

District Parent Advisory Council

Constitution and Bylaws

Revised May 2015



School District No.46
(Sunshine Coast)

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CONSTITUTION

SECTION I NAME

The name of the Association shall be the **SUNSHINE COAST DISTRICT PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL** School District No. 46, known within School District No. 46 as the District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC).

The Council will operate as a non-profit organization with no personal financial benefit. The business of the Council shall be unbiased towards race, religion, gender or politics.

SECTION II PURPOSE

The purpose of the Council, as the collective voice of the parents, is to support, encourage and improve the quality of education and the well-being of the students in School District No. 46 (Sunshine Coast) by:

1. Exchanging ideas and information among Parent Advisory Councils in the School District.
2. Providing information regarding educational and community matters to parents and Parent Advisory Councils.
3. Providing a parental voice to educational decision-making organizations affecting the School District.

The aims and objectives of the Sunshine Coast Parent Advisory Council shall be:

1. To provide a link between parents, educators, administrators, the Board of Trustees, the Ministry of Education and community organizations with an interest in education.
2. To have a voice in the development of new and revised educational programs within School District No. 46.
3. To provide leadership in developing and understanding the rights and responsibilities of parents within the education system.
4. To help parents become more familiar with the facilities and services of School District No. 46, thereby ensuring their children's maximum usage of the school system.
5. To provide leadership initiating, maintaining, encouraging, and further developing Parent Advisory Councils at the individual school level within School District No. 46.
6. To provide the link to and encourage participation in the British Columbia Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils.

7. To initiate and maintain the British Columbia Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC) Advocacy Project within School District No. 46. (See Appendix A)
8. To provide administrative support for the goals of the Sunshine Coast Alternative School. (See Appendix D)

SECTION III INTERPRETATION OF TERMS

DPAC refers to the Sunshine Coast District Parent Advisory Council by the Board of Trustees of School District No. 46, to be the umbrella group of Parent Advisory Councils formed or to be formed in each local school.

Parents refers to the Parent/Parents or Guardian of a child or children in School District No. 46.

District refers to School District No. 46 (Sunshine Coast).

School(s) refers to any public elementary or secondary educational institution within School District No. 46 (Sunshine Coast).

SD No. 46 refers to School District No. 46 (Sunshine Coast).

Parent Advisory Council refers to any organized group of parents recognized under the British Columbia School Act- Bill 67, Div. 2, Sec. 8.

PAC refers to the Parent Advisory Council.

Community Organizations refers to groups which demonstrate by their attendance an interest in education, particularly the educational operations of School District N. 46 and are not already included in the scope of this constitution.

BCCPAC refers to the British Columbia Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils.

SCAS refers to the Sunshine Coast Alternative School.

BYLAWS

SECTION IV MEMBERSHIP

1. Voting membership of the DPAC is comprised of delegates appointed by individual school PACs, and parents of students enrolled in SD No. 46.

SECTION V MEETINGS

1. There shall be an Annual General Meeting for the purpose of election of officers held in October of each year, and additional general meetings shall be held at least once a month during the school year or as deemed appropriate by the executive to conduct current business.
2. 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 delegates.
3. Meetings will be conducted efficiently and with fairness to the members present.
4. Representatives from the School Board, District Administration, School Administrators' Association, Teachers' Association, Support Staff, and other community organizations with an interest in education within School District No. 46 may be invited to attend as non-voting members of the District Parent Advisory Council.
4. If procedural problems should arise, Robert's Rules of Order will be used to resolve the situation, unless they are in conflict with the guidelines in this constitution.

SECTION VI VOTING

1. The voting members present at any duly called general meeting shall constitute a quorum.
2. Unless otherwise provided, questions arising at any meeting shall be decided upon by a simple majority vote.
3. In the case of a tie vote, the motion will be lost. The motion may be brought forth at a future meeting for reconsideration.
4. PACs will vote through their elected representatives, one vote per PAC.
5. Voting of members on all matters must be given personally, except under special circumstances where voting by proxy shall be permitted.

6. Voting shall be done by a show of hands, with the exception of the election of officers, which may be done by secret ballot.

SECTION VII ELECTION OF OFFICERS

1. The executive shall be elected by the DPAC members in attendance in October of each year.
2. Call for Nominations shall be made at the meeting in September. Nominations shall be voluntary or, come from PACs.
3. In the event of a vacancy in the executive during the year, the Council shall appoint the new officers, who shall hold office until the next election.
4. Elections shall be conducted by the Nominating Committee chairperson.

Eligibility

Any past or present elected representative of a member school is eligible to serve on the executive. Employees or elected officials of School District No. 46 or the Ministry of Education are not eligible for the positions of Chair, Co-Chair and Vice-Chair due to perceived bias.

SECTION VIII LENGTH OF TERM OF OFFICE

1. The term of office shall commence in November and shall be held for one year.
2. Any elected member of the DPAC may serve on 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 five consecutive years.
3. The Past Chair shall hold that office for one year.

SECTION IX EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

The affairs of the DPAC shall be managed by a Board of elected officers and the immediate Past Chair.

The Executive Officers may be as follows:

- A. Chair or Co-Chairs
 - B. Vice Chair
 - C. Secretary
 - D. Treasurer
 - E. District Associate to BCCPAC
 - F. Two or more Members at Large
 - G. Past Chair
- with a minimum of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

Removal of an Executive

1. The members may, by a majority of not less than 75% of the votes cast, remove an executive member before the expiration of his or her term of office, and may elect an eligible DPAC member to complete the term.
2. 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.

Remuneration of Executive

1. 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 DPAC's affairs to a maximum of \$100, unless the membership has approved to do otherwise.

Executive Meetings

1. Executive meetings will be held at the call of the chair.
2. A quorum for executive meetings will be a majority (50% plus 1) of the members of the executive.
3. Executive members will be given reasonable notice of executive meetings.
4. All matters requiring a vote at executive meetings will be decided by a simple majority of the votes cast (50% plus 1).
5. In the case of a tie vote, the chair does not have a second or casting vote and the motion is defeated.

SECTION X DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS

All officers or representatives shall follow the Code of Ethics as outlined in Section XIII.

A. CHAIR OR CO-CHAIR

1. Shall convene and preside at all membership, special and executive meetings.
2. Shall ensure that an agenda is prepared and presented.
3. Shall appoint committees where authorized to do so by the executive or membership.
4. Shall be an ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee.
5. Shall take such actions or ensure that such actions are taken by others to achieve the objectives and purpose of the organization.
6. Shall be the official spokesperson for the District Parent Advisory Council.
7. Shall be one of the financial signing officers.
8. Shall submit an annual report.
9. Shall ensure that the DPAC is represented in school and district activities.

B. VICE-CHAIR

1. Shall assume the Chair's responsibilities in his/her absence.
2. Shall assist the Chair in the performance of his/her duties.
3. Shall be one of the financial signing officers.
4. Shall accept extra duties as required.
5. Shall submit an annual report upon request.

C. SECRETARY

1. Shall keep accurate and official minutes of the DPAC.
2. Shall distribute minutes to DPAC members within 14 days after the last meeting.
3. Shall keep an accurate copy of the Constitution and Bylaws and, if an when any changes are made, they shall be done so in red and the amended copy shall be dated and initialed.
4. Shall make available on request, to any member of the DPAC, a copy of the Constitution and Bylaws.
5. Shall keep an up-to-date record of the PAC representatives.
6. Shall be responsible for maintaining files.
7. Shall conduct all correspondence for the DPAC upon request.
8. Shall cooperate with the Chair in providing information to the local news media.

D. TREASURER

1. Shall maintain an accurate record of all expenditures of the DPAC.
2. Shall receive all funds for the DPAC.
3. Shall disburse funds authorized by the Executive and members.
4. Shall give a report of all receipts and expenditures at all General Meetings.
5. Shall be one of the financial signing officers.
6. Shall deposit all funds collected on behalf of the DPAC in an account at a recognized financial institution approved by the Executive.
7. Shall have the books ready for inspection/audit annually.
8. Shall submit an annual financial statement at the Annual General Meeting of the DPAC.
9. Shall ensure that another financial signing officer has access to the books in the event of his/her absence.

E. DISTRICT ASSOCIATE TO BCCPAC

1. Shall act as a liaison between the DPAC and BCCPAC.
2. Shall ensure that BCCPAC information is received by member PACs.
3. Shall help identify district parents for BCCPAC committees.
4. Shall process BCCPAC forms and applications.
5. Shall assist PACs in responding to BCCPAC Annual General Meeting

resolutions.

F. MEMBER AT LARGE

1. Shall serve in a capacity to be determined by the DPAC at the time of their election, and at other times throughout their tenure as the needs of the DPAC might require.

G. PAST CHAIR

1. Shall help smooth transition between Chairs.
2. Shall assist and advise the DPAC.
3. Shall act as a consultant to the Chair.
4. Shall chair the Nominating Committee.

SECTION XI COMMITTEES

1. Standing and ad-hoc committees shall be formed when necessary.
2. A Nominating Committee shall be appointed annually before the Annual General Meeting
3. Committees are responsible to the executive and members.
4. Members may be appointed annually to committees by the Chair (after consultation with the executive).

SECTION XII FINANCES

1. The annual fees (if any) from member Parent Advisory Councils shall be set at the Annual General Meeting.
2. Expenditures over \$100 require the approval of the DPAC.
3. The Treasurer shall maintain an account at a recognized financial institution approved by the executive.
4. The executive will name at least three signing officers for banking and legal documents. Two signatures will be required on all of these documents.
5. The financial year of the DPAC will be Nov 1 to Oct 31
6. The executive will prepare a budget and present it to the membership for approval before the current budget expires.

SECTION XIII CHANGING THE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Sunshine Coast District Parent Advisory Council may be made at any general meeting at which business is conducted providing:

1. Written or electronic notice has been given to all members (14 days minimum),
2. The notice of the meeting included notice of the specific amendments proposed.
3. A two-thirds (2/3) majority of those voting members present at the meeting will be required to amend the Constitution and Bylaws.

SECTION XIV DISSOLUTION

1. In the event of dissolution of the DPAC, and following payment of all outstanding debts, disbursement of remaining funds will be decided upon by the membership at the final General Meeting.
2. In the event of dissolution of the DPAC, all records of the organization shall be placed under the jurisdiction of School District No. 46.

SECTION XV APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - ADVOCACY

This DPAC endeavours to:

1. facilitate two-way communication and cooperation between the School District and parents of students in the district
2. facilitate communication among Parent Advisory Councils and member associations in the district
3. provide a forum for DPAC members to discuss ideas, issues and information related to educational matters
4. exercise leadership in developing and expressing collective parental views to the District, BCCPAC and the Ministry of Education
5. facilitate parent education
6. review School District policies and programs dealing with the care and protection of children. Support policies that enable each child realizing his/her potential.
7. interact with community organizations concerned with the education and well-being of children and communicate to parents the resources available to them
8. encourage the formation of officially recognized PACs for each school in School District No. 46
9. recognize the official channels of protocol as set out in District Policy and inform about this policy
10. DPAC does not support, endorse/recommend any method, product or person. It does, however, endeavour to inform in the belief that parents have the right to know.
11. DPAC supports the BCCPAC Advocacy principals in School District No. 46.

APPENDIX B - CODE OF ETHICS

INTRODUCTION

The Sunshine Coast District Parent Advisory Council is not a forum for the discussion of individual school personnel, students, parents, or other individual members of the school community.

An executive member who is approached by a parent with a concern relating to an individual is in a privileged position and must treat such discussion with discretion, protecting the confidentiality of the people involved.

The following Code of Ethics and process for the hearing and resolution of complaints provides guidelines for actions of persons representing the District Parent Advisory Council and defines a structure for handling concerns.

It is important that District PAC executive members work to be efficient and respected in their role and are accountable for their actions.

It is recognized that District PAC positions are volunteer and this Code of Ethics, as well as its administration, depend on individual integrity and cooperation. It is important that those assuming District PAC roles understand their responsibilities and are willing to be bound by this Code of Ethics.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE CODE OF ETHICS

The following is a process for dealing with a concern that an executive member, committee member, or representative may have failed to observe the Code of Ethics. The process is intended to deal with complaints in a positive manner. Its goal is to facilitate a fair resolution, agreeable to all parties.

1. Any person bringing forward a concern will be advised of this process.
2. All complaints and information surrounding complaints will be dealt with in confidence.
3. Those directly involved in the complaint will be given access to all relevant information.
4. All parties will be dealt with respectfully.
5. Any person involved may have a support person.
6. There will be a fair review of the concern to protect volunteers, executive members, and representatives from vexations and mischievous complaints.

PROCESS

1. All complaints, verbal and written, will be received by the chair. The chair 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 chair, the complainant will be directed to the vice-chair. If the chair and vice-chair are involved, any executive member may receive the complaint.
2. For the purpose of this process, the person acting on the complaint is named 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 the specifics of any resolution.
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 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 DPAC executive within 30 days of being notified of the decision.

CODE OF ETHICS

A parent who accepts a position as a Council executive member, committee member, or representative:

1. Upholds the constitution and bylaws, policies, and procedures of the electing body
2. Performs his or her duties with honesty and integrity and in the interests of the DPAC
3. Works to ensure that the well-being of students is the primary focus of all decisions
4. Respects the rights of all individuals
5. Takes direction from the membership and executive
6. Encourages and supports parents and students with individual concerns to act on their own behalf, and provides information on the process for taking concerns forward
7. Works to ensure that issues are resolved through due process
8. Strives to be 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, is accepting the position of _____ of Sunshine Coast District Parent Advisory Council and have read, understood, and agreed to abide by this Code of Ethics. 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 Member, Committee Member, or Representative:

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Email: _____

Phone number: _____

APPENDIX C - CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND PERCEIVED BIAS

RATIONALE

DPAC expresses the views of parents regarding education in School District No. 46. Parents bring a special expertise to the education forum which develops from their intimate experiences with children as they grow and develop and form a lifelong commitment to their children.

DEFINITIONS

1. *Conflict of Interest* – If a parent or member of the parent's immediate family could benefit financially from a decision of the PAC, DPAC, or school planning council that the parent can influence or vote on, the parent has a conflict of interest. This is true whether the parent is an executive member, committee member, or member at large.
2. *Perception of Bias* - Perceived bias may exist if a parent has another role in the education system that might be seen to influence the parent's conduct or views. For example, if a parent is an employee or elected official of the school district or Ministry of Education (or is married to one), others may question whether the parent is acting solely in the interests of the DPAC.

POLICY

1. That individuals refrain from discussing, influencing and voting upon any matter before DPAC in which they or their families have a pecuniary interest.
2. That the voice of DPAC must clearly be, and must be perceived to be, that of the parents of School District No. 46.
3. That individuals who may be in a situation of "*perceived bias*" by virtue of another role they hold in the education system avoid functions within DPAC which involve representation to external organizations and the general public.

CONCERNS

1. That members who have concerns regarding conflict of interest and perceived bias will be referred to the Conflict of Interest Committee promptly.

PROCEDURES

1. Concerns regarding conflict of interest and perceived bias will be referred to the Conflict of Interest Committee promptly.
2. The Conflict of Interest Committee will be composed of the chair and two (2) other executive members and will deal with questions of conflict of interest and perceived bias.
3. The Conflict of Interest Committee will review any concerns that an individual is in a conflict of interest situation and make recommendations as to how the situation may be addressed.

4. 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 a reassignment to another committee or position as appropriate.
5. If the Committee does not resolve the matter with the individual, the Committee will report to the DPAC executive.

APPENDIX D- SUNSHINE COAST ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL

The DPAC through its Executive represents the interests of the parents and students of the Sunshine Coast Alternative School (SCAS) until such time as the SCAS establishes its own parent / community organization.

Responsibilities include:

1. Secure and distribute Direct Access Funds (gaming funds), any monies accrued to the SCAS parent group from School District No. 46 (Sunshine Coast) or other sources of funding in consultation with the parents, SPC and SCAS administration.
2. Provide a link between SCAS, DPAC and BCCPAC and the larger community.
3. Support the goals and purpose of the SCAS.