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Parent Education

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Parent Education

Educating parents about your school, district, province, and public education in general is a key component to the development and success of your council.

Some of the ways you can offer parent education are

- speakers at regular and special meetings, events, and conferences
- presentations to coincide with parent-teacher interviews or other events that bring parents into the school
- sponsoring parents to attend conferences, workshops, and presentations offered by others
- a bulletin or newsletter explaining current issues (paper, e-mail, or website), translated into the major languages spoken by parents in the community
- collaboration with community groups concerned about particular issues. Invite a group to explain their concerns to parents.
- collaboration with cultural groups in the community willing to assist with outreach to parents using volunteer interpreters
- open house or regular drop-in
- a well-stocked, up-to-date parent library, open at times convenient to parents.

Using Local Resources

There are many people in our schools and districts with knowledge and expertise on issues of interest to parents. Inviting members of our own community to speak to parents is an excellent way to take advantage of local expertise while building good relations with our education partners.

Consider inviting the following people to speak on suggested topics:

Principal—

- Your school—layout, facilities, grounds, where to find people and things. Suggest a tour with student leaders.
- School staff—classroom teachers, specialist teachers (English as a Second Language, learning assistance, speech/language, hearing impaired, behaviour), department

heads, coaches, counsellors, psychologists, office staff, maintenance staff. What do these people do? When are they in the school? How does a parent get in touch with them?

- Curriculum and programs—What does the school offer? How does a student qualify for a particular program? Who should the student or parent speak to?
- School plan, current issues, special projects
- Opportunities for parent involvement

Teachers, counsellors, specialists—

- Curriculum, programs, special projects, services to students and parents
- How to get in touch, best methods of communication
- Opportunities for parent involvement

Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Secretary-Treasurer, Planner—

- School district facilities, organizational structure, personnel. Suggest a tour of the main administration office or special program centres.
- School district annual budget—How is it created? Who is consulted?
- Special programs or projects, educational choices available to students
- School district Accountability Contract, current issues
- Physical planning and development
- Opportunities for parent involvement

Chair of the Board of Trustees—

- Governance and decision-making, school district policy structure
- Current issues, special programs or projects, vision for the future
- Opportunities for public consultation

Local groups or organizations with special knowledge or expertise on current issues—

- Band Councils—hold a PAC or DPAC meeting at the Band Council centre, or alternate meetings between the school and Band Council centre
- Public service clubs (Rotary, Lyons Quest) on programs for children and youth

- Public health service on nutrition, exercise, substance abuse, or safety
- Cultural groups on multiculturalism and cultural awareness
- Police on crime prevention, substance abuse, teen driving, or safety
- Crisis centre on services for children, youth, and parents
- Local experts on conflict resolution, bullying, and harassment
- Parenting instructors on programs for new, experienced, or teen parents
- Tutors on helping children with homework or tips for reading together
- Gardening clubs on keeping school grounds green.

School and District Professional Development

Check your school or district website for upcoming professional development opportunities.

Publicize these events in your council's newsletter or website.

School and district staff take part in ongoing professional development. Many schools and districts extend open invitations to parents to participate in workshops, presentations, and conferences. These are excellent opportunities to learn alongside those who work with our children.

Ask your principal or school district administration office for a schedule of professional development opportunities for the year. Find out which ones are open to parents. For those that may not be, inquire what parents can do to attend.

Some events may require a fee. Check your council's annual budget, and consider including an item for parent professional development to defray all or part of the cost.

BCCPAC

BCCPAC offers many resources and opportunities for parent education:

- Fall Leadership Conference
- Spring Conference and Annual General Meeting
- Regional Events
- Website including
 - information and updates on current educational issues
 - online discussion forums
 - issues bulletins
 - practice notes
 - discussion papers and submissions
 - frequently asked questions
 - sample constitution and bylaws
 - member resolutions
 - hundreds of links to information, resources, and organizations
- Regular mailouts to members
- PAC *Ed* Education and Development Workshop Series
- Presentations on the role of parents
- Member Services
- BCCPAC Advocacy Project

BCCPAC website:

www.bccpac.bc.ca

BCCPAC Member
Services:

Call 604-687-4433

**Or e-mail
info@bccpac.bc.ca**

BCCPAC Advocacy
Project toll free
message line:

1-888-351-9834

