

- Meetings will be conducted efficiently and with fairness to the members present.
- There shall be an Annual General Meeting for the purpose of elections of Officers held in May of each year and additional general meetings shall be held at least once a month (except March, December and June) during the school year to conduct business.
- The Executive Meetings and additional General Meetings shall be held at the discretion of the Executive or upon the receipt of a petition representing fifty percent (50%) of the voting representatives.
- If procedural problems arise on an issue not covered in these bylaws, Robert's Rules of Orders shall be used to resolve the issue.
- All topics of discussion at Executive Meetings shall be considered public information unless unanimously agreed beforehand.

Section IX - VOTING

- A "quorum" shall be a minimum of ten (10) voting representatives.
- Unless otherwise provided, questions arising at any meeting shall be decided upon by a simple majority vote, 50% plus 1
- In the case of a tie, the motion will be lost.
- For the purpose of recording the opinion of the Council, a majority vote of seventy-five percent (75%) must be reached. Failing this, the minority opinion must also be recorded.
- Voting of members on all matters must be given personally. Voting by proxy shall not be permitted.
- Voting shall be done by the show of hands with the exception of the Election of Executive Officers, which shall be done by secret ballot.

Section X - COMMUNICATING COUNCIL RESPONSES

The Council outlines the following ways to communicate parent views and responses:

1. District PAC Executive - All Executive Members must be contacted and agree. This would be identified as a response from the District PAC Executive.
2. District PAC Representative - A Response from the District PAC Representatives at any regular General Meeting. Should a majority of seventy-five percent (75%) not be reached, the opinion must be reported fully, listing those who agree, disagree, or abstain with the names of representatives listed.
3. This response takes a minimum of one (1) month. Representatives would take a clearly stated question to their PAC, discuss it there, and bring the response back to the District PAC Meeting. A full report of response would be made (number of schools agreeing or disagreeing).
4. When time is limited, a response using social media or email can be utilized. This provides a faster option for responses and reflects ways to communicate with more parents on mass. A full report will be provided to the membership at the next general meeting.

Section XI - ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

- The Executive shall be elected by the Representatives, from among the elected or appointed Representatives or other persons so nominated by the PAC's in May of each year.
- Call for Nominations shall be made at the first meeting in April. Nominations shall remain open until immediately before the election.
- In the event that only one nomination is received for any Executive position, a "yes" or "no" vote will be taken. If a majority of "no" votes is received, the position will be considered vacant.
- In the event of a vacancy, the Council shall elect a new officer. If a vacancy occurs after December 1st, the Executive may appoint someone to fill the position to complete the term.
- Elections shall be conducted by the Nominating Committee Chairperson.
- Scrutineers shall be appointed as required by the Nominating Committee Chairperson at the time of elections.

Section XII - LENGTH OF TERM OF OFFICE

The term of office shall commence in July of each year.

Any elected member of the Council may serve in the Executive for as many years as he/she is elected to a position, but no person may hold any one position for more than three (3) consecutive years.

No person may hold more than one elected Executive position at any one time.

The Past Chairperson may, at his/her option, hold that office for one year.

Section XIII - EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

The affairs of the Council shall be managed by a board of elected officers, and the immediate Past Chairperson. The Executive Officers will be as follows:

Chairperson

Vice-Chairperson

Treasurer

Secretary

Two or more Directors

All Executive Officers shall sign the Code of Ethics (Appendix #2). One nominee or representative from any member PAC will be allowed to represent their PAC on the executive.

Section XIV - DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS

DPAC Executive Members are “fiduciaries” which means they are in a position requiring them to act for and on behalf of others and to exercise discretion in that role. The fiduciary duty of directory is to act honestly, in honest faith, and in the best interest of the association.

1. Chairperson

- a) Shall preside at all meetings of the Council and the Executive Board.
- b) Shall be one of the financial signing officers.
- c) Shall be an ex-officio member to all committees except the Nominating Committee.
- d) Shall appoint chairpersons to all committees when the occasion arises.
- e) Shall be the spokesperson for the District Parent Advisory Council.
- f) Shall, in consultation with the Executive Officers, appoint parents to serve as parent representatives on District Committees when invited to do so by District personnel.
- g) Shall review all correspondence that is received by the District PAC.
- h) Shall know the constitution and ensure it is followed.

2. Vice-Chairperson

- a) Shall act in the Chairperson’s position in her/her absence or upon request.
- b) Shall assist the Chairperson in the performance of his/her duties.
- c) Shall contact Executive Members to inform them of Executive Meetings.
- d) Shall be one of the financial signing officers.

3. Treasurer

- a) Shall present an annual written report on all expenditures at the May General Meeting. Information will be obtained from the Executive Assistant to the District Superintendent.
- b) Shall be one of the financial signing officers.

4. Secretary

- a) Shall keep an accurate record and official minutes of the Council.
- b) Shall distribute the minutes to the Council Members as soon as possible after the last meeting.
- c) Shall keep an up-to-date copy of the Constitution and By-laws.
- d) Shall keep an up-to-date record of the PAC Representatives.
- e) May assist the Chairperson with issuing and receiving correspondence on behalf of the Council.
- f) May cooperate with the Chairperson with providing information to the local news media.

5. Director

- a) Shall serve in the capacity to be determined by the Council at the time of their Election and at other times throughout their tenure as the needs of the Council might require.

6. Past Chairperson

- a) May assist and advise the Executive Officers in all matters concerning the Council.

Section XV - RECALL OF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

If any executive member is not fulfilling their duties as outlined in the Constitution, or is acting in a way contrary to the Constitution and By-laws, a DPAC Representative can ask for a vote to recall this Executive Officer. All DPAC Representatives and Executive Members must be notified in writing thirty (30) days before the meeting at which the vote will take place. A recall must be supported by seventy-five percent (75%) of the voting delegates present. In addition, if any Executive Officer fails to attend three (3) consecutive regular or Executive Meetings and/or fails to meet the requirements of their position (as stated in this constitution and by-laws) for three (3) consecutive months, they shall be deemed to have resigned unless they have presented valid reasons for continuing as an Executive Member.

Section XVI - NOMINATING COMMITTEE

- There shall be a Nominating Committee consisting of a Past Executive Member as chairperson, if possible, and two (2) additional members as selected by the Council.
- Shall be formed at the February General Meeting.
- Shall contact all PACs asking for suggested nominations in March of each year.
- Shall strive to present at least two (2) names for each executive position.

Section XVII - FINANCES

- The Abbotsford District Parent Advisory Council, School District No. 34, will collect no membership fees from Parent Advisory Councils as all Parent Advisory Councils are considered members of the District PAC.
- Expenditures under \$100.00 require the approval of two of the three financial signing officers.
- Expenditures over \$100.00 require the unanimous approval of the complete Executive or a majority of the representatives at a regular meeting.
- The District PAC funds shall be retained at the District Superintendent's Office. A complete report of expenditures shall be presented, by the Treasurer, at the May General Meeting and distributed in the minutes to all members.
- In the event of dissolution of the Council, the funds remaining after all outstanding debts shall be disbursed as indicated by a vote of the delegates of the Council.

Section XVIII - CHANGING THE CONSTITUTION

- Shall require written notice to the Council Members at least twenty-five (25) days prior to the meeting at which the vote will be taken.
- All motions to amend shall require two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the delegates present.

Section XIX - CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND PERCEIVED BIAS RATIONALE

That Abbotsford District PAC expresses the views of parents regarding education in the District of Abbotsford. Parents bring a special expertise to the educational forum which develops from their intimate experiences with children as they grow and develop and form a lifelong commitment to their children's education. A representative who is also a staff member must disclose their position to the executive.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DEFINITIONS:

Conflict of Interest - refers to a situation in which an individual or his/her immediate family could benefit monetarily from a decision of the Abbotsford District PAC which that individual can influence or vote upon.

Perception of Bias refers to a situation which may exist if an individual who represents District PAC to an external organization or to the general public, is also an employee or elected official of any school district of the Ministry of Education. There may be a perception that he or she is not speaking solely in the interest of parents and this may diminish the power of what is said.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY:

- A) **Conflict of Interest:** That individuals refrain from discussing, influencing, and voting upon any matter before the District PAC in which they or their families have a pecuniary interest.
- B) **Perceived Bias:** That the voice of District PAC must clearly be and must be perceived to be that of the parents of Abbotsford. That individual who may be in a position of "perceived bias" by virtue of another role they hold in the educational system avoid functions within the District PAC which involve representation to external organizations and the general public.
- C) **Concerns:** That members who have concerns regarding conflict of interest or perceived bias refer those concerns to committee.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST PROCEDURE:

-Concerns regarding conflict of interest and perceived bias will be referred to the Conflict of Interest Committee.

-The Conflict of Interest Committee will be comprised of the Chairperson and two other Executive Members and will deal with questions of conflict and perceived bias.

-The Conflict of Interest Committee will review any concerns that an individual is in a conflict on interest situation and make recommendations as to how the situation may be addressed.

-The Committee will review any concerns that a perception of bias exists. If the Committee determines that a perception of bias does exist, this will be brought to the individual's attention with a suggestion that the individual request reassignment to another committee or positions as appropriate.

-If the Committee does not resolve the matter with the individual, the Committee will report to the Executive.

-The Nominations Committee will refer to the Conflict of Interest Committee for reviewing the situation of any candidate for an executive position who provides compensated services to the Ministry of Education or a school district or other organization related to education in the province of British Columbia, but is not a full-time or permanent part time employee of those organizations. The Conflict of Interest Committee will decide on the eligibility of such a person for an executive position.

Appendix I - PROCEDURES

The following are procedures regarding a variety of items. These procedures are not part of the Constitution and can be changed or added by motion at any General Meeting of the Council. Additions or changes will be recorded along with the date.

1. External groups wishing to distribute material to PAC be encouraged to do so directly to individual PACs. Information sent to the District PAC will be made available at District PAC Meetings, but not distributed. Likewise, lists of names and personal telephone numbers of PAC Chairs or District PAC Representatives will not be made available to any organization or business (except to the School Board Office).
Motion Date: January 5, 1995
Amended: January 25, 1996
2. Parents of children attending a school in District No. 34 who are not District PAC Representatives and wish to serve on a District PAC Committee may serve as members, but not as chairpersons.
Motion Date: March 30, 1995
Amended: January 25, 1996
3. The Agenda for any Regular District PAC Meeting will be set out by the District PAC Executive. Any District PAC Representative can add an item to the agenda under "Addition to the Agenda". These items should be:
 - a) Items that have been discussed and endorsed by their PAC.
 - b) Please submit in writing with copies available for each representativeMotion date: June 13, 2002
Amended: May 27, 2004
4. All correspondence received by the District PAC will be listed in the minutes of the next meeting, except information promoting fundraising ideas. Fundraising information will not be listed in the minutes, but will be displayed at the Regular District PAC Meeting.
Motion Date: November 28, 1996
5. Guests: During the regular meeting, guests are requested to channel their queries through a PAC Representative to the chair. During the open question period, guests are free to address the chair.
Motion Date: June 13, 2002
Amended: May 27, 2004
6. A sign-up sheet will be provided for representatives to provide their names, phone numbers, fax numbers and email addresses for the use of the secretary.
Motion Date: June 13, 2002
7. New PAC Representatives to District PAC will be given an introduction to council members at the September meeting. A package including the District PAC Constitution, and list of duties of a District PAC Representative will be provided at this time by District PAC Executive.
Motion Date: June 13, 2002

8. Administration of the Code of Ethics: for dealing with a concern that a District PAC Executive Member may have failed to observe the Code of Ethics. This process is intended to deal with complaints in a positive manner. The goal is to facilitate a fair resolution agreeable to all parties.
Any person bringing forward a concern will be advised of this process.
All complaints and information surrounding the complaints will be dealt with in confidence.
Those directly involved in the complaint will be given access to all relevant information.
All parties will be dealt with respectfully.
Any person involved may have a support person.
There will be a fair review of the concern to protect volunteers and Executive Members for vexatious and mischievous complaints.
9. DPAC executive will strive to have 2 executive members attend all meetings
Amended – May 24, 2012

COMPLAINT PROCESS - For dealing with a breach of the Code of Ethics:

1. All complaints, verbal, and written, will be received by the Chairperson. The Chairperson may appoint another Executive Member to act as chairperson for the specific purpose of administering the Code of Ethics. In the event the complaint relates to the Chairperson, the complaint will be referred to the Vice-Chairperson. If the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson are involved, any Executive Member may receive the complaint.
2. For the purpose of this process, the person acting on the complaint is the chairperson.
3. Upon receiving the complaint, the chairperson will work to clarify the complaint, determine if and how the Code of Ethics has been breached and facilitate the complaints process. The chairperson is responsible for keeping complete notes of the process. These notes should include names of all involved, details of all meetings and specific of any resolutions.
4. Every attempt will be made to resolve the concern in a timely manner.
5. As a first step, the person bringing forward the complaint will be encouraged to inform the person in question of their concern and to discuss the problem with the intent of reaching a resolution.
6. If a resolution is not reached between the parties, the chairperson will enter the discussion with the intent of facilitating a positive resolution.
7. The chairperson may request the participation of other Executive Members in the process.
8. If the parties cannot agree on a resolution, the chairperson will make a recommendation to the parties. The chairperson may recommend that the matter be closed.
9. Either party may appeal the decision of the chairperson. The appeal must be in writing to the District PAC Executive with thirty (30) days of being notified of the decision. BCCPAC may be invited to help resolve the situation.

Motion Date: June 13, 2002

Amended: May 27, 2004

Appendix II

CODE OF ETHICS

A parent who accepts a position as a District PAC Executive Member:

1. Upholds the constitution and by-laws, policies and procedures of the electing District PAC body.
2. Performs his/her duties with honesty and integrity.
3. Works to ensure that the well-being of students is the primary focus of all decisions.
4. Respects the rights of individuals.
5. Takes direction from the members ensuring representation processes are in place.
6. Encourages and supports parents and students with individual concerns, to act on their own behalf and provides information on the process for taking forward concerns.
7. Works to ensure those issues are resolved through due process.
8. Strives to be informed and only passes on information that is reliable.
9. Respects all confidential information.
10. Supports public education.

Statement of Understanding

I, the undersigned, in accepting the position of _____ on the Abbotsford District PAC Executive have read, understood and agree to abide by the Code of Ethics set out in this document. I also agree to participate in the dispute resolution process that has been agreed to by the Abbotsford District PAC should there be any concern about my work.

Name of Executive Member: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Phone Number: _____

