

Central Okanagan District Parent Advisory Council Constitution and Bylaws

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The British Columbia School Act provides that:

...It is the goal of a democratic society to ensure that all its members receive an education that enables them to become personally fulfilled and publicly useful, thereby increasing the strength and contributions to the health and stability of that society; (and)

The Mission Statement for BC Schools is that:

...The purpose of the British Columbia school system is to enable all learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy, democratic and pluralistic society and a prosperous and sustainable economy.

And to facilitate achievement of those objectives the Act provides further that parents/guardians of students attending schools within a district may apply to establish a Parent Advisory Council for that School District. To that end, application has been made and a council established in respect of School District No. 23, Central Okanagan.

In these Bylaws, School District No. 23, Central Okanagan shall be referred to as "SD 23". The Central Okanagan Parent Advisory Council shall be referred to as "COPAC".

Table of Contents

CONSTITUTION

Section I	Name
Section II	Purposes of the Council
Section III	Interpretation of Terms

BYLAWS

Section I	Membership
Section II	Meetings of Members
Section III	Proceedings at General Meetings
Section IV	Executive
Section V	Executive Meetings
Section VI	Committee Representatives
Section VII	Conduct of Executive and Representatives
Section VIII	Duties of Executive and Representatives
Section IX	Financial Matters
Section X	Constitution and Bylaws Amendments
Section XI	Property and Documents
Section XII	Dissolution

CONSTITUTION

Section I Name

The name of the District Advisory Council shall be the Central Okanagan Parent Advisory Council hereinafter known as COPAC.

COPAC is recognized by the Board of Education of SD 23 as the District Parent Advisory Council as defined in the School Act, British Columbia.

The Council will operate as a non-profit organization with no personal financial benefit accruing to members.

The business of the Council will be unbiased in respect of race, religion, gender, politics, sexual orientation, and physical or mental ability.

Section II – PURPOSES OF THE COUNCIL

The purposes of the COPAC will be:

1. To support public education by engaging in activities that promote parental involvement at all levels (School, District and Provincial);
2. To advise the Board of Education, Superintendent, District staff and the Ministry of Education on any matter relating to education in SD 23;
3. To promote the interests of public education and, in particular, the interests of SD 23;
4. To provide leadership in the school community to support, encourage and develop PACs in SD 23;
5. To provide parent education and professional development, and to serve as a forum for discussion of educational issues;
6. To advise and participate in the activities of the BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC); and
7. To communicate with other organizations in the community and province on educational matters of common interest.

Section III - INTERPRETATION OF TERMS

“**BCCPAC**” refers to the British Columbia Confederation of Parents Advisory Councils.

“**Board of Education**” refers to the currently elected Board of Education of SD 23.

“**COPAC**” refers to the Central Okanagan Parent Advisory Council as defined in Section I.

“**COPAC Member**” refers to individual PACs of SD 23.

“**District**” means School District No. 23 (Central Okanagan), hereinafter referred to as SD 23.

“**DPAC**” or “**District Parent Advisory Council**” means the parent advisory council organized according to the School Act and operating as a District Parent Advisory Council in School District No.23 (Central Okanagan), hereinafter referred to as COPAC.

“**Executive Officer(s)**” refers to the person(s) elected to a COPAC executive position(s) as outlined in Section IV.

“**Ex-officio**” refers to membership on a Board or a committee by virtue of holding an office in an organization. Ex-officio members have no voting privileges.

“**Gaming account**” refers to the bank account specifically designated to receive deposits and disburse eligible payments from Gaming funds.

“**Gaming Funds**” refers to the funds received by COPAC through Community Gaming Grants program or any funds received by COPAC generated through licensed gaming activities.

“**Notice of Motion**” refers to a written notification of a proposal for action or consideration brought to a general meeting for debate and vote at a specified future date.

“**PAC**” or “**Parent Advisory Council**” means the parents organized according to the School Act and operating as a Parent Advisory Council at individual schools within SD 23.

“PAC Representative (s)” refers to the person or persons designated to represent his/her member PAC to COPAC.

“Parent” is as defined in the School Act and means

(a) the guardian of the student or child;

(b) the person legally entitled to custody of the student or child; or

(c) the person who usually has the care and control of the student or child.

and, for the purposes of these bylaws, means the parent or guardian of a child or children enrolled in a school in School District No. 23

“Proxy” refers to a document by which one person authorises another to vote in his/her place.

“School” refers to any public primary, elementary, middle or secondary educational institution within School District No. 23, including Central School, Storefront locations and eSchool23.

Bylaws

Section I – MEMBERSHIP

Voting members

3. Membership of COPAC is comprised of all individual member PACs in SD 23. Each COPAC Member shall elect a representative to exercise its voice and vote. Members may designate alternates.

Education Partners

2. COPAC General Meetings are open to its recognized education partners. These could include, but are not limited to, the Board of Education, District Administration, the Central Okanagan Principals and Vice-Principals Association (COPVPA), the Central Okanagan Teachers Association (COTA) The Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 2523 (CUPE), and the Indigenous Parent & Family Council.
3. COPAC may invite other community organizations or individuals with an interest in education to its meetings.
4. Educational Partner representatives and invited guests do not have not voting privileges at meetings.

Compliance with bylaws

5. Every member will uphold the constitution and comply with these bylaws.
6. All executive members will receive a copy of the COPAC Constitution and Bylaws and will be required to sign a statement that they have read and understand the Bylaws and agree to uphold them.

Section II – MEETINGS OF MEMBERS

General meetings

1. General meetings will be conducted efficiently and with fairness to all members.
2. *The current edition of 'Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised'* shall govern all meetings, unless otherwise provided for in these Bylaws.
3. Unless otherwise determined by PAC Reps, general meetings shall be held on the first Monday of each month during the school year (September to June inclusive) to conduct current business. Where a holiday falls on the first Monday of the month, the general meeting shall be held on the second Monday of the month.

Special meetings

4. Special meetings shall be held at the discretion of the executive, or upon the receipt of a petition representing fifty percent (50%) of the voting members. Every reasonable effort shall be made to provide a minimum of seven (7) days to the general membership of any extraordinary meeting being called.

Meetings Held Electronically

5. Except as otherwise provided in these bylaws, meetings may be conducted through use of Internet meeting services designated by the President that support anonymous voting and support visible displays identifying those participating, identifying those seeking recognition to speak, showing (or permitting the retrieval of) the text of pending motions, and showing the results of votes. These electronic meetings shall be subject to all rules adopted by the executive team, to govern them, which may include any reasonable limitations on, and requirements for, members' participation. Any such rules adopted COPAC shall supersede any conflicting rules but may not otherwise conflict with or alter any bylaw. An anonymous vote conducted through the designated Internet meeting service shall be deemed a ballot vote, fulfilling any requirement in the bylaws or rules that a vote be conducted by ballot.

Annual General Meeting

6. In May of each year, there shall be an Annual General Meeting for the purpose of election of Officers and receipt of annual reports.

Conduct

7. At general meetings, members will not discuss individual school personnel, students, parents, or other members of the school community.
8. The Council will refrain from partisan political action or other activities that do not serve the interests of the school district or the public school system.

Notice of meetings

8. Members will be given reasonable notice of general meetings.

Section III – PROCEEDINGS AT GENERAL MEETINGS

Quorum

1. A quorum for any monthly or special meeting of COPAC (including the AGM) will be ten (10) voting members.
2. If at any time during a COPAC meeting a quorum ceases to be present, business then in progress must be suspended until there is a quorum present or until the meeting is adjourned or terminated.

Voting

3. Each COPAC Member shall have one (1) vote, carried by its PAC Representative or alternate. Except as provided elsewhere in these bylaws, all matters requiring a vote will be decided by a simple majority of the votes cast (50% plus 1).
4. A Notice of Motion must be provided to the COPAC members at least one meeting prior to action being taken to:
 1. Set the COPAC budget
 2. Amend the Constitution and/or Bylaws;
 3. Dissolve COPAC.
5. In the case of a tie vote, the motion will be lost.
6. Members will vote through their representative. A representative must be present at a meeting to vote. Voting by proxy will not be permitted.
7. Except as provided elsewhere in these bylaws, voting is by a show of hands or, where requested by any members present, by secret ballot.
8. A vote will be taken to destroy the ballots after every election.

Section IV -- EXECUTIVE

Role of Executive

1. The executive will manage the Council's affairs between general meetings.

Executive defined

2. The executive will include the president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and three (3) members at large.

Eligibility

3. A person nominated for a position on the COPAC Executive must be a current member of the COPAC Executive, or a current PAC Representative to COPAC, or a person who has previously been a PAC Representative to COPAC, or is currently a PAC Executive Member and be the parent or guardian of a student enrolled in SD 23 for the duration of the term of office. No employee of SD23 can hold an executive position due to potential perceived conflict of interest.

Election of Executive

4. Calls for nominations shall be made at the general meetings in March and April.
5. A Nominations Committee shall be a Standing Committee chaired by an individual not seeking election into an executive position. The Nominations Committee will consist of at least two (2) persons appointed by the Membership. The Nominations Committee will strive to present at least two (2) qualified candidates for each Executive position.
6. Current PAC representatives shall elect the Executive Officers at the Annual General Meeting.
7. Elections will be conducted by the chair of the Nominations Committee.

Term of office

8. The executive will hold office for a term of one (1) school year beginning July 1st following the election. The outgoing executive will use the month of June to assist the incoming executive in learning the duties and responsibilities of each position.
9. No person may hold the same executive position for more than two (2) consecutive years. In cases where a person has held a role for two consecutive one-year terms, and no replacement nomination is put forward, the COPAC Representatives in attendance may, by a majority vote of not less than two thirds (2/3), vote to extend the term for another year until the next AGM, provided the person holding the position is willing to continue to hold the position and remains a parent or guardian of a student enrolled in School District #23 for the duration of the term of office. The maximum consecutive years any person can hold the same executive position, including extensions, is three (3) consecutive years.
10. No person may hold more than one (1) elected Executive position at any one time.

Vacancy

11. If an executive member resigns or ceases to hold office for any other reason, the remaining executive members may appoint an eligible member of the Council to fill the vacancy until the next annual general meeting.

12. An Officer missing more than two (2) consecutive general meetings or Executive meetings without justification forfeits his/her position.

Removal of executive

13. 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 member to complete the term.

14. 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

15. 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 Council's affairs.

Section V – EXECUTIVE MEETINGS

Meetings

1. Executive meetings will be held at the call of the president no less than 6 times per year. Any member may attend an executive meeting but shall not be permitted to vote.

Quorum

2. A quorum for executive meetings will be a majority (50% plus 1) of the members of the executive.

Notice

3. Executive members will be given reasonable notice of executive meetings.

Voting

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 president shall cast a vote to break the tie.

Section VI - COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

Internal committees

All parents /guardians are eligible and encouraged to volunteer as committee members.

All committees shall be accountable to and report to the COPAC Membership at general meetings.

Internal COPAC committees, being committees generated by COPAC may consist of:

- Standing Committees, which shall be authorized for an indefinite period of time;
- AD HOC Committees, which shall be authorized to fulfill a specific and/or temporary purpose;
- Committees of the Whole, which shall consist of the entire Membership.

Each Committee's mandate shall be established by the Membership through a motion introduced at a general meeting. The mandate shall include the committee's purpose, terms of reference and timelines.

External Committees, being committees generated outside of COPAC.

- In the case where a limited number of COPAC Representatives may be sent from COPAC, the Executive shall, by means of a majority vote of the Executive, select the COPAC Representative(s).
- Individuals selected to serve on External Committees are responsible to report to and seek input/feedback from COPAC members and must provide regular reports to the Membership.

Section VII – CONDUCT OF EXECUTIVE AND REPRESENTATIVES

Code of ethics

On election or appointment, every executive member and representative must sign and agree to abide by a code of ethics acceptable to the membership.

Representing the Council

Every executive member and representative must act solely in the interests of the parent membership of the Council.

Privilege

Any information received in confidence by an executive member or representative from school personnel, a student, parent, or other member of the school community is privileged and must not be divulged without permission of the person giving the information.

Disclosure of interest

An executive member or representative who is interested, either directly or indirectly, in a proposed contract or transaction with the Council must disclose fully and promptly the nature and extent of his or her interest to the membership and executive.

Such an executive member or representative must avoid using his or her position on the Council for personal gain.

Section VIII – DUTIES OF EXECUTIVE AND REPRESENTATIVES

1. The President will

- a) Speak on behalf of the Council;
- b) consult with Council members; preside at membership and executive meetings;
- c) be an ex-officio member to all committees except the Nominating Committee;
- d) Ensure that an agenda is prepared;
- e) appoint committees where authorized by the membership or executive;
- f) ensure that the Council is represented in School District activities;
- g) ensure that Council activities are aimed at achieving the purposes set out in the constitution;
- h) be one of the signing officers;
- i) remain available to assist the President-Elect to learn his/her duties until the last day of the current school year;
- j) in the event that the President is unable to remain until the end of the school year, an outgoing executive member will be appointed to complete the tasks as outlined in Item j; and
- k) submit a written report at the Annual General Meeting.

2. The Vice-President will

- a) support the president;
- b) assume the duties of the president in the president's absence or upon request;
- c) assist the president in the performance of his or her duties;
- d) accept extra duties as required;
- e) may be a signing officer; and
- f) submit a written report at the Annual General Meeting.

3. The Secretary will

- a) ensure that members are notified of meetings;
- b) record and file minutes of all meetings;
- c) keep an accurate copy of the Constitution and Bylaws, and make copies available to members upon request;
- d) prepare and maintain other documentation as requested by the membership or executive;
- e) issue and receive correspondence on behalf of the Council;
- f) ensure safekeeping of all records of the Council;
- g) may be a signing officer; and
- h) submit an annual report.

4. The Treasurer will

- a) be one of the signing officers;
- b) receive funds on behalf of the council and ensure all funds of the Council are properly accounted for;
- c) deposit all monies collected on behalf of COPAC in and account at a recognized financial institution approved by the executive;
- d) disburse funds as authorized by the membership or executive;
- e) ensure that proper financial records and books of account are maintained;
- f) provide a written report of all receipts and disbursements at each general and executive meeting;
- g) make financial records and books of account available to members upon request;
- h) have the financial records and books of account ready for inspection or audit annually;
- i) with the assistance of the executive, draft an annual budget;
- j) ensure that the application for Community Gaming Grant funds is completed and submitted on a timely basis;
- k) prepare and submit as required by legislation any and all reports regarding the expenditure of Gaming Funds;
- l) ensure that another signing officer has access to the financial records and books of account in the treasurer's absence; and
- m) submit an annual financial statement at the annual general meeting.

5. The Members-at-Large will

- a) serve in a capacity to be determined by the Council at the time of election, and at other times as the Council requires; and
- b) submit a written report at the Annual General Meeting.

Section IX – FINANCIAL MATTERS

Financial year

The financial year of the Council will be July 1st to June 30th.

Power to raise money

The Council may raise and spend money to further its purposes.

Bank accounts

All funds of the Council must be kept on deposit in the name of the Council in a bank or financial institution registered under the Bank Act.

Signing authority

The executive will name at least three (3) signing officers for banking and other documents. Two signatures will be required on all banking documents required for the release of COPAC funds.

Annual budget

The Treasurer, with the assistance of the executive, will prepare a budget and present it to the membership for consideration at or before the October meeting each year. Notice of motion must be provided so that members are prepared to debate and adopt the budget at the next general meeting.

Non-budgeted expenditures

In the interim period between July 1st and the adoption of the budget, and at any other time, the executive may approve non-budgeted expenditures up to two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250). Such expenditures must be reported to the Membership in the treasurer's report at the meeting immediately after the expense was incurred.

Any expenses over two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250) that do not make up part of the approved COPAC budget require approval at a general meeting of before the expenses are incurred.

Treasurer's report

A treasurer's report will be presented at each general meeting.

Auditor

Members at a general meeting may appoint an auditor.

Section X – CONSTITUTION AND BYLAW AMENDMENTS

The members may, by a majority vote of not less than two thirds (2/3) of the members present, amend the Constitution and Bylaws. Written notice specifying the proposed amendments must be given to the members not less than 14 days before the meeting at which the vote will be taken.

Section XI – PROPERTY AND DOCUMENTS

1. All documents, records, minutes, correspondence, or other papers kept by a member, executive member, representative, or committee member in connection with the Council shall be deemed to be property of the Council and shall be turned over to the Council when the member, executive member, representative, or committee member ceases to perform the task to which the papers relate. For the purpose of this section, Council documents includes any information that is contained on electronic media, SD 23 email accounts and website accesses related to COPAC.

Section XII – DISSOLUTION

Upon winding up of dissolution of the Council, the assets which remain after payment of all costs, charges, and expenses which are properly incurred in the winding up shall be equally distributed to all COPAC Members at the time of dissolution.

In the event of winding up or dissolution, all records of the Council shall be placed under the jurisdiction of School District No.23 (Central Okanagan) in the person of the Secretary-Treasurer.