

DISTRICT 43

PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

APRIL 2011

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DPAC POLICY #101

Guiding Principles

This Council endeavours to:

- a) facilitate two-way communication and cooperation between the School District and parents of students in the District;
- b) facilitate communication amongst Parent Advisory Councils in the District;
- c) provide a forum for DPAC members to discuss ideas, issues and information related to educational matters;
- d) exercise leadership in developing and expressing collective parental views to the District and BCCPAC;
- e) facilitate parent education;
- f) review school district policies and programs dealing with the care and protection of children. Support policies that enable each child to realize his/her potential;
- g) interact with community organizations concerned with the education and well-being of children and communicate to parents the resources available to them;
- h) encourage the formation of officially recognized PACs for each school in District 43;
- i) recognize the official protocols as set out in District Policy and inform parents about this policy;
- j) refrain from supporting, endorsing or recommending any service, product, or person.

DPAC POLICY #102

Conflict of Interest and Perceived Bias

RATIONALE:

DPAC expresses the views of parents regarding education in School District #43. Parents bring a special expertise to the education forum that develops from their intimate experiences with children as they grow and develop and form a lifelong commitment to their children.

DEFINITIONS:

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

Perception of Bias refers to a situation that may exist if an individual who represents DPAC to an external organization or to the general public, is also an employee or elected official of a school district or 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.

POLICY:

A. Conflict of Interest

That individuals refrain from discussing, influencing and voting upon any matter before DPAC in which they or their families have a pecuniary interest.

B. Perceived Bias

That the voice of DPAC must clearly be, and must be perceived to be, that of the parents of School District #43.

Those 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 that involve representation to external organizations and the general public.

C. Concerns

Those members who have concerns regarding conflict of interest or perceived bias refer those concerns to the Committee.

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 President 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.

6. The Nominations Committee will refer to the Conflict of Interest Committee for review the situation of any candidate for an Executive position who provides compensated services to a School District or the Ministry of Education. The Conflict of Interest Committee will decide on the eligibility of such a person for an Executive position.

DPAC POLICY #103

Communications Policy

Email

- Email may be used to facilitate ongoing operations. It should be used as a forum for discussion only on a limited basis. It will not be utilized to exact Executive decisions. These are expected to occur around the Executive table. With this stipulation, however, comes a responsibility on DPAC Executive members. They must be willing to meet when necessary to transact emergent business, that otherwise could have been transacted via email.
- All emails will be treated in confidence as if they were occurring around the Executive table, and are to adhere to the DPAC Code of Ethics. Emails may not be forwarded outside of the DPAC office or the Executive.
- There will be occasion when it will be necessary given time constraint to extract decisions from our general membership, or to obtain feedback from them, for purposes of expressing a collective voice. Email will be utilized for these purposes, as it is the most effective and efficient means of transferring information to and from our membership, and to or from our provincial parent group, BCCPAC.
- All members are expected to utilize common sense when emailing with one another and external parties. Emails should address District issues only, keeping in mind the well being of all students. To ensure abuses do not occur, emailing will occur to Undisclosed Recipient, the most secure form of transmission.

Media Submissions

- All Executive members are expected to understand that personal contact with the media regarding educational matters is not recommended. There is a perception that the name of an Executive Member is easily recognized in the public domain, and therefore any views expressed by a member could be perceived as being those of the organization. In view of this, policy dictates that any Executive member considering communicating to or through the media, first inform the DPAC Executive to ensure the communiqué aligns with the DPAC Code of Ethics. Otherwise, a disclaimer to the effect of “this viewpoint does not represent that of the DPAC organization or its Executive”, shall be included.
- As per the DPAC Bylaws, the only Executive member authorized to speak to the media on behalf of the organization is the President.

Committee Reports

- DPAC representatives sitting on external District committees or on Executive internal committees are expected to report to the membership regularly. Each member is required to report at both our General meetings and our Executive meetings, and if unable to attend, is expected to file a report in writing. An annual report for each Committee is to be filed in

writing for the Annual General Meeting. It is expected that DPAC Committee members will report out factually, responsibly and in context. They will otherwise be considered in contravention of the Code of Ethics.

- It is the responsibility of the Committee member to provide copies of any significant documents such as minutes, handouts etc., to the Vice President.
- All Executive portfolio binders are to be stored at the DPAC office for the summer period.

Fundraising or Community Interest Groups

- All fundraising requests are to be directed to our individual PACs. DPAC will not endorse or act as the central distribution channel for any fundraisers or Community Interest Groups.
- However, if the President thinks there may be a benefit from a collective DPAC involvement, she or he may refer the matter to the DPAC Executive for further direction.

DPAC POLICY #104

Directing Resolutions to DPAC

Resolutions are formal statements expressing the opinion of your PAC. Member PACs are encouraged to send their resolutions, at any time during the year, to DPAC.

HOW TO WRITE A RESOLUTION

TITLE: The title is directly related to the main topic of the resolution statement and makes the resolution easily identifiable for discussion.

SUBMITTED BY: This is the name of the member group submitting the resolution. It is always advisable that resolutions grow out of discussions at a PAC meeting rather than coming only from the Executive. Please attach minutes of the PAC meeting where the resolution was discussed and voted on.

CONTACT PERSON: It is important to include the name, address, phone, fax and e-mail of a person that the DPAC Executive may contact should further information be requested.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: This is how the resolution begins. The statements that follow must clearly and concisely outline what the submitting group wants. Do not try to deal with more than one issue on a topic, present more than one resolution if necessary. A resolution must not give direction to other organizations. If the change is not within DPAC's ability to act upon, then it should direct DPAC to lobby the appropriate body to make the change so long as it conforms with the DPAC Constitution and Bylaws.

RATIONALE: This is where the reason for the resolution is stated – “the why?” It must give clear, straightforward evidence and background data to support the resolution. The rationale is needed so that members can understand why the resolution has come forward, and gives them an opportunity to consider information that they might not know about. The rationale is not part of the resolution and, therefore, while it can be debated, it cannot be changed and is not voted upon.

DESTINATION: This defines where or to whom the action specified in the resolution is to be directed. There may be more than one destination.

Resolutions are presented at the General Meeting; members have an opportunity to debate the issues, to amend (so long as the intent is not changed) and then take them back to their member PACs to be voted on. At the next General meeting, members vote upon the resolutions. If a resolution passes, it is added to the DPAC Resolutions Book. The Executive prioritises and develops action to be taken on the policies. A Resolution Tracking form is updated, adding action taken, results obtained and further action to be taken. This form is periodically sent to all members and can be requested from the office as well.

PROCEDURES: See Bylaws ARTICLE II Section 6.3 for procedures.

DPAC POLICY #105

In-Camera Meetings

The Executive believes that the trust of its DPAC membership is preserved through the conduct of its meetings, which are normally open to observers.

The Executive recognizes, however, that occasions may arise from time to time where it is in the best interest to discuss sensitive matters in closed or in-camera meetings.

GUIDELINES:

The DPAC Executive may decide at any time, by majority vote of those present and voting, that a whole meeting or any part of a meeting be held in-camera to discuss matters of a sensitive nature, including, but not necessarily restricted to:

- Personnel
- Litigation brought by or against DPAC
- Investigation of, and or expulsion of, an Executive member or PAC under Bylaw Article VIII Section 1

The Executive may convene an in-camera meeting by motion only. Such motions shall be recorded in the minutes of the Executive.

The Executive shall, during the in-camera meeting, adopt only such motions as are required to reconvene the Executive in an open, public meeting.

Executive members and other persons attending the in-camera meetings are honour-bound not to disclose the details of the discussion. All documents presented during the in-camera session may be declared a “document confidential”, in which case the document shall be made available only to members of the Executive and discussed only in-camera.

All decisions of the Executive shall be made in open meetings of the Executive.

DPAC POLICY #106

Executive Nominations

Rationale:

Except where prohibited by the Bylaws, a parent or guardian of a student attending a School District #43 school may stand for election. However, in the interest of honesty, transparency, and open communication, the prospective candidate must declare and disclose any association with the Ministry of Education, School District #43 or any other school district within the province of BC.

Definitions:

Conflict of Interest and Perceived Bias refers to DPAC Policy #102.

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

Perception of Bias refers to a situation that may exist if an individual who represents DPAC to an external organization or to the general public, is also an employee or elected official of a school district or 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.

Disclosure means to reveal and inform.

POLICY:

Any person standing for election as an executive officer must complete a written form that includes biographical data and discloses their association with the educational system in BC. To ensure the membership has a clear understanding of the prospective candidate's convictions and capabilities, the disclosure shall include such data as recent work history, educational background, other volunteer work and affiliations

Procedures:

1. Obtain both Disclosure and Nomination forms from the DPAC office. Submit the completed forms to DPAC at least two weeks prior to the AGM elections. Candidates nominated from the floor at the AGM must complete and submit the Disclosure and Nomination forms before election.
2. If a candidate is elected, these forms will remain the property of DPAC. If the candidate is not elected, the forms will be returned to the candidate.

Disclosure Procedure at Time of the Election:

1. It is the expectation that before the election is held, each candidate shall speak to the membership disclosing their biographical data, including work and educational history, hobbies, interests, volunteer work, and affiliations.
2. The current Executive and general membership will be provided with the opportunity to question each candidate with respect to their suitability for their prospective role as an Executive member.

3. A prospective candidate is not required to answer questions regarding their age, sexual preference, place of origin (birthplace), ethnicity, disability, political affiliation, or any question that is discriminatory as defined by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Statement of Expectations:

- An Executive member’s first and foremost interests are those of students and parents of SD #43.
- An Executive member will strive to work collaboratively with partner groups while keeping the interests of parents and students as their primary and guiding working principle.
- An Executive member will act in a manner that is free from political influence.
- An Executive member will follow the DPAC Code of Ethics and remain accountable to the Executive and the membership.

DPAC Disclosure Form

Name of Candidate: _____

Schools that Children attend: _____

Biographical Data: Please provide a short summary concerning work and educational history.

Personal Background: Please provide information regarding hobbies and/or interests.

Volunteer Work and Affiliations: Please disclose your involvement as a volunteer with any agency or organization.

I hereby certify that the above information is true and correct.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

DPAC POLICY #107

Policy on Payment of Expenses

Background:

This policy is to ensure clarity and equity for reimbursement of expenses for DPAC Executive or DPAC Advocates, when on approved business on behalf of the District 43 Parent Advisory Council (DPAC 43). The Budget Amount for these expenditures is established on an annual basis, and presented to the general membership for approval.

Criteria:

- 1) Expense Reports are to be submitted for authorization by either the President or Vice President. The Expense Report will provide a breakdown and detail of the expenses, with receipts to support.
- 2) Expense Reports for the President and/or Vice President need to be authorized by the other authorizing executive officer (or their designate), that is, they cannot approve their own expenses.
- 3) Mileage will be paid at a rate of 42 cents a kilometre.
- 4) No expense will be reimbursed without a receipt, unless have received the prior approval of the President or Vice President.
- 5) Expense Reports need to be submitted at the end of November, March, and June, for reimbursement. The Treasurer shall report out the reimbursement status to the Executive at the end of each period.
- 6) No expenses will be paid outside the total annual budget, without getting the approval of the general membership.
- 7) Babysitting costs incurred by DPAC Executive members when they are representing DPAC at approved meetings/functions (does not include DPAC Executive Meetings or DPAC General Meetings) may be partially or fully covered with prior approval of the executive, but may not exceed the budgeted amount.