

Alfred B. Dixon Elementary School  
Parent Advisory Council  
Constitutions & Bylaws

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# Constitution

## Section I – NAME

The name of this Council is the **Alfred B. Dixon Elementary School Parent Advisory Council**, as per the School Act, Bill 67, Division 2, Section 8(1).

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.
4. To promote the interests of public education and, in particular, the interests of Alfred B. Dixon Elementary School.
5. To provide leadership in the school community.
6. To contribute to a sense of community within the school and between the school, home, and neighbourhood.
7. To provide parent education and professional development, and a forum for discussion of educational issues.
8. To assist parents in obtaining information and communicating with the principal and staff.
9. To assist the principal and staff in ensuring the highest safety standards are maintained in the school and neighbourhood.
10. To organize and support activities for students and parents.
11. To provide financial support for the goals of the Council, as determined by the membership.
12. To advise and participate in the activities of the Richmond District Parents Association and the BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils.

## Section III – INTERPRETATION OF TERMS

“AGM” means annual general meeting of the Members

“committee” means any committee formed pursuant to Section 9 of the Bylaws

“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. 38

“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. 38

“PAC” or “parent advisory council” means the parents organized according to the School Act and operating as a parent advisory council in Alfred B. Dixon Elementary School

“Officer” means any officer of the Executive, as described in Section IV of the Bylaws

“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 the parent or guardian of a child or children enrolled in School District No. 38 and attending Alfred B. Dixon Elementary School.

“school” means any public elementary or secondary educational institution as defined in the School Act operating within School District No. 38

“SGM” means any special general meeting of the Members

# By-Laws

## Section I – MEMBERSHIP

### **Voting members**

1. All parents and guardians of students registered in Alfred B. Dixon Elementary School are voting members of the Council.

### **Non-voting members**

2. Administrators and staff (teaching and non-teaching) of Alfred B. Dixon 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.
6. Every member will uphold the Richmond School District Code of Conduct.

## 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 per year, one of those being the Annual General Meeting.
3. Members will be given reasonable notice of general meetings, including date, time, location, and online access information if the meeting is via videoconference.

### **Annual General Meeting**

4. The Council shall convene an Annual General Meeting (AGM) at least once per year, for the purposes of election of officers.
5. The Executive shall give Members 14 days' notice of the AGM, including date, time, location, and online access information if the meeting is via videoconference.

### **Special General Meetings**

6. An SGM may be called at the discretion of the Executive or when ten (10) Members sponsor a written petition directed at the Chair requesting that such an SGM be called.
7. The Executive shall give Members seven (7) days' notice of the SGM, including date, time, location, and online access information if the meeting is via videoconference. If the Chair receives a written petition requesting an SGM, the Executive must set the SGM date within seven (7) days of the receipt by the Chair of such petition.

### **Conduct**

8. At the meetings, members will not discuss individual school personnel, students, parents, or other members of the school community.
9. 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.
10. If procedural problems arise on an issue not covered in these bylaws, Robert's Rules of Order shall be used to resolve the issue.

## Section III – PROCEEDINGS AT GENERAL MEETINGS

### **Quorum**

A quorum is the minimum number of voting members that need to be present at a meeting to make decisions. The requirement for a quorum ensures that a representative number of voting members are present in the room when decisions are made. The quorum cannot be waived or suspended, even by unanimous consent.

1. The voting members present at any duly called General Meeting with a minimum of three members of the executive and two non-executive members shall constitute a quorum.
2. Three (3) Officers shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the Executive.
3. Two-thirds (67%) of the members of any Committee shall constitute a quorum of such Committee.
4. If at any time during a General, Executive, or Committee 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**

5. 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). It is one (1) vote per Parent.
6. In the case of a tie vote, the chair does not have a second or casting vote, and the motion is defeated.
7. Members must vote in person on all matters. Voting by proxy will not be permitted.
8. 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. All elections of officers, where there is more than one (1) candidate, shall be by secret ballot. If there is a tie, a re-vote will be held.
9. A vote will be taken to destroy the ballots after every election.
10. Frequently administrators and staff at Alfred B. Dixon Elementary School are also parents of students registered at the school (hereafter referred to as a Staff-parent). A Staff-parent will be expected to abstain from voting as a parent member of the PAC on any PAC issue in which they are in a position of conflict of interest, which can be determined by the Chair (e.g., a vote on PAC financial issues) or by the individual's choice.
11. Any member 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, and will be expected to abstain from voting as a parent member of the PAC on any PAC issue in which they are in a position of conflict of interest, which can be determined by the Chair (e.g., a vote on PAC financial issues) or by the individual's choice.

## 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 chair, vice-chair, secretary, treasurer, 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. 38 or the Ministry of Education.

### **Election of executive**

4. The executive will be elected at each annual general meeting.

### **Term of office**

5. The executive will hold office for a term of one year beginning immediately following the election.
6. No person may hold the same executive position for more than four years.

### **Termination**

7. The members in attendance at an SGM may, by a majority of 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. An Officer shall cease to hold office upon such removal or upon resignation.
8. Written notice specifying the intention to make a motion to remove the executive member must be given to all members not less than seven (7) days before the meeting.

### **Resignation**

9. Any Officer may withdraw from office by submitting a written resignation to the Chair.

### **Vacancy**

10. 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.

### **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 while engaged in the Council's affairs.

## Section V – EXECUTIVE MEETINGS

### **Meetings**

1. Executive meetings will be held at the call of the Chair.

### **Quorum**

2. Three (3) Officers shall constitute a quorum at any meeting 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.

### **Rules of Order**

6. Except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, parliamentary procedure shall govern at all meetings of the Council and of the Executive, as set forth in Robert's Rules of Order.

## Section VI - DISTRICT PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL AND EXTERNAL COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

### **District Parent Advisory Council and School Planning Council Representatives**

1. One representative to the District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC) may be elected annually from among the voting members who are not employees or elected officials of School District No. 38 or the Ministry of Education.
2. One representative to the School Planning Council (SPC) may be elected annually from among the voting members who are not employees or elected officials of School District No. 38 or the Ministry of Education.

### **Election of SPC and DPAC representatives**

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

### **Term of office**

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

### **Vacancy**

5. If a DPAC or SPC 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 (a representative or a Council member) who is not an employee or elected official of School District No. 38 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 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. The Vice-Chair is responsible for ensuring that all executive members sign the Code of Ethics annually and safely store the signed declarations. A sample Code of Ethics appears at the end of these bylaws.

### **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.

### **Code of Conduct**

6. All Members must agree to comply with, and be subject to, the provisions of these Bylaws.
7. Members shall not use the Council as a forum for the discussion of individual school personnel, students, parents, or other individual members of the school community.
8. Officers who are approached with a concern relating to an individual within the school community are in a privileged position and must treat such discussion as confidential.

## Section VIII – DUTIES OF EXECUTIVE & REPRESENTATIVES

### A. The Chair will

1. speak on behalf of the Council
2. consult with Council members
3. preside at membership and executive meetings
4. ensure that an agenda is prepared, with advance consultation with the executive and principal, before the meeting to give them an opportunity for input.
5. appoint committees where authorized by the membership or executive
6. ensure that the Council is represented in school and district activities
7. ensure that Council activities are aimed at achieving the purposes set out in the constitution
8. be a signing officer
9. provide a report at each meeting outlining the work done and issues considered since the last meeting.
10. serve as principal spokesperson of the council
11. support the Treasurer in drafting an annual budget

If changes are made to the constitution and bylaws, they should be dated and initialed and a copy placed in the school for safekeeping.

### B. The Vice-Chair will

1. support the Chair
2. assume the duties of the Chair in the Chair's absence or upon request
3. assist the Chair in the performance of his or her duties
4. be a signing officer
5. ensure the Executive sign the yearly Code of Ethics declaration
6. perform such other duties as the Chair may from time to time direct

### C. The Secretary will

1. ensure that members are notified of meetings
2. record and file minutes of all meetings
3. keep an accurate copy of the constitution and bylaws, and make copies available to Members upon request
4. prepare and maintain other documentation as requested by the membership or executive
5. issue and receive correspondence on behalf of the Council
6. ensure safekeeping of all records of the Council
7. if requested, be a signing officer
8. perform such other duties as the Chair may from time to time direct

#### **D. The Treasurer will**

1. be a signing officer
2. ensure all funds of the Council are properly accounted for
3. disburse funds as authorized by the membership or executive
4. ensure that proper financial records and books of account are maintained
5. report on all receipts and disbursements at general and executive meetings
6. make financial records and books of account available to members upon request
7. have the financial records and books of account ready for inspection or audit annually
8. with the assistance of the executive, draft an annual budget
9. ensure that another signing officer has access to the financial records and books of account in the treasurer's absence
10. submit an annual financial statement after the end of each fiscal year
11. perform such other duties as the Chair may from time to time direct

Financial records should be kept for seven years. Other documents may be kept according to their value or precedent-setting nature. Minutes can be a valuable history of the council.

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

1. attend all meetings of the District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC) and represent, speak, and vote on behalf of the Council
2. maintain current registration of the Council
3. report regularly to the membership and executive on all matters relating to the DPAC
4. seek and give input to the DPAC on behalf of the Council
5. receive, circulate, and post DPAC newsletters, brochures, and announcements
6. receive and act on all other communications from the DPAC
7. liaise with other parents and DPAC representatives

#### **F. Members-at-Large will**

1. 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**

1. advise and support the membership and executive
2. provide information about resources, contacts, and other matters

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

1. attend all meetings of the School Planning Council (SPC)
2. represent, speak, and vote on behalf of the Council at SPC meetings
3. request and take direction from the membership and executive
4. be strong advocates for meaningful parent involvement in the school and school planning
5. provide a written report to all general and executive meetings
6. attend general and executive meetings as directed by the membership or executive

### **Conflict of Interest**

Every Officer of the Council who holds any position of office whereby, whether directly or indirectly, duties or interests might be created in conflict with one's duties or interests as an Officer of the Council, shall disclose to the Chair the fact and nature and extent of the conflict, whether real, potential, or perceived.

## 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.
4. A Nominating Committee may be appointed annually before the annual general meeting.

## Section X – FINANCIAL MATTERS

### **Financial year**

1. The financial year of the Council will be from the first day of September and shall terminate on the last day of August of the following year.

### **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 (3) signing officers for banking and legal documents. Two (2) 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 each year. The budget will cover one financial year.

### **Non-budgeted expenditures**

6. The executive will present all proposed expenditures beyond the current budget for approval at the next general meeting. The expenditure must be approved by a majority of the Members at any General Meeting. All extraordinary expenditures (above and beyond budget) must be voted on by the general membership if the amount exceeds \$200.

### **Treasurer's report**

7. A treasurer's report will be presented at each general meeting.
8. Due to the timing of the AGM, the treasurer will present financial statements for the most recently completed financial year to the members at the first General Meeting after September 1.

### **Auditor**

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

## Section XI – CONSTITUTION AND BYLAW AMENDMENTS

1. Any member may propose amendments to these Bylaws provided that at least seven (7) days' notice of the proposed amendments shall be given to all Members in advance of any General Meeting, AGM, or SGM at which the proposed amendments are to be considered. 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 seven (7) 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. With the adoption of new bylaws, all former bylaws are hereby repealed.

## 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 Chair 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. 38 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. Upon dissolution of the Council, any assets remaining after all debts have been paid or provision for payment has been made, shall be dispersed by the membership at the final General Meeting.
3. In the event of winding up or dissolution, all records of the Council shall be given to the principal of Alfred B. Dixon Elementary School of School District No. 38.

**Adopted by the Alfred B. Dixon Parent Advisory Council at Richmond, British Columbia, on June 17, 2024. Signatures of chair and one other executive member**

## Section XIV – COMMUNICATION

1. All social media connected to Alfred B. Dixon Elementary School PAC will be managed by the PAC Executive or a PAC member designated by the PAC Executive.
2. No one shall comment on behalf of the PAC Executive on any media platform without prior permission of the PAC Chair and/or Co-Chair.
3. All communications by the PAC, regardless of platform, will be for PAC or school related information purposes only. PAC communication channels shall not be used for any commercial, political or personal commentary, endorsement or disapproval.

## CODE OF ETHICS

A parent who accepts a position as a Council executive member, committee member, or representative

1. upholds the constitution and bylaws, policies, and procedures of the electing body
2. performs his or her duties with honesty and integrity and in the interests of the Council
3. works to ensure that the well-being of students is the primary focus of all decisions
4. respects the rights of all individuals
5. takes direction from the membership and executive
6. encourages and supports parents and students with individual concerns to act on their own behalf, and provides information on the process for taking concerns forward
7. works to ensure that issues are resolved through due process
8. strives to be informed and only passes on information that is reliable
9. respects all confidential information
10. supports public education
11. declares to the PAC if they are an employee or elected official of School District No. 38 or BC Ministry of Education
12. does not personally gain from participation in the PAC or committee.
13. declares any conflict of interest and perceived bias, and excuses themselves from voting
14. declares any financial interest not common to other members of the council, and excuses themselves from voting

### Statement of Understanding

I, the undersigned, in accepting the position of \_\_\_\_\_ of the Alfred B. Dixon Parent Advisory Council have read, understood, and agreed to abide by this Code of Ethics. I also agree to participate in the dispute resolution process that has been agreed to by the electing body, should there be any concerns about my work.

Name of Executive Member, Committee Member, or Representative

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

This page can be photocopied and used annually for all executive members and representatives.

## **Financial Considerations**

The following policies and procedures are designed to put into place some safeguards to protect parents who may be handling PAC funds. Over the course of the school year many different parents may be called upon to deal with cash and/or cheques from our various PAC events and it is very important that we deal in a consistent manner with these funds.

### **Cash Handling Policies**

1. All PAC cash/cheques handled by parents must be double custodial (handled by 2 parties).
2. The cash tally sheet must be initialed by both parties prior to cash/cheques leaving the school property. No uncounted funds are to leave the school.
3. The returning deposit slip must be attached to the original cash tally sheet.
4. The PAC treasurer or designate is responsible for deposits and this individual must be present at the time the cash/cheques are tallied. The designate would be the Event Coordinator or Fundraising Leader, whenever possible.
5. At the end of an event day, anyone with cash/cheques to be deposited must hand them over to the PAC Treasurer or designate for tallying and deposit.
6. Every effort must be made to transfer the funds to the PAC bank account(s) as soon as possible.
7. Parents are not permitted to reimburse themselves directly from the proceeds of any PAC event. Parents must submit an expense voucher to the PAC executive for reimbursement by cheque. These expenses must be approved prior to the event whenever possible.
8. Parents who handle monies and fail to adhere to these procedures could be held personally liable for any missing, lost, or stolen monies.
9. The PAC and Treasurer are responsible for financial oversight of the Fundraising Committee. This includes granting approval of fundraising initiatives on behalf of the PAC and communication with members of the Dixon community.
10. Transparency with all business agreements and financial transactions is paramount. The PAC and Treasurer are accountable to the Dixon community for the finances of the PAC including the judicious spending of PAC funds.
11. When considering entering into a business agreement with an external vendor, a minimum of 2 vendors must be considered. Any personal relationships with the vendor must be disclosed to the Fundraising Committee and PAC.
12. Required financial approval is for a specific product/service and for the mark-up amount to be charged as the fundraiser. Referral fees for services are not payable.
13. The PAC does not have the capacity to keep inventory for future sale. This type of business arrangement should be avoided.
14. The overriding goal of fundraising efforts is to promote inclusivity of all members of the Dixon Community. This means that mark-up margins for fundraising must be kept reasonable and affordable, and no member of the Dixon Community will be excluded from attending a fundraising event because of cost.
15. The PAC will define short and long-term projects for fundraising efforts and liaise with the Fundraising Committee about fundraising goals.