



CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

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CONSTITUTION

I. NAME

The name of the organization shall be the CONFEDERATION OF PARENTS' ADVISORY COUNCILS OF SAANICH (known within School District No. 63 (Saanich) as COPACS).

II. NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

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

III. NO DISCRIMINATION

All business and activities within the scope of the COPACS mandate shall not be discriminatory with respect to race, religion, gender, politics, sexual orientation, and physical or mental ability.

IV. PURPOSE

Mission Statement

The goal of the Confederation of Parents' Advisory Councils of Saanich (COPACS) is to promote excellence in education through meaningful parent participation at the school and school district levels.

COPACS endeavours to:

- Foster communication and cooperation between parents, school district staff and elected trustees
- Exercise leadership in developing and expressing collective parental views, as identified through Parent Advisory Councils
- Inform and educate parents/guardians about key issues affecting students
- Liaise with other parental organizations such as the BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils, and the Canadian Home and School Federation

Adopted, November 2003

V. DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. "Assembly" means all delegates, voting and non-voting, including Executive Officers
2. "Confederation" comprises all the Parent Advisory Councils in School District No. 63 (Saanich). The unit of membership shall be the Parent Advisory Council, not the individual.
3. "Delegate" means an individual elected by the members of the separate Parent Advisory Councils to represent its interests.
4. "COPACS Committees" means internal committees established by the Confederation of Parents' Advisory Councils of Saanich

5. "District Committees" means committees established from time to time by School District No. 63 (Saanich)
6. "Employee" means any person employed in any capacity in any school district or the Ministry of Education
7. "Executive" means the Elected Officers of the Confederation and the Past President
8. "Member" means the individual Parent Advisory Councils of the public schools in School District No. 63 (Saanich).
9. "Member at Large" of COPACS means any parent/guardian who has a child registered in School District No. 63 (Saanich)
10. "PAC" means Parent Advisory Council at all public schools within School District No. 63 (Saanich)
11. "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 a parent/parents/guardian who has a child registered in School District No. 63 (Saanich).
12. "Proxy" means an individual who carries written voting authorization from a delegate
13. "Quorum" means one-third of voting delegates. Where calculation results in a fraction, the result shall be rounded off to the next highest whole number.
14. "School" means any public elementary or secondary educational institution as defined in the School Act operating within School District No. 63 (Saanich.)
15. "District Standing Committees" means committees established by and reporting directly to the Board of Trustees of School District No. 63 (Saanich)
16. "Simple Majority" means over fifty percent (50%) of attending voting delegates

BY LAWS

VI. MEMBERSHIP

1. Voting membership of COPACS consists of delegates appointed by individual PACs.
2. Members at large may attend any COPACS meeting but have non-voting status.
3. Members at large may speak at any meeting of the assembly by prior arrangement with the Executive.

4. Members at large who have submitted a completed COPACS District Committee Volunteer Form and have endorsement from their respective PAC are eligible to represent parents on district committees.
5. Associate membership is available to interested individuals and groups through application to the Executive and is of non-voting status.
6. Election of the delegates to COPACS is the responsibility of the school PACs.
7. No voting delegate, committee member, or member of the Executive of COPACS shall retain their position if elected as School Trustee.

VII. MEETINGS

1. There shall normally be an Annual General Meeting in April of each year. The business of the annual meeting shall include the following:
 - a) adopting the minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting
 - b) presentation of the reports of the Executive and committee chairs
 - c) election of officers
 - d) establishment of membership donations
 - e) approval of financial statements and proposed budget
2. General meetings shall normally be held at least once a month during the school year to conduct current business. Additional general meetings shall be held at the discretion of the Executive, or upon the receipt of a petition representing fifty percent (50%) of the voting delegates.
3. Notice of meetings of the Assembly shall be at the direction of the Executive.
4. Between meetings, the Executive shall carry on the business of the Confederation with the assistance of committees established by the Executive and the Executive shall be responsible to, and report to, each meeting of the Assembly.
5. The rules contained in the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern all matters of procedure not covered in these bylaws.

VIII. VOTING

1. Each Parent Advisory Council within COPACS is entitled to one vote carried by its delegate or alternate (or proxy vote).
2. Proxy voting shall be permitted at general meetings.
3. The proxy vote may be received from each member PAC provided the proxy vote is in writing and signed by a minimum of two members of its executive, and the proxy vote is cast by a duly-designated delegate or member at large.

4. A quorum shall consist of one-third (1/3) of the voting delegates.
5. Unless otherwise provided, questions arising at any meeting shall be decided upon by a simple majority vote.
6. Voting shall be done by the show of hands with the exception of the election of officers which shall be done by secret ballot.

IX. EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

1. The affairs of COPACS shall be managed by a ~~board~~ committee of elected Executive Officers and the immediate Past President. The Executive Officers will be as follows:
 - a) President
 - b) 1st Vice President
 - c) 2nd Vice President
 - d) Treasurer
 - e) Recording Secretary
 - f) District Associate
 - g) Past President
 - h) COPACS representatives on School District No. 63 (Saanich) Board Standing Committees
2. Delegates and members at large are eligible for nomination to the COPACS Executive by their respective PACs.
3. The terms of office of all Executive Officers shall commence in April of each year.
4. Any person may serve on the Executive Committee for as many years as he/she is elected to a position, but no person may hold any one position for more than three consecutive years.
5. No person may hold more than one elected Executive position at any one time.
6. The Past President shall hold that office for one year.
7. No member of the Executive shall be an employee or an elected official of any school district or an employee of the Ministry of Education.
8. In the event of a vacancy in the Executive in mid-term, a Nominating Committee shall be struck and an election shall be held.
9. At meetings of the Executive Committee, a quorum shall be a majority of the persons who have been elected in any one year.

X. NOMINATING COMMITTEE AND ELECTIONS

1. Elections shall be conducted by the Nominating Committee Chairperson.
2. The Nominating Committee shall be chaired by a member who is not standing for election whenever possible and consist of at least two members.
3. The Committee shall become active at the February general meeting.
4. The Committee shall present nominees for the election at the Annual General Meeting and conduct the election.
5. The election shall be by secret ballot.
6. Candidates may stipulate that scrutineer(s) be appointed by the Nominations Committee Chairperson.

XI. DUTIES OF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

1. All Executive Officers shall:
 - a) keep up to date on the affairs of COPACS
 - b) carry out delegated responsibilities as described
 - c) keep other members of the Executive and the Assembly informed about their activities on behalf of COPACS
2. **President**
 - a) shall preside at all meetings of the Assembly and the Executive Board
 - b) shall be one of the financial signing officers
 - c) shall be an ex-officio member to all committees except the Nominating Committee
 - d) shall be the spokesperson for COPACS
 - e) shall represent COPACS at School Board meetings and report back to the Assembly
 - f) shall ensure that representatives are appointed to COPACS and district committees, as required
 - g) shall draft correspondence on behalf of the Assembly, or delegate that task to another member of the Executive
 - h) shall submit an annual report at the Annual General Meeting
 - i) shall ensure that all relevant information regarding this position is passed on to the succeeding president
3. **1st Vice President**
 - a) shall act in the President's position in his/her absence
 - b) shall assist the President in the performance of his/her duties
 - d) shall chair Constitution and Bylaws committee
 - c) shall submit an annual report at the Annual General Meeting
 - d) shall ensure all relevant information regarding this position is passed on to succeeding 1st Vice President

4. **2nd Vice President**
 - a) shall assist the President in the performance of his/her duties
 - b) shall submit an annual report at the Annual General Meeting
 - c) shall ensure all relevant information regarding this position is passed on to succeeding 2nd Vice President
5. **Treasurer**
 - a) shall maintain an accurate record of all expenditures of the Assembly
 - b) shall receive all monies for the Assembly
 - c) shall disburse funds authorized by the Executive
 - d) shall give a report of all receipts and expenditures at all general meetings
 - e) shall be one of the financial signing officers
 - f) shall deposit all monies collected on behalf of COPACS in an account at a recognized financial institution approved by the Executive
 - g) shall have the books ready for an inspection/audit annually
 - h) shall present an annual financial statement at the Annual General Meeting of the Assembly
 - i) shall ensure that another financial signing officer has access to the books in the event of his/her absence
 - j) shall submit an annual report at the Annual General Meeting
 - k) shall ensure all relevant information regarding this position is passed on to succeeding Treasurer
6. **Recording Secretary**
 - a) shall keep accurate and official minutes of the Assembly
 - b) shall distribute minutes to COPACS members as soon as possible after the last meeting
 - c) shall keep an accurate copy of the Constitution and Bylaws and ~~d~~) shall make available on request, to any member of the Assembly, a copy of the Constitution and Bylaws
 - d) shall keep an accurate record of COPACS delegates
 - e) shall submit an annual report at the Annual General Meeting
 - f) shall ensure all relevant information regarding this position is passed on to succeeding Recording Secretary
7. **District Associate**
 - a) shall act as liaison between British Columbia Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC) and PACs in School District No. 63 (Saanich)
 - b) shall distribute information from BCCPAC and gather information on local issues and forward to BCCPAC.
 - c) shall help identify parents to serve on provincial committees
 - d) shall attend provincial training sessions and conferences, or identify a parent who could attend these meetings (all expenses would be covered)
 - e) shall help coordinate BCCPAC workshops at a local level
 - f) shall share expertise and train others
 - g) shall submit an annual report at the Annual General Meeting

h) shall ensure all relevant information regarding this position is passed on to succeeding District Associate

8. Past President

- a) shall ensure smooth transition between presidents
- b) shall assist and advise the Executive Officers in all matters concerning the Assembly

9. COPACS Representatives on District Standing Committees

- a) shall attend meetings of their respective standing committees
- b) shall represent the views of Saanich parents to the best of their ability
- c) shall consult with the Executive
- d) shall submit a report of standing committee activities, including their input on behalf of parent, to the monthly COPACS meeting
- e) shall submit an annual report at the Annual General Meeting
- f) shall ensure all relevant information regarding is passed on to succeeding representatives

XII. COPACS COMMITTEES

1. COPACS Committees shall be established as the need arises.
2. The terms of reference and privileges of each committee shall be specified at the time it is established.
3. A COPACS Committee shall report promptly to the Executive.
4. COPACS Committee chairpersons shall be elected by the committee members from among the committee members.

XIII. DISTRICT COMMITTEES

1. COPACS will attempt wherever possible to have representation on School District Committees.
2. Members at large who have submitted a completed volunteer form and who conform with Bylaw XXI (1) may be appointed by the Executive to a District No. 63 (Saanich) Committee for a one-year term and may be reappointed annually to a maximum of three consecutive terms.
3. The responsibilities of a committee member are:
 - a) to report to the monthly COPACS meeting or send in a written report to be attached to the agenda.
 - b) to attend committee meetings regularly or find an alternate
 - c) to represent the views of all Saanich parents to the best of his/her ability
 - d) to consult with the COPACS Executive wherever possible when questions or problems arise
 - e) to inform the COPACS President and committee chair in writing when resigning.

XIV. CODE OF CONDUCT

Any person who accepts a position as a COPACS Executive Officer or represents the COPACS through a committee must abide by the following Code of Conduct and endeavour to:

1. Uphold COPACS' Constitution and Bylaws
2. Make a reasonable effort to attend all executive, committee and general meetings
3. Perform duties with honesty and integrity
4. Inform COPACS of any matters of conflict of interest and shall refrain from discussing, influencing and voting upon any matter in which they or their families could benefit monetarily from the decision made
5. Ensure that the well-being of students is the primary focus of all decisions
6. Respect the rights of all individuals
7. Take direction from the members and ensure that they are represented
8. Encourage and support parents/guardians and students with individual concerns to act on their own behalf, and provide information on the process for taking concerns forward
9. Ensure that issues are resolved through due process
10. Respect all confidential information
11. Support public education

XV. REMOVAL OF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS OR COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

1. Removal of an Executive Officer or Committee Representative can occur for cause. The reasons that may lead to removal of an officer can include violations of these Bylaws, working against the values and goals stated in these Bylaws and this Constitution, and absenteeism.
2. Written notice specifying the intention to make a motion to remove the Executive Officer or Committee Representative must be given to all members not less than 30 days prior to the meeting.
3. If they desire, the Executive Officer or Committee Representative may appear at that meeting and explain their actions to the Assembly prior to the vote.
4. The vote should be by secret ballot, except by general consent. A majority vote of not less than 75% of the members present is required. Abstentions are counted as "No" and the person in question does not have a vote, in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

XVI. FINANCIAL MATTERS

1. The financial year shall be April 1 to March 31.
2. COPACS may raise and spend money to further its purposes in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws.
3. All funds must be kept on deposit in the name of COPACS in a bank or financial institution registered under the Bank Act.
4. The Executive will name at least three signing officers for banking and legal documents, one of whom is the Treasurer. The signatures of at least two signing officers will be required on all of these documents.
5. The Executive will prepare a budget and present it to the membership for approval at the Annual General Meeting.
6. Members may appoint an auditor at a general meeting.
7. No Executive Officer, Committee Member, Delegate or Member at large may be remunerated for serving on the Executive or on committees. However, they may be reimbursed for expenses reasonably and necessarily incurred while engaged in COPACS business with prior approval of the Executive Committee.
8. Minor expenses of \$300.00 or less can be made with the majority approval of the Executive. Expenses of more than \$300.00 require the approval of a resolution of the delegates at a meeting of the Assembly.

XVII. CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHANGES

1. Amendments to the Constitution and/or Bylaws shall require written notice to the members at least 30 days prior to the meeting at which the vote will be taken.
2. All motions to amend require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the delegates present.
3. A constitution and Bylaws Committee chaired by the 1st Vice President and consisting of a minimum of three members including the Vice President shall be established every two years to review the Constitution and Bylaws.

XVIII. CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND PERCEPTION OF BIAS

1. All delegates, Executive officers and committee representatives will be responsible for declaring any conflict of interest on issues which provide or appear to provide a direct benefit to that person or person's family or any business in which the person or family member is a principle or partner.

2. Upon declaring a “conflict of interest” the delegate, executive officer, or committee representative waives his/her right to vote on that issue and to participate in the discussion immediately prior to the vote.
3. For the voice of COPACS to clearly be, and be perceived to be that of parents in School District No. 63 (Saanich), a delegate or member at large who may be in a situation of “perceived bias” by virtue of another role they hold in the education system shall not be eligible to perform functions within COPACS which involve representation on COPACS or district committees or to the general public.
4. Members who have concerns regarding conflict of interest or perceived bias shall refer those concerns to the Executive who shall strike a committee composed of the President and two other COPACS delegates to review their concerns.
5. COPACS shall not endorse any candidate for any School Board election.

XIX. PROPERTY AND DOCUMENTS

All property, documents, records, minutes, correspondence, or other papers, electronic or digital medium kept by a member, Executive Officer, delegate, member at large or committee member in connection to COPACS shall be deemed to be property of COPACS and shall be turned over to the President when that person ceases to perform the task to which the documentation relates.

XX. DISSOLUTION

1. COPACS may be dissolved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote at any general meeting of the Assembly.
2. The Notice of Dissolution of COPACS to the membership shall be made at least 30 days prior to a general meeting.
3. In the event the Confederation ceases operation, all assets of the Confederation after the discharge of all debts and obligations shall be held in trust by the Secretary-Treasurer of School District No. 63 (Saanich) until such time as a new Confederation is formed.

Revised and Adopted, March 3, 2005

Ron Broda, President

*Dana Walt, Vice President
Chair, Constitution Review Committee*