

History & Function of PACs

In 1989, the provincial government enacted a new School Act that gave parents in every district across British Columbia the right to establish and belong to a Parent Advisory Council at their children's school(s). The Act also established the right of the PAC, through its elected officers, to advise the principal and staff of their school "...respecting any matter relating to the school..."

Topics on which PACs may offer advice and assistance:

- School philosophy and program priorities
- School regulations and general student conduct
- The curriculum, new instructional programs, facilities, equipment and learning resources
- Budget, alterations and renovations to facilities
- Safety programs and procedures
- Alternatives for identifying, communicating and meeting unique community needs
- Communicating ideas from the community to the board of school trustees and school staff
- Informing the community about decisions made at the school, district and ministry levels
- Methods to ensure racial and cultural understanding and improve the sense of community within the school neighbourhood
- Methods of resolving school-community differences and improving relations
- Methods to encourage other community individuals and groups who do not have children of school age to attend meetings to express their ideas and share their concerns.

PACs are part of the BC School Act, in Section 8. There are also Surrey School District Policy involving PACs; Policy 10300, 10303 (Fundraising), 10305 (Insurance Coverage), and Regulation 10370 (School Planning Councils). Also of potential interest to parents are Policies 10310 (School Volunteers) and 10313 (Volunteer Drivers).

PAC, DPAC, and BCCPAC

Whereas a PAC's role is to advise school administration regarding matters within the school, one of DPAC's (District Parent Advisory Council) roles is to advise the District's Board of Education on matters of interest to PACs across the District, and to represent the collective views of those PACs at the District level; DPAC members sit on a number of District committees. When the need arises, DPAC can formally bring issues in front of the Board of Education.

DPAC supports and encourages PACs and parents in accessing the school system at all levels by providing regular forums for the exchange of ideas and information to ensure that public education serves the best interests of all students. Information about DPAC meetings can be found on their website, www.surreydpac.ca.

DPAC also provides assistance to PACs who need help with different aspects of running a PAC; any PAC member should feel free to approach a DPAC Director with questions they might have, or to make contact through the DPAC website.

DPAC is comprised of elected parent representatives from PACs. The roles, duties and responsibilities of elected DPAC representatives vary from PAC to PAC. Generally, DPAC representatives:

- Act as a liaison between the PAC and DPAC by attending DPAC meetings
- Communicate and obtain information to and from PAC
- Bring forward issues that may be common to more than one school

BCCPAC represents the DPACs and PACs from every school district in the province. Collectively, BCCPAC represents the parents of children in BC schools at the Provincial level, and advocates for parent concerns with the Ministry of Education. Any PAC can become a member of BCCPAC, but is required to register and pay an annual fee. More information about BCCPAC can be found on their website. www.bccpac.bc.ca.

PAC Liability

PACs need to be aware of potential liability issues. A PAC as an organization is liable (responsible) for the actions of their members both off and on school premises as they relate to the members' service on behalf of the PAC. The PAC is only covered by the District's Liability Agreement if the event has been sanctioned by the School District (authority given to administration) and the related activities are carried out in accordance with administration's direction (eg: if a Principal sanctions a fun night but does not want horseback riding included then including that activity would taint the sanction and potentially void liability coverage). More information can be found in School Board Policy 10305.

PAC Executive

Some of the responsibilities of the executive committee include:

- Assessing the interest and concerns of people in the school community.
- Preparing a program that reflects the priorities of parents and guardians.
- Holding regular meetings and planning agendas for general meetings.
- Streamlining general meetings and making them interesting in order to encourage parent involvement.
- Working with the administration in a positive and respectful manner.
 - Ideally, PAC executives have healthy relationships with their administration team, which would include the attendance of administration at PAC general meetings, as well as meeting privately with administration when warranted. It should be kept in mind that in the end, decisions about PAC budgets and initiatives are made by PAC members. However, many of these decisions will ultimately require administration support to move ahead, so the best relationship for a PAC and school administration is a healthy partnership. There are times when, for a variety of reasons, such a partnership proves difficult to achieve. Such situations sometimes can be helped by the involvement of an Assistant Superintendent and/or DPAC assistance.
- Ensuring there is a proper transition plan in place in case for when executive members leave their positions.
 - Ideally, a plan will be in place at all times, as executive members sometimes leave with little warning, for a variety of reasons. In support of this, DPAC is keeping copies of PAC's Constitution & Bylaws in our files at the School District offices to ensure these documents aren't lost, as they often are in PAC executive transition. We would also encourage PACs to develop manuals or guides for executive positions and committees, so future PAC members don't have to start from scratch, and are guided by the past experiences of others.

Chairperson/President

- Coordinates Parent Advisory Council affairs in cooperation with other executive members.
- Presides at all meetings (If he or she is unable to attend, the vice-chairperson fills in.)
- Conducts business meetings
- Establishes meeting rules with the executive members
- Helps prepare the agenda for all meetings and consults with the administration
- Is responsible for preparing the information and facts needed for a good discussion on agenda topics
- Keeps meetings orderly (To keep spur-of-the moment decision-making to a minimum, the chairperson provides an opportunity for additions to the agenda at the beginning of the meeting)
- Sets a timetable and sticks to it after the members decide the best time for beginning and ending meetings.

Vice-Chairperson/Vice-President

- Learns duties and responsibilities of the chairperson in order to preside at meetings in her or his absence
- Fulfills an important role as an understudy to the chairperson
- Takes over if the chairperson resigns
- May be called upon to chair special committees or projects

The Treasurer

- Custodian of funds
- Disburses money according to the budget and notes transactions in the treasurer's records
- Presents a report of finances at each meeting for information (an annual report is usually adopted before the election of new officers)

The Secretary

- Records minutes of regular and executive meetings;
- Presents and reads minutes for adoption at meetings; and,
- Maintains a minutes book that may include:
 - Rules of order and/or Constitution and Bylaws
 - Notebooks from past executives and committee chairpersons
 - School handbook
 - General membership list
 - School profile
 - Past submissions and correspondence to the board and the Ministry of Education
 - Minutes from the conception of the PAC on must be maintained

School Planning Council

- Three parents are part of the SPC, at least one of which must be an executive.
- The School Planning Council is an advisory body. The primary responsibility of School Planning Councils is to consult with the school community in developing, monitoring, and reviewing school plans for improving student achievement.
- The District's policy on School Planning Councils defines the Council's role as follows:
 - Provision of input to and approval of a proposed school plan;
 - Consultation on matters referred to it by the Board, the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designate;
 - Consultation on matters pertaining to student achievement referred to it by the Principal, the teaching staff, or by the Parent Advisory Council.

PAC Meetings

How to Run a Meeting

Chairing a meeting is a challenging experience. But with a carefully prepared agenda and a few basic organizational skills you can hold a successful meeting. Don't forget to make people feel comfortable; introduce yourself and welcome everyone - new parents may not know anyone.

Agenda

- Lets your PAC members know what to expect and how they might participate in the meeting
- Provides order and direction to the meeting
- Streamlines and shortens your meeting
- Makes the job of the recording secretary easier, thus improving the accuracy of the minutes
- An agenda is simply a brief outline of what you intend to discuss and in what order. A well-planned agenda reflects the concerns and interest of your school community and is based on mutually defined goals.

Planning Your Agenda

- Review previous minutes for items that are pending and issues that were tabled or should be reported on.
- Items on the agenda may be classified as follows:
 - For information
 - Items that keep your PAC informed, but don't require immediate action (e.g., correspondence, announcement of events, progress reports)
 - For discussion or tabling
 - Items that require more discussion from your group before decisions are made

- Business that should be referred to a smaller sub-committee for further discussion
 - Business that you choose to put aside (table) for the moment
- For decision and action
 - Items resulting from business referred to a sub-committee
 - Business that you feel your group should act upon
- **Plan your time realistically** - Don't squeeze too many items onto the agenda. Set aside enough time for the important items, allow for the assignment and review of tasks.
- **Indicate when the meeting will start and end** - Try to stick to your schedule.
- Most commonly, the order of business on an agenda is as follows:
 1. Call to order & introduction of new members
 2. Approval of agenda
 3. Approval of minutes of previous meeting
 4. Committee Reports & Correspondence
 5. Business arising from the minutes (old business)
 6. New Business
 7. Program (guest speakers, discussion, etc.) – Guests may be at the start so they don't have to sit through the business portion of the meeting
 8. Adjournment

Minutes

1. The simplest way to reflect the meeting is to follow the agenda and keep the same numbering system for both. Refer to the examples of a sample agenda and the sample minutes below.
2. Minutes should be a brief reflection of the discussion, not a detailed account of what occurred. Names should not be used except for motions, actions, or topics brought forth by a specific individual.
3. If names are required it should be a first name, and initial for last name if there are more than 2 people with the same name at the meeting. The meeting attendance sheet will reflect the full name of the people in attendance if there is ever follow up needed.
4. A copy of all documentation presented should be kept with the minutes. It would be reflected in minutes "see handout, see submission, see letter dated____, from whom" as examples. When presenting the minutes at the next meeting it is not necessary to make a copy of these items, just have them available for review should someone who was not in attendance wish to review.
5. **MOTIONS**: Only require someone to move the motion. Be sure to repeat the motion to assure that it is recorded accurately. The chair of the meeting should accept the motion; allow for discussion of the motion, and then call a vote on the motion. Record if the motion is carried or defeated. Areas where a motion would be used include expenditures outside of the approved budget, to strike a committee or ad-hoc group, to appoint someone to a position or group. Robert's Rules suggest a seconder NOT be recorded. Examples: **MOTION** to approve expenditure of \$500 for bus for a band trip. Moved: Tammy, **motion carried** **MOTION** by Sue to appoint Bob Smith to deal with media relations for the PAC, vote 5 in favour, 10 opposed, **motion failed**
6. **ACTIONS**: Action items are used to attach specific tasks to an individual. The timeframe for the action is assumed to be by the next meeting, or by a specified deadline. For example, if someone volunteers to source out pricing for emergency preparedness and report to the next meeting. Examples: **ACTION**: Sue to get pricing for equipment on emergency prep list and provide a report at the next PAC meeting. **ACTION**: Peggy to arrange Mr. Smith to be guest speaker for the next meeting.
7. The following should always be noted somewhere on the minutes: Date and time of the meeting, place of meeting, name of chairperson, names of members present (pass around attendance sheet), name of recorder.

Sample Agenda

Your School
PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA
Wednesday, September 28, 2011

- 1.0 CALL TO ORDER
- 2.0 ADOPTION OF AGENDA
- 3.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES – include previous meeting date
- 4.0 REPORTS
 - 4.1 Principal’s Report
 - 4.2 Teacher’s Report
 - 4.3 Treasurer’s Report – should include a printed version for all
 - 4.4 DPAC Report
 - 4.5 SPC Report
- 5.0 OLD BUSINESS
 - 5.1 Topics that have already been discussed in the past and there
 - 5.2 is follow up information to be presented
 - 5.3
 - 5.4
- 6.0 NEW BUSINESS
 - 6.1 Correspondence
 - 6.2 Agenda items that have not been discussed in recent meetings
 - 6.3
 - 6.4
- 7.0 OPEN FORUM
- 8.0 ADJOURNMENT

NEXT GENERAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2011

Sample Minutes

Your School Parent Advisory Council General Meeting Minutes – September 28, 2011

Location of meeting

1.0 Welcome and Call to Order: Who called the meeting to order and at what time.

2.0 Adoption of Agenda: **MOTION** to approve: 1st: first name – reflect whether motion was carried or failed.

If additions or amendments made it would **MOTION** to approve as amended:

3.0 Adoption of Previous Minutes: **MOTION** to approve: 1st first name, reflect whether motion was carried or failed

Minutes can only be approved by those who were in attendance at the meeting you are reviewing.

4.0 Report

4.1 President's Report: Name of speaker

4.2 Teacher's Report: Name of speaker(s)

4.3 Treasurer's Report: Name of speaker

- see handout provided – there should always be statements presented at every meeting. The secretary should keep all records in the secretary binder.

4.4 DPAC Report: Name of speaker(s)

This could be verbal or a written submission that is discussed and added to the permanent record

4.5 SPC Report: Name of speaker(s)

This could be a verbal or written submission that is discussed and added to the permanent record

5.0 Old Business

5.1 Topic

5.2 Topic

6.0 New Business

6.1 Topic

6.2 Topic

7.0 Open Forum – this is for topics that were not added to the agenda, but are discussed prior to adjournment of the meeting

8.0 Adjournment: Note the time the meeting was called. If the meeting must be called prior to all topics being discussed, those issues not already discussed must be tabled prior to adjournment or are considered to fall to the floor (this means they will not be brought back to discuss at the next meeting).

Next Meeting Date and Location

Respectfully submitted by Name of recorder

Finances

Reporting

- The Treasurer, with the assistance of the PAC Executive, must prepare a budget for the school year. This budget needs to be passed at a PAC general (**not** executive) meeting.
- The Treasurer must provide a financial report at every PAC meeting that shows the spending for the past month and the year-to-date, in a way that is easy for PAC members to understand.
- The Treasurer must keep a written record (manual or electronic ledger) of all financial activity – deposits, disbursements, bank debits and credits.

Bank Accounts & Signing Authority

- The PAC should have two bank accounts – one for regular funds, and one for gaming funds.
- 3-4 PAC Executive members should have signing authority.
- Cheques must require two signatories.
- PAC members should not sign cheques for which they are the payee.
- Should a problem arise, all members of the PAC as individuals may be held liable for the group's funds.
- At the first PAC meeting after the incoming executive has been elected by the Parent Advisory Council, your PAC executive should designate authorized signatories by way of a motion that is recorded in your minutes:
 - **The (school name) PAC designates the following executive members as authorized signatories on our (bank name) account(s): (Name #1), (Name #2), (Name #3)...**

Gaming Account

- PACs are eligible for an annual gaming grant from the provincial government. Information and forums can be found at <http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/gaming/grants/pacdpac.htm>.
- Gaming grant money is restricted in its use (see below – use the link above for the complete conditions)
- Any proceeds from fundraisers held throughout the year that require a gaming license (50/50 draws, raffles, etc.) must be deposited into the gaming account and are subject to the same restrictions as the grant money.

Conditions for a PAC/DPAC Grant

Use of Grant Funds

- 5) PACs may only use grant funds within BC for eligible disbursements that benefit students by enhancing the extracurricular opportunities as set out in section 5 of the application form.
- 7) A receipt must be obtained for each disbursement of gaming funds and retained as part of the gaming records set out in condition 15(d).
- 8) PACs and DPACs cannot use grant funds for the following ineligible costs:
 - a) Curricular activities or purposes;
 - b) Disbursements outside of the province unless approved in advance in writing by the branch;
 - c) Out-of-province travel, unless approved in advance by the branch;
 - d) Out-of-province or out-of-country aid;
 - e) Past debt, loan or interest payments;
 - f) Sustaining or endowment funds; or
 - g) Professional development of staff.
- 11) Unless otherwise approved in writing by the general manager, grant funds must be fully disbursed within:
 - a) 12 months of receipt of the gaming grant for DPACs; or
 - b) 36 months of receipt of the gaming grant for PACs.

SECTION 7 – ELIGIBLE USES OF PAC / DPAC GRANT FUNDS

Parent Advisory Councils and Parent Organizations PAC funding is intended to benefit students by enhancing their extracurricular opportunities:

- Student publications: newsletters, yearbooks
- Student competitions: writing, debating, chess, music
- Student computers: software, hardware, accessories
- Student societies: drama club, student society
- Student ceremonies: graduation, dry grad
- Student conferences or educational field trips within B.C.
- Uniforms and equipment for extracurricular activities
- Sports or playground equipment
- Awards and trophies
- Scholarships and bursaries for post-secondary education (paid directly to students)
- Capital acquisitions directly benefiting students, such as playground equipment
- Student transportation and travel within B.C.
- Student transportation and travel outside B.C., where the student group:
 - is representing its school as a result of merit achieved through organized competition
 - is competing in a sport that involves cross border travel
 - has been selected because of its level of creative achievement or success, or
 - is entered in a recognized competition in which there is a formal evaluation or adjudication process

Sample Financial Report

<u>REGULAR ACCOUNT</u>		Bank Balance Forward	0.00
<u>Revenue</u>	Sep-11	YTD	Budget
Fundraiser 1			3,000.00
Fundraiser 2			2,000.00
<hr/>			
Total Revenue	0.00	0.00	2,000.00
<u>Expenses</u>			
Technology			3,000.00
Office Expenses			100.00
Presentations			1,900.00
Total Expenses	0.00	0.00	2,000.00
NET INCOME	0.00	0.00	0.00

<u>GAMING ACCOUNT</u>		Bank Balance Forward	0.00
<u>Revenue</u>	Sep-11	YTD	Budget
Gaming Revenue			11,000.00
<u>Expenses</u>			
Field Trips			5,000.00
Playground Equipment			5,000.00
<hr/>			
Total Expenses	0.00	0.00	10,000.00
NET INCOME			1,000.00