



Our Ref: 129241

FEB 10 2009

Ron Broda, President
BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils
350-5172 Kingsway
Burnaby BC V5H 2E8

Dear Mr. Broda:

Thank you for your letter dated December 18, 2008, regarding a requirement that Parent Advisory Councils (PAC) must pay membership fees to belong to a District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC).

In your letter you state that you have become aware that the Sooke Parent Education Advisory Council – the DPAC for School District No. 62 (Sooke) – is requiring parent advisory councils to pay a membership fee to the DPAC in order to be a member in good standing of the DPAC. Further, you asked about the *School Act*'s intent related to a PAC's right to membership on a DPAC. Ministry staff have reviewed the *School Act* and in their view, the *Act* does not give a DPAC the ability to make paying a membership fee by a PAC a condition of membership on a DPAC.

District parent advisory councils (DPACs) are creations of the *School Act*. Sections 8.4 and 8.5 of the *Act* detail the creation of a DPAC and the purpose and operation of DPACs. Specifically, subsection 8.5 (2) of the *Act* gives a DPAC the power to make bylaws "governing its meetings and the business and conduct of its affairs."

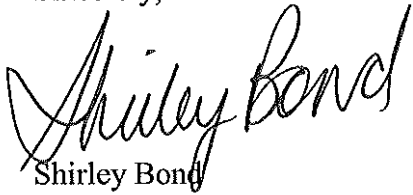
The *Act* also states, in subsection 8.3 (3), that each parent advisory council (PAC) may elect one of its members annually to represent it on the district parent advisory council.

Ministry of Education officials have reviewed the *Act* and I am advised that in their view exclusion of a PAC from a district body, ultimately denying the school a voice is inconsistent with the intent of the *School Act*. The result would not be in the best interests of the school district, the parents or the representative objectives of the DPAC.

.../2

I appreciate your organization's ongoing commitment to giving parents a voice in the BC's school system. Thank you for sharing your concerns with me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shirley Bond". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial 'S'.

Shirley Bond
Minister
Deputy Premier