

Prince George District Parent Advisory Council

# **Internal Policies and Procedures**

As adopted May 7, 2012

# **Executive Code of Conduct**

## **ROLE – Parents who accept a position as a DPAC executive officer:**

1. Work cooperatively to fulfill the goals of the DPAC.
2. Uphold the constitution and bylaws, policies and procedures of the DPAC.
3. Are willing to review their work with other executive officers and the general members.

## **DECISION-MAKING – Parents who accept a position as a DPAC executive officer:**

1. Work to ensure the well being of students is the primary focus of all decisions.
2. Express concerns about proposed actions while they are under consideration, to be taken into account before a decision is made. A different perspective may help the group realize an action may have consequences that had not been anticipated.
3. Publically support the decisions of the membership, once a decision has been duly voted on, in spite of any personal concerns or reservations.

## **INTERPERSONAL CONDUCT – Parents who accepts a position as a DPAC executive officer:**

1. Respect the rights of all individuals.
2. Perform their duties with honesty and integrity.
3. Speak and act towards other officers with respect and dignity, mindful of other officers' rights and sensibilities
4. Strive to be informed and only pass on reliable and relevant information.
5. Use the Dispute Resolution Process for any issues with other DPAC members.
6. Encourage and support parents and students with individual concerns to act on their own behalf, and provide information on the process for taking forward concerns.
7. Respect all confidential information.
8. Work to ensure that issues are resolved through due process.

## **PRESENTATION TO THE PUBLIC – Parents who accepts a position as a DPAC executive officer:**

1. Support public education.
2. Represent the DPAC members' perspectives, to partner groups in education, focusing on the best interests of students.
3. Recognize that membership lists are confidential, unless permission has been obtained from each member listed.
4. Direct requests for statements on behalf of the DPAC to the Chairperson. The Chairperson is the official spokesperson for the DPAC.

## **Dispute Resolution Process**

DPAC members should recognize that each individual brings their own style to a volunteer environment, and when differences occur, effort should be made by all volunteers to understand and coach colleagues rather than judging their differences. In the event of a serious conflict that impairs a person's ability to perform their work with a positive and respectful attitude, the DPAC member should take the following steps:

1. Go directly to the person that the conflict is with, and attempt to resolve the situation with them in a face to face meeting.
2. If you cannot resolve the issue with this person, tell them that in your opinion, the issue has not been resolved and that you are proceeding with the dispute resolution process.
3. Contact the DPAC Chairperson, or, in the event the concern relates to the Chairperson, the concern should be directed to another Executive member. For the purposes of this process the person acting on the concern is named the Mediator.
4. Upon receiving the concern, the Mediator will work to clarify the concern, determine if and how the Code of Ethics has been breached and facilitate the resolution process.
5. If the person bringing the concern forward has not spoken directly to the other person in the conflict, they 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 Mediator will enter the discussion, with the intent to facilitate a positive resolution.
7. The Mediator may request the participation of other executive members in the process.
8. If the parties cannot agree on resolution, the Mediator will make a recommendation to the parties. The recommendation may be that the matter be closed.
9. Every attempt will be made to resolve the concern in a timely manner.
10. Either of the parties may appeal the decision of the Mediator, to the DPAC Executive as a whole. The appeal must be in writing within 30 days of being notified of the decision.

# **Delegates to BC Coalition of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC) Conferences**

## **Background**

1. The Spring Conference is the annual general meeting (AGM) of BCCPAC and is a policy-oriented conference, where resolutions are put forward and voted on by BCCPAC members. It is a means of bringing the parent voice to the provincial table.
2. The Fall Conference of BCCPAC is a training-oriented conference, where delegates attend multiple workshops to improve their skills in building effective PAC's. As well, the conference is a major networking opportunity for PAC executives to meet each other and build working relationships.
3. All BCCPAC members will be encouraged to attend the conferences, or pass their proxies to those delegates from our district who will be attending.
4. In the event that DPAC has travel reimbursements available yet cannot send sufficient delegates to use the funds, the unused portion of travel subsidies will be offered to member PAC's to attend the conferences.

## **Applicant Criteria**

1. DPAC will fund at least two delegates to attend each of the Conferences, assuming adequate financial resources.
2. A standing invitation will be offered to the DPAC District Associate or his/her stand-in (preferably a member of the DPAC executive). This person will fulfill the role of proxy-carrier for all district PAC's who wish to participate in proxy voting.
3. The other delegate(s) will be selected by the delegate selection committee, with an eye to building future capacity at the DPAC executive level.
4. All DPAC members currently fulfilling the function of DPAC reps for their schools or serving as a DPAC executive member will be able to apply to be a DPAC delegate, including members of the delegate selection committee.
5. A delegate selection committee will be established at the first general meeting of the school year.
6. The committee will invite all interested parties to submit a brief written application before a specified deadline (at least one week before early bird registration closes), detailing their reasons for wanting to attend the conference, and how they believe this experience will benefit DPAC and/or their PAC.

## **Delegate Selection**

1. In selecting delegates, the following criteria is to be considered:

- a. Applicants who have demonstrated a high level of involvement in DPAC or their PAC
- b. Applicants who stand to benefit most from the training provided
2. Whenever possible, the selection committee will ensure that one of the delegates has previously attended such a conference and can act as a mentor/guide for the other(s).
3. Applicants who miss the deadline will only be considered if there is a shortage of other suitable applicants.
4. The committee will have at least one alternate delegate who is willing to attend on short notice in the event one of the selected applicants is unable to attend.

### **Delegate Expectations**

1. Delegates are expected to attend the full conference.
2. Delegates may choose which workshops to attend based on their own interests and anticipated benefits to DPAC. There should be a cross-section of workshops attended by DPAC delegates. The DPAC executive may decide on workshop selection for delegates.
3. Delegates must provide a post-conference presentation or written report for DPAC at the next general DPAC meeting. This may be delayed to the next meeting upon request.

### **Expenses**

1. Delegates selected through this process will be reimbursed for all reasonable costs related to conference fees, transportation, lodging, food (excluding alcohol), and other incidental costs.
2. Payments will be made on the basis of actual receipt amounts.
3. Meals will be based on a maximum of \$10 breakfast, \$15 lunch, and \$25 dinner.
4. DPAC reserves the right to set transportation and lodging maximums.
5. Delegates must be willing to carpool or share a room upon request.
6. DPAC may advance a payment to delegates to cover their expenses upon request.
7. DPAC will not be responsible for any financial loss if delegates have to take off any time from work to attend the conference.

### **Resolutions and BCCPAC AGM**

1. The DPAC executive will arrange for a resolution workshop, prior the BCCPAC AGM and any other conferences with resolutions, as far in advance of the conference as possible.
2. DPAC volunteer(s) will research information on the more complex resolutions for presentation at the workshop.

Updated – May 7, 2012

3. Parents from all PAC's are encouraged to attend the workshop meeting to discuss the resolutions, with the intent of taking the information back to their schools.
4. Member PACs would fill in their proxy form and voting instructions, and pass them to the DPAC proxy-carrier.
5. Proxies that are supplied without voting instructions will be voted according to the proxy-carrier's decisions.

## **Duties of DPAC Representatives**

DPAC Representatives attend DPAC meetings on behalf of their PAC, and are chosen by each PAC on the basis of their own bylaws and policies. DPAC Representatives are expected to act on behalf of the PAC they represent, but are free to exercise their own judgment unless instructed otherwise by their PAC.

### **Between DPAC meetings, it is suggested that a DPAC representative should:**

- Report back to their PAC on the DPAC meeting
- Gather the PAC's views on issues to bring forward to the DPAC
- Review documents relevant to the meeting, in advance of the meeting.
- Suggest any items that should be included on the next meeting agenda.
- Complete all tasks volunteered for as early as possible.

### **During DPAC meetings, a DPAC representative should:**

- Attend all DPAC and committee meetings volunteered for.
- Arrive on time, and pay attention for the duration.
- Raise valid concerns. Representatives should give themselves permission to question the status quo or conventional wisdom, even at the risk of being unpopular.
- When opposing an initiative, be prepared to propose alternatives.
- Insist on that all proposals be clear, especially when votes are taken.
- Try to speak up more often and offer insights and ideas, if you tend to hold back.
- Learn to hold back comments and listen more often, if you tend to dominate a meeting.

## **Perceived Bias and Conflict of Interest**

DPAC expresses the views of the parents in this school district. Parents bring a special expertise to the process of determining the educational goals, policies and services provided for their children.

The voice of this DPAC must clearly be, and must be perceived to be, that of the parents of this school district. Individuals who may be in a situation of “perceived bias” by virtue of another role they hold in the educational system must avoid functions within this DPAC which involve representation of the parent voice.

Members who have concerns regarding conflict of interest or perceived bias should refer those concerns to the DPAC Executive.

We conduct our meetings for Robert’s Rules of Order, which states:

“No member should vote on a question in which he has a direct personal or pecuniary interest not common to other members of the organization. For example, if a motion proposes that the organization enter into a contract with a commercial firm of which a member of the organization is an officer and from which contract he would derive personal pecuniary profit, the members should abstain from voting on the motion. However, no member can be compelled to refrain from voting in such circumstances.”