



BC CONFEDERATION OF PARENT ADVISORY COUNCILS

Suite 202, 1545 West 8th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V6J 1T5
Tel: 604-687-4433 Fax: 604-687-4488 Email: info@bccpac.bc.ca

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New Legislation on Class Size and Composition Blends Perspectives

BCCPAC is pleased that the Education (Learning Enhancement) Statutes Amendment Act strengthens consultation with parents on class size and composition. Principals will be required to consult with School Planning Councils on class organization within 15 days of school opening, and superintendents will be required to report on class size to District Parent Advisory Councils, as well as school boards, by October 1st each year.

“Parents want accountability for classroom organization at all levels,” says Kim Howland, BCCPAC President, “and they want to be involved in decisions to ensure the best interests of students are always foremost.”

Over the last several months, the Learning Roundtable has discussed class size and composition. Howland says, “Throughout our discussions, it was obvious that partner groups had differing perspectives on how we could address these issues. The new legislation blends those perspectives, and incorporates a built-in review process at the end of a year.”

In its presentation to the Learning Roundtable, BCCPAC noted that parents do not want to see large classes for Grades 4 to 7, but they still want flexibility in order to accommodate individual school communities. The new legislation reduces the average for these grades to 28, and stipulates that principals must have the consent of teachers for any classes over 30 in size.

The new legislation also requires that school boards ensure that no class has more than 3 students with identified special needs and an Individual Education Plan (excluding gifted students) unless the organization of the class is appropriate for student learning and the principal has consulted with the teacher.

“We understand that the intent of this legislation is to ensure that students with special needs are not grouped together as a cost saving measure,” says Howland. “At the same time, School Planning Councils and District Parent Advisory Councils must ensure that all students have opportunities to participate in classes in which they can be successful.”

**For more information, please contact
Kim Howland, President
BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils
Tel. 604-687-4433 Fax 604-687-4488
Email: info@bccpac.bc.ca**