

**NEW WESTMINSTER SECONDARY SCHOOL  
PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**Constitution and Bylaws**

Amended May 15, 2003  
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**Constitution**

## Section I - NAME

The name of this Council is the New Westminster Secondary School Parent Advisory Council.  
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 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 the New Westminster Secondary 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 neighbourhood
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 neighbourhood
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
13. To advise and participate in the activities of the New Westminster District Parent Advisory Council and the BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils

## 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. 40

**"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. 40

**"PAC" or "parent advisory council"** means the parents organized according to the School Act and operating as a parent advisory council in New Westminster Secondary 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. 40

**"school"** means any public elementary, **middle** or secondary educational institution as defined in the School Act operating within School District No. 40

"SPC" means the school planning council created for New Westminster Secondary School according to the School Act

## **Bylaws**

### **Section IV - MEMBERSHIP**

#### **Voting members**

1. All parents and guardians of students registered in New Westminster Secondary School are voting members of the Council.

#### **Non-voting members**

2. Administrators and staff (teaching and non-teaching) of New Westminster Secondary 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.
6. Individuals will refrain from discussing, influencing and voting upon any matter before the PAC in which they or their families have a financial interest.
7. Individuals who may be in a situation of "perceived bias" by virtue of another role they hold in the education system avoid roles within the PAC which involve representation to external organizations and to the general public.

### **Section V - 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. Election of the executive will take place during an Annual General Meeting to be held in May of each year, with a supplementary election in September.
3. Extraordinary meetings may be called by the executive with a minimum seven (7) days notice

#### **Conduct**

4. The New Westminster Secondary School Parent Advisory Council is not a forum for the discussion of individual school personnel, students, parents, or any other members of the school community.
5. 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**

6. Members will be given reasonable notice of general meetings. *(notice of meetings can be sent in various ways - by flyer, newsletter, e-mail, or website. A calendar of meetings for the year shall satisfy the requirement for reasonable notice)*

### **Section VI - PROCEEDINGS AT GENERAL MEETINGS**

#### **Quorum**

1. A quorum for general meetings will be seven (7) voting members.
2. If at any time during a general 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. 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. In the case of a tie vote, the chair does not have a second or casting vote and the motion is defeated.
5. Members must vote in person on all matters. Voting by proxy will not be permitted.
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.
8. If procedural problems arise, 'Robert's Rules of Order' will be used to resolve the situation unless they are in conflict with this Constitution.

## **Section VII - EXECUTIVE**

### **Role of executive**

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

### **Executive defined**

2. The executive will include the chair, vice chair, secretary, treasurer, immediate past chair (if eligible), any number of members-at-large, representative to the District Parent Advisory Council, **representatives to the School Planning Council** 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. 40 or the Ministry of Education.

### **Election of executive**

4. The executive will be elected at each annual general meeting in May, with a supplementary election in September.
5. Elections will be conducted by the chair of the Nominations Committee.

### **Term of office**

6. The executive will hold office for a term of one year beginning August 1 and ending July 31.
7. No person may hold the same executive position for more than four years ***except by unanimous consent of the members electing that person.***
8. No person may hold more than one executive position ***except by unanimous consent of the members electing that person.***

### **Vacancy**

9. 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**

10. 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.
11. 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**

12. 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 VIII - EXECUTIVE MEETINGS**

### **Meetings**

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

### **Quorum**

2. A quorum for executive meeting 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 second or casting vote and the motion is defeated.

## **Section IX - SCHOOL PLANNING COUNCIL, DISTRICT PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL, AND EXTERNAL COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES**

**School Planning Council representatives**

1. Three representatives to the school planning council (SPC) must be elected annually from among the voting members who are not employees or elected officials of any school board or the Ministry of Education. One of these representatives must be an elected member of the Council executive.

**District Parent Advisory Council representative**

2. One representative to the New Westminster DPAC may be elected annually from among the voting members who are not employees or elected officials of School District No. 40 or the Ministry of Education.

**Election of SPC and DPAC representatives**

3. The election of representatives to the SPC and DPAC must be by secret ballot as stipulated in the School Act.

**Term of office**

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

**Vacancy**

5. If an SPC or 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.

**External committees**

6. The membership or executive may elect or appoint a member who is not an employee or elected official of School District No. 40 or the Ministry of Education to represent the Council on an external committee or to an external organization.
7. The representative will report to the membership or executive as required.

## **Section X - CONDUCT OF EXECUTIVE AND REPRESENTATIVES**

**Code of ethics**

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

**Representing the Council**

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 his or her position on the Council for personal gain.

## **Section XI - DUTIES OF EXECUTIVE AND REPRESENTATIVES**

### **A. The Chair 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 Chair will**

- (a) support the chair
- (b) assume the duties of the chair in the chair's absence or upon request
- (c) assist the chair in the performance of his or her duties
- (d) accept extra duties as required
- (e) be a signing officer

### **C. The Secretary will**

- (a) ensure that members are notified of meetings
- (b) record and file minutes of meetings
- (c) keep an accurate copy of the constitution and bylaws and make copies available to members upon request, and if and when changes are made they shall be done so in red and the copy amended shall be dated and initialled and a copy submitted to the school principal for safekeeping
- (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
- (h) maintain current registration of the Council

### **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) with the assistance of the executive, draft an annual budget
- (i) ensure that another signing officer has access to the financial records and books of account in the treasurer's absence
- (j) submit an annual financial statement at the annual general meeting

### **E. The DPAC Representative will**

- (a) attend all meetings of New Westminster District Parent Advisory Council and represent, speak, and vote on behalf of the Council
- (b) report regularly to the membership and executive on all matters relating to the DPAC
- (c) seek and give input to the DPAC on behalf of the Council
- (d) receive, circulate, and post DPAC newsletters, brochures, and announcements
- (e) receive and act on all other communications from the DPAC
- (f) liaise with other parents and DPAC representatives

**F. Members-at-Large (Directors) 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

**G. The immediate Past Chair will**

- (a) advise and support the membership and executive
- (b) provide information about resources, contacts, and other matters

**H. The School Planning Council (SPC) representatives will**

- (a) attend all meetings of the school planning council (SPC)
- (b) represent, speak, and vote on behalf of the Council at SPC meetings
- (c) request and take direction from the membership and executive
- (d) be strong advocates for meaningful parent involvement in the school and school planning
- (e) provide a report to all general and executive meetings
- (f) attend general and executive meetings as directed by the membership or executive

**Section XII - 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.
- 4. A Nominating Committee may be appointed annually before the annual general meeting.

**Section XIII - FINANCIAL MATTERS**

**Financial year**

- 1. The financial year of the Council will be August 1 - July 31.

**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 chartered bank or financial institution registered under the Bank Act or the Credit Union Incorporation 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.

**Annual budget**

- 5. The executive will prepare a budget and present it to the membership for approval before the current budget expires.

**Non-budgeted expenditures**

- 6. All non-budgeted expenditures above and beyond \$250.00 will be first presented to and voted on by the executive, and then approved by a majority at a general meeting.

**Treasurer's report**

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

**Auditor**

- 8. Members at a general meeting may appoint an auditor

## **Section XIV - 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, and a copy of the amended constitution and bylaws shall be submitted to the Board of School Trustees of School District No. 40.
2. Written notice specifying the proposed amendments must be made available 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.

## **Section XV - 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 chair when the member, executive member, representative, or committee member ceases to perform the task to which the papers relate.

## **Section XVI - DISSOLUTION**

1. In the event of winding up or dissolution of the Council, the assets which remain after payment of all cost, charges and expenses which are properly incurred in the winding up shall be distributed to a such charitable organization or organizations having a similar purpose. This provision shall be unalterable.
2. In the event that the New Westminster Secondary School Parent Advisory Council, which received charitable gaming funds from licensed charitable gaming and/or direct charitable access, at any time dissolve or cease to exist, any and all gaming monies or assets purchased with gaming funds held at the date of dissolution or cessation of existence shall be distributed by the New Westminster Secondary School Parent Advisory Council to:
  - \* A registered charity or registered charities in British Columbia as defined in the Income Tax Act (Canada), as may be determined by the members of the Council at the time of winding up or dissolution
  - OR
  - \* Such charitable organization or organizations in British Columbia having a similar charitable purpose

The foregoing resolution shall not be altered or amended and shall continue to be binding on the New Westminster Secondary School Parent Advisory Council.

3. In the event of winding up or dissolution, all records of the Council shall be placed under the jurisdiction of School District No. 40 in the person of the principal of the school