

(Adopted: Feb. 11, 2017)

Highlands Elementary PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

Constitution and By-Laws

Highlands Elementary Parent Advisory Council Constitution

SECTION I: NAME

The name of the Association shall be Highlands Elementary Parent Advisory Council (PAC) belonging to School District #5, Southeast Kootenay.

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

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

SECTION II: PURPOSE OF THE COUNCIL

The purpose of the Council is to support, encourage and improve the quality of education and the well-being of the students of Highlands Elementary School by:

1. Communicating with parents, encouraging their involvement in the school, and by supporting programs that promote parent involvement.
2. Contributing to a sense of community within the school and between the school, home, and neighbourhood.
3. Assisting parents in obtaining information and communicating with the principal and staff about their child's progress or other concerns.
4. Organizing and supporting activities for students and parents.
5. Providing a forum for discussion of educational issues.
6. Providing financial support for the goals of the Council, as determined by the membership.
7. To promote the interests of public education and, in particular, the interests of Highlands Elementary School.
8. To provide leadership in the school community.
9. Advising the school board, principal, and staff on any matters relating to the school.
10. To advise and participate in the activities of SD5 District Parent Advisory Council and through membership, the BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Council.

SECTION III: DISSOLUTION

1. In the event of dissolution of the Council, and following payment of all outstanding debts, costs of dissolution and disbursement of assets, the remaining funds will be decided upon by the members of the Council at the final General Meeting.

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2. In the event of dissolution of the Council all records of the organization shall be placed under the jurisdiction of the Secretary - Treasurer of School District #5.

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**Highlands Elementary
Parent Advisory Council
By-Laws**

SECTION I: MEMBERSHIP

1. All parents and guardians of students registered at Highlands Elementary School are voting members of the Council.
2. Administration and staff (teaching and non-teaching) of Highlands Elementary School may be non-voting members of the Council.
3. Members of the school community who are not parents/guardians of students currently registered at Highlands Elementary School may be invited to be non-voting members of the group.
4. At no time shall the council have more non-voting than voting members.
5. Every member will uphold the constitution and comply with these by-laws.

SECTION II: MEETINGS

1. There shall be an Annual General Meeting for the purpose of election of officers held in June of each year and general meetings shall be held once a month during the school year to conduct business, unless otherwise, as determined by the membership.
2. Executive meetings and additional general meetings shall be held at the discretion of The Executive, or upon the receipt of a petition representing 50% of the voting delegates.
3. Executive meetings may be held anytime or place as deemed necessary. The purpose of executive meetings is to carry on business between general meetings with minutes being presented at the next general meeting.
4. Members will be given reasonable notice of all meetings.
5. Meetings will be conducted efficiently and with fairness to all members present.
6. A Council meeting shall not be a forum for the discussion of individual school personnel, students, parents, or other individual members of the school community.
7. If procedural problems arise, Robert's Rules of Order will be used to resolve the situation, unless they are in conflict with the guidelines in this constitution and by-laws.

A. QUORUM

- a. Three voting members, of which one must be an elected official, present at any duly called general meeting shall constitute a quorum.

- b. 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.

B. VOTING

- a. Unless otherwise provided, questions arising at any meeting shall be decided upon by a simple majority vote.
- b. In the case of a tie vote, the motion will be lost.
- c. Members must vote personally on all matters; voting by proxy and/or email shall not be permitted.
- d. Voting shall be done by the show of hands with the exception of the election of officers, which shall be done by secret ballot.
- e. A vote by secret ballot will also be used at the request of two voting members present at a meeting.
- f. Ballots will be destroyed at the end of the vote, once approved.

SECTION III: ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

The affairs of the council shall be managed by a board of elected officers. The Executive officers shall be elected from the voting members at the Annual General Meeting and should include:

- Chairperson
 - Vice Chairperson
 - Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC) Representative
1. Additional officers may be added as determined by the needs of the council.
 2. Call for nominations shall be made at the two meetings prior to the Annual General Meeting. (June).
 3. In the event of a vacancy of the executive during the year, the executive may appoint a new officer from the voting members who shall hold office until the next election.

SECTION IV: TERM OF OFFICE

1. The term of office shall commence immediately following election at the AGM and shall be for one year.
2. No person may hold any one position for more than three consecutive years, unless they receive a 75% vote from the Council members.
3. No person may hold more than one elected executive position at any one time

SECTION V: DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS

A. The Chairperson will:

- a. convene and preside at all membership, special, and executive meetings
- b. ensure that an agenda is prepared and presented
- c. know the constitution, bylaws and meeting rules
- d. appoint committees where authorized to do so by the executive or membership
- e. consult with council members regularly
- f. ensure that the council is represented in school and/or district activities
- g. ensure that the council activities are aimed at achieving the objectives and purposes of the organization
- h. take such actions or ensure that such actions are taken by others to achieve the objectives and purpose of the organization
- i. be the official spokesperson for the organization
- j. be a signing officer
- k. submit an annual report
- l. ensure all records are submitted to the Councils upon vacating their Executive position

B. The Vice-Chairperson will:

- a. assume the responsibilities of the chairperson in his/her absence
- b. accept extra duties as required
- c. assist the Chairperson in the performance of his/her duties
- d. ensure all records are submitted to the Councils upon vacating their Executive position
- e. or may be a signing officer

C. The Secretary will:

- a. ensure that members are notified of meetings
- b. record the minutes of general, special and executive meetings

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- c. keep an accurate and up-to-date copy of the Constitution and Bylaws and make copies available for members upon request
- d. distribute minutes to Council members
- e. use the Bcc option when notifying or contacting members via e-mail
- f. issue and receive correspondence on behalf of the organization
- g. ensure safekeeping of all records of the Council
- h. ensure all records are submitted to the Councils upon vacating their Executive position
- i. or may be a signing officer

D. The Treasurer will:

- a. ensure the safety and security of all funds and financial records of the Council at all times
- b. receive all funds for the council
- c. disburse funds authorized by the executive or members
- d. maintain an accurate record of all expenditures of the council
- e. give a written report of all receipts and expenditures at all general meetings
- f. deposit all funds collected on behalf of the council in an account at a recognized financial institution approved by the Council
- g. make books available for viewing by members upon request
- h. have the financial records and books of accounts ready for inspection or audit annually
- i. with the assistance of the executive, draft a tentative plan of expenditures as per Section VIII - 3
- j. ensure that another signing officer has access to the books in the event of his/her absence
- k. submit an annual financial statement at the annual general meeting
- l. ensure all records are submitted to the Councils upon vacating their Executive position

E. The District Parents Advisory Council (DPAC) Representative will:

- a. Attend all SD5 Southeast Kootenay DPAC meetings 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

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- f. liaise with other parents and DPAC representatives
- g. submit an annual report
- h. or may be a signing authority

SECTION VI: CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS

A parent who accepts a position as a Highlands Elementary School PAC Executive Member will:

- Uphold the constitution and bylaws, policies and procedures of the electing Body
- Perform her/his duties with honesty and integrity
- Work to ensure that the well-being of students is the primary focus of all decisions
- Respect the rights of all individuals
- Take direction from the members, ensuring representation processes are in place
- Encourage and support parents and students with individual concerns to act on their own behalf and provide information on the process for taking forward concerns
- Work to ensure those issues are resolved through due process
- Strive to be informed and only pass on information that is reliable
- Respect all confidential information
- Support public education
- When approached by a parent with a concern relating to an individual, be in a privileged position and must treat such discussion with discretion, protecting the confidentiality of the people involved

A. CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

If a parent or a member of the parent's immediate family could benefit financially from a decision of the Highlands Elementary School PAC or SD5 DPAC that the parent can influence or vote on, the parent has a conflict of interest. This is true whether the parent is an executive member, committee member, or council member.

- If a member is not sure if they are in conflict of interest they are to seek clarification from the Executive members and/or council
- If a member has a financial interest not common to other members of the council, they should refrain from voting

B. PERCEIVED BIAS:

Perceived bias may exist if a parent has another role in the education system that might be seen to influence the parent's conduct or views.

For example, if a parent is an employee or elected official of the school district or Ministry of Education (or is married to one), others may question whether the parent is acting solely in the interests of the council.

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- If a member is not sure if there is a perceived bias they are to seek clarification from the Executive members and/or council
- If a parent has a perceived bias, they should refrain from voting

SECTION VII: COMMITTEES

- a. Standing and ad hoc committees may be formed when necessary
- b. Committees are responsible to the executive and members
- c. The Executive may appoint members to committees annually.

SECTION VIII: FINANCES

1. The financial year of the Council will be September 1st to August 31st of any given year.
2. The Council may raise and spend money to further its purposes
3. A tentative plan of expenditures, based on usual yearly expenses will be drawn up by the executive and presented for approval to the Council at the AGM.
4. All funds should be on deposit in a bank or financial establishment registered under the Bank Act.
5. The executive shall name three signing officers for banking and legal documents. Any two of these signatures will be required for these documents.
6. The need for audits will be agreed upon by the members at any general meeting whereupon an independent auditor will be appointed as needed.

SECTION IX: CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAW AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the constitution and by-laws of the Highlands Elementary School Parent Advisory Council may be made at any general meeting at which business is conducted, providing:

1. Written notice of the meeting, specifying the proposed amendments, has been given to all members not less than thirty days before the meeting.
2. That when 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 and/or made accessible to all members.
3. A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of those voting members present at the meeting will be required to amend the Constitution and By-laws
4. A copy of the approved constitution or by-law amendment is dated, signed, and forwarded to the School Board Office for safekeeping only

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SECTION X: REMOVAL OF AN EXECUTIVE MEMBER

1. 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 a successor to complete the term.
2. Written notice specifying the intention to make a motion to remove the executive member shall be given to the members not less than 14 days before the meeting
3. Voting shall be done by secret ballot
4. A vote shall be taken to destroy any ballots

SECTION XI: PROPERTY IN DOCUMENTS

All documents, record, minutes, correspondence or other papers kept by a member, executive member, or committee member in connection with the organization shall be deemed to be property of the organization, and shall be turned over to the Chairperson when the member, executive member, or committee member ceases to perform the task to which the papers relate.

Adopted by Highlands Elementary School Parent Advisory Council at Cranbrook, British Columbia,

on Feb. 11, 2017

Chairperson: _____

Secretary: _____

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