

From: BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (www.bccpac.bc.ca)

What is a PAC

The School Act gives parents the right, through PACs, to assume an advisory role in every school. PAC is the officially recognized collective voice of parents of their school. A PAC, through its elected officers, may advise the school board, the principal and staff of the school respecting any matter relating to the school.

PACs are forums within each school community to discuss matters affecting your school and the education of your children. Parents' voices are a tremendous value to their school. They offer a wealth of ideas and support in the challenges that face all public schools. PACs strive to represent the diversity within their communities and contribute to the benefit of all students by:

- providing opportunities to educate and inform parents about the school;
- involving parents in volunteer activities; and
- openly discussing parents' concerns and aspirations for their schools.

Who Can Become a Member of PAC?

All parents and guardians of students registered in the school are able to participate as a member of the PAC.

What Governs a PAC?

As an autonomous body, the PAC must abide by its Constitution and Bylaws and the School Act.

How Does a PAC Work?

Through their elected executives from parents in the school, PACs communicate with their parent community gathering and discussing issues of importance regarding their school in order to adequately advise those that influence their school. In addition to PAC meetings communication may also be done through, newsletters, telephone, email, and websites so that all parents have the opportunity for input. PACs, with strong participation from parents, have an important influence on life at the school and the feelings the community has toward the school and education. There is strong evidence that increased parent involvement in the school results in increased student achievement, accomplishment, satisfaction, and bonding all of which result in decreased dropout rates and better citizen.

Whom does the PAC Advise?

- (a) advise the board and the principal and staff of the school or the Provincial school respecting any matter relating to the school or the Provincial school, other than matters assigned to the school planning council, and
- (b) at the request of the SPC, assist the SPC in carrying out its functions under this Act.
- (c) advise their District Parents' Advisory Council (DPAC), British Columbia Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC), the Ministry of Education and any other organization, as they deem necessary.

The Purpose of a PAC can be:

- to provide parents with the opportunity to gain greater understanding of the school;
- to assist the SPC in carrying out its function;

- to give input into school- based decisions;
- to participate in goal setting;
- to unify efforts of the school community towards the goal of quality education;
- to monitor and review school rules and conduct, the safety programs, the educational programs; learning materials, equipment and the school building;
- to educate parents;
- to advocate equal educational opportunities for all students;
- to liaise with other education partners and organizations; and
- to provide methods to resolve problems between the school and community by directing parents and students to the Advocacy project.

The PAC is NOT:

A forum to discuss individual students/staff problems or conflicts.

Your Involvement

Parents are encouraged and invited to bring forth issues, suggestions, or concerns relating to the meeting and enhancement of the needs of your school community.

These issues can be brought forth by:

- contacting a PAC executive member
- sending a letter to the school addressed to a member of the PAC executive
- attending a PAC meeting