

Constitution & Bylaws
For Upper Sumas
Elementary School
Abbotsford, BC

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Constitution for Upper Sumas Elementary School PAC

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Section I – NAME

The name of this Council is Upper Sumas Elementary School Parent Advisory Committee. The Council will operate as a non-profit organization with no personal financial benefit accruing to members.

Section II – PURPOSES OF THE COUNCIL

The purposes of the Council will be:

1. To promote the education and welfare of students in the school
2. To encourage parent involvement in the school, and to support programs that promote parent involvement
3. To advise the school board, principal, and staff on any matter relating to the school, other than matters assigned to the school planning council
4. To participate in the work of the school planning council through the Council's elected representatives
5. To promote the interests of public education and, in particular, the interests of Upper Sumas Elementary School
6. To provide leadership in the school community
7. To contribute to a sense of community within the school and between the school, home, and neighborhood.

8. To provide parent education and professional development, and a forum for discussion of educational issues
9. To assist parents in obtaining information and communicating with the principal and staff about their child's progress or other concerns
10. To assist the principal and staff in ensuring the highest safety standards are maintained in the school and neighborhood
11. To organize and support activities for students and parents
12. To provide financial support for the goals of the Council, as determined by the membership

Section III -- INTERPRETATION OF TERMS

“Community organizations” means groups that demonstrate an interest in education and are not already included in the scope of the Council's constitution and bylaws

“District” means School District No. 34

“DPAC” or “district parent advisory council” means the parent advisory councils organized according to the School Act and operating as a district parent advisory council in School District No. 34

“PAC” or “parent advisory council” means the parents organized according to the School Act and operating as a parent advisory council in Upper Sumas Elementary School

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

- (a) the guardian of the person 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 School District No. 34

“School” means any public elementary or secondary educational institution as defined in the School Act operating within School District No. 34

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Section I – MEMBERSHIP

Voting Members:

1. All parents and guardians of students registered at Upper Sumas Elementary School are voting members of the Council.

Non-Voting Members

2. Administrators and staff (teaching and non-teaching) of Upper Sumas Elementary School may be invited to become non-voting members of the Council.

3. Members of the school community who are not parents of students registered in the public school system may be invited to become non-voting members of the Council.

4. At no time will the Council have more non-voting than voting members.

Compliance with bylaws

5. Every member will uphold the constitution and comply with these bylaws.

Section II –MEETINGS OF MEMBERS

General meetings

1. General meetings will be conducted with fairness to all members.

2. General meetings will be held not less than four times during the school year. One of those meetings will be the annual general meeting.

Conduct

3. The Council will refrain from partisan political action or other activities that do not serve the interests of the school or the public school system.

Notice of meetings

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

Section III – PROCEEDINGS AT GENERAL MEETINGS

Quorum

1. A quorum for general meetings will be six* voting members (*the minimum number of voting members that can reasonably be expected to attend).

2. If at any time during a general meeting a quorum ceases to be present, business requiring passing votes must be suspended until there is a quorum present. (See below)

3. In the event of a meeting where a quorum has not been met, text messages from absent voting members will be acceptable forms of votes for all matters except Executive Elections. These messages must be recorded in the meeting minutes.

Voting

4. 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).
5. In the case of a tie vote, the chair does not have a second or casting vote and the motion is defeated.
6. Except as provided elsewhere in these bylaws, voting is by a show of hands or, where requested by two voting members present, by secret ballot.
7. 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 (can be combined into one role with vice-president if needed), treasurer, DPAC representatives, member(s) at large, and such other members of the Council as the membership decides.

Eligibility

3. Any voting member of the Council is eligible to serve on the executive, except employees or elected officials of School District No. 34 or the Ministry of Education.

Perception of Bias – Councils need to appear to be representing the voice of parents and protecting the integrity of their membership. Members who are school board or Ministry of Education employees or elected officials may be seen as having a bias and not speaking or acting solely on behalf of parents.

Election of Executive

4. The executive will be elected at each annual general meeting.
5. Elections will be conducted by the PAC President.

Term of office

6. The executive will hold office for a term of one year beginning July 1st to June 30th.
7. Any person may hold the same executive position for as many years as they are nominated by voting members of the council.

Vacancy

8. 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.

Removal of executive

9. 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.
10. 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

11. No executive member may be remunerated for serving on the executive, but may be reimbursed for expenses reasonably and necessarily incurred, with prior approval, while engaged in the Council's affairs.

Section V – EXECUTIVE MEETINGS

Meetings

1. Executive meetings will be held at the call of the president. At least one meeting will be held before each general meeting.

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 chair does not have a second or casting vote and the motion is defeated.

Section VI -DISTRICT PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

District Parent Advisory Council representative

1. One representative to the Abbotsford DPAC may be elected annually from among the voting members who are not employees or elected officials of School District No. 34 or the Ministry of Education.

2. This role is not a requirement for the PAC Executive to operate.

Election of DPAC representatives

3. The election of representatives to the DPAC must be by secret ballot.

Term of office

4. DPAC representatives will hold office for a term of one year.

Vacancy

5. If a DPAC representative resigns or ceases to hold office for any other reason, the membership may elect an eligible member of the Council to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term. Such election must be by secret ballot.

Section VII – CONDUCT OF EXECUTIVE AND REPRESENTATIVES

Code of ethics

1. On election or appointment, every executive member and representative must sign and agree to abide by a code of ethics acceptable to the membership.
2. Every executive member and representative must act solely in the interests of the parent membership of the Council.

Privilege

3. 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

4. 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.
5. Such an executive member or representative must avoid using their position for personal gain.

Section VIII – DUTIES OF EXECUTIVE AND REPRESENTATIVES

A. The President will

- (a) speak on behalf of the Council
- (b) consult with Council members
- (c) preside at membership and executive meetings
- (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 and district activities
- (g) ensure that Council activities are aimed at achieving the purposes set out in the constitution
- (h) be a signing officer
- (i) submit an annual report

B. 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) be a signing officer
- (f) submit an annual report

C. 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 safe keeping of all records of the Council
- (g) may be a signing officer
- (h) submit an annual report

D. The Treasurer will

- (a) be one of the signing officers
- (b) ensure all funds of the Council are properly accounted for
- (c) disburse funds as authorized by the membership or executive
- (d) ensure that proper financial records and books of account are maintained
- (e) report on all receipts and disbursements at general and executive meetings
- (f) make financial records and books of account available to members upon request
- (g) have the financial records and books of account ready for inspection or audit annually
- (h) ensure that another signing officer has access to the financial records and books of account in the treasurer's absence
- (i) submit an annual financial statement at the annual general meeting

E. The DPAC Representative will

- (a) attend all meetings of Abbotsford DPAC and represent, speak, and vote on behalf of the Council
- (b) maintain current registration of the Council
- (c) report regularly to the membership and executive on all matters relating to the DPAC
- (d) seek and give input to the DPAC on behalf of the Council
- (e) receive, circulate, and post DPAC newsletters, brochures, and announcements
- (f) receive and act on all other communications from the DPAC
- (g) liaise with other parents and DPAC representatives
- (h) submit an annual report

F. 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
- (b) submit an annual report

Section IX – COMMITTEES

1. The membership and executive may appoint committees to further the Council's purposes and carry on its affairs.
2. The terms of reference of each committee will be specified by the membership or executive at the time the committee is established, or by the committee at its first meeting, as the membership or executive decide.
3. Committees will report to the membership and executive as required.

Section X – FINANCIAL MATTERS

Financial year

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

Power to raise money

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

Bank accounts

3. 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

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.

Non-budgeted expenditures

5. The executive will present all proposed expenditures beyond the current budget for approval at the next general meeting.

Treasurer's report

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

Auditor

7. Members at a general meeting may appoint an auditor.

Council money can only be spent if authorized by a motion passed at a general meeting. One of the most useful motions is approval of a budget. A budget gives the executive authority to make the transactions included in the budget without coming back to the membership for approval.

Section XI – CONSTITUTION AND BYLAW AMENDMENTS

1. The members may, by a majority of not less than 75% of the votes cast, amend the Council's constitution and bylaws.

2. Written notice specifying the proposed amendments must be given to the members not less than 14 days before the meeting.

3. Where the proposed amendments exceed one page, they need not be given to every member, but must be posted in a conspicuous place in the school or made accessible to all members.

4. The president may update the Council's Constitution and Bylaws as needed, with the amendments being reviewed and passed by a vote of not less than 75% by the Council.

Section XII – PROPERTY IN DOCUMENTS

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 president when the member, executive member, representative, or committee member ceases to perform the task to which the papers relate.

Section XIII – DISSOLUTION

1. In the event of winding up or dissolution of the Council, and after payment of all debts and costs of winding up or dissolution, the assets and remaining funds of the Council shall be distributed to another parent advisory council or councils in School District No. 34 having purposes similar to those of the Council, as the members of the Council may determine at the time of winding up or dissolution.
2. In the event of winding up or dissolution, all records of the Council shall be given to the principal of Upper Sumas Elementary School.

Adopted by Upper Sumas Elementary School PAC at Abbotsford, British Columbia, on _____.

Signatures of president and one other executive member

P.A.C. President

Print Name

P.A.C. Executive Member

Print Name