



BC Confederation of  
Parent Advisory Councils

# Advocacy in Action

# Using Your Parent Voice

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BCCPAC CONFERENCE





BC Confederation of  
Parent Advisory Councils

## Who We Are

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The BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC) is a non-partisan, registered non-profit charity in existence since 1922.

We are governed by a **volunteer** Board of nine directors **elected** annually by the membership which consists of District Parent Advisory Councils (DPAC) and Parent Advisory Councils (PAC).

We answer to our members (annual fee) through our Constitution & Bylaws and our Policies.

We represent the parents/guardians/caregivers of >565,000 children in provincial public schools.

BCCPAC is recognized by government and education stakeholders as the provincial voice of parents on education and related issues within the K-12 public system.



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## What We Do

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We advocate for systemic changes.

We educate and inform parents on issues related to public education.

We represent parents with the Ministry, on provincial committees and provide input to provincial initiatives dealing with students, families, and K-12 education.

We communicate and meet regularly with the Ministry of Education and Education Partners to ensure the parent perspective is represented and the parent voice is heard.

We use the School Act, district policies and district bylaws to guide parents/guardians in advocating for their child's educational program.



“Unless someone like you  
cares a whole awful lot,  
nothing is going to get  
better. It’s not.”

Dr. Seuss

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# DOCUMENT EVERYTHING

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# Advocacy – Using Your Parent Voice

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**Advocacy is speaking up in support of yourself or others.**

Caregivers are their child's natural advocate, making sure their child's rights, needs and opinions are respected.

Caregivers can also help make sure decisions affecting their child are made fairly.

Advocacy is about finding a successful solution for the benefit of the child.





Resolution will be achieved  
more readily if all parties  
check their pre-conceived  
notions at the door



## Dispute Resolution Process

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**Step 1:** Communicate your concerns to the individual(s) directly involved

**Step 2:** Communicate your concerns to the Principal

**Step 3:** Review your concerns with the appropriate District contact, if necessary

**Step 4:** Start the Appeals Process; Contact the Ombudsperson

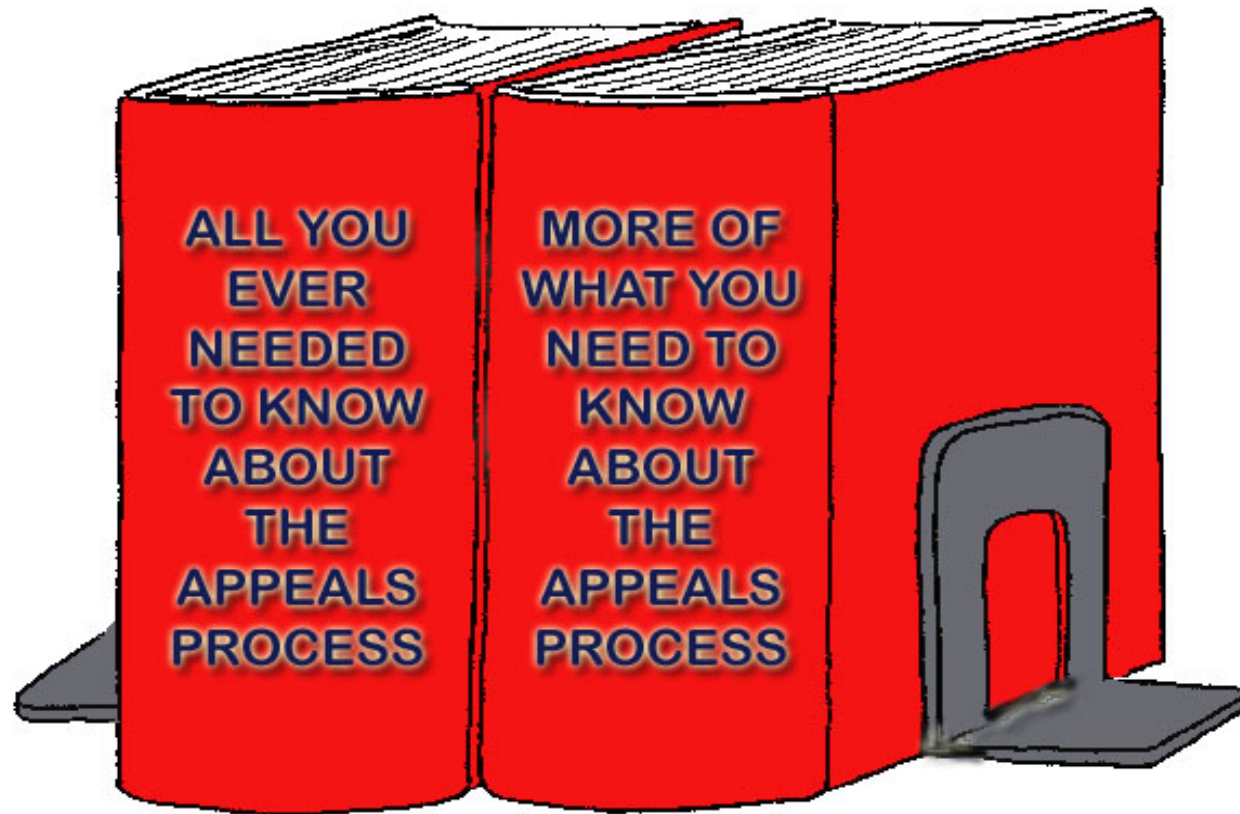
**Step 5:** File a Section 11





# The Appeals Process

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YOU ARE  
NOT  
ALONE

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## What is the Appeals Process?

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- A documented course of action, intended to achieve inherent fairness by focusing on the solution and not on the personalities involved
- A non-confrontational process
- A Policy or Bylaw mandated by the School Act and created by each individual School Board

While each Board must have an Appeals Process, the wording and steps that are taken can vary greatly between school districts.



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## When to Use the Appeals Process

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As soon as you are not making substantive progress on any issue that you feel significantly impacts the education of your child.

NOT just a 'last-resort'.

NOT solely used to reverse a prior, formal decision.



## School District #39 – Policy 13

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*Examples of decisions that will be deemed to **significantly affect the education, health or safety of a student** include:*

- 3.1 Disciplinary suspension from school for a period in excess of five (5) consecutive instructional days;*
- 3.2 The transfer of a student from one school to another for disciplinary reasons;*
- 3.3 The exclusion of a student from school for a health condition;*
- 3.4 Significant decisions regarding placement in an educational program (this does not include classroom or teacher preference issues, except in exceptional circumstances);*
- 3.5 Grade promotion or graduation;*
- 3.6 Refusal to offer an educational program to a non-graduated student sixteen (16) years of age or older*



## If you have been told...

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- Your child is not allowed to attend school on a full-time basis.
- Your child's designation does not fund the extra help needed.
- Your child received an Evergreen diploma and is considered graduated.
- Our district does not have the capacity or resources to meet your child's needs.
- We cannot include "this" in the IEP because it will trigger an audit.
- It is district policy.



# Using the Appeals Process

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## Document Everything!

1. Make sure you have shared your concern with the Principal.
2. Go online to find your District's Appeals Process - each district has a similar, yet unique, process.
3. Contact the Office of the Secretary-Treasurer, of your District, to inform them you are planning to use the Appeals Process and ask who in the District is assigned to help parents complete the forms.
4. Contact the Ombudsperson to let them know you started the Appeals Process.



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ASK A **LOT** OF  
QUESTIONS!

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**Do NOT  
APOLOGIZE**





The best way  
for School Districts to handle  
the Appeals Process  
is to put measures in place  
to ensure it is never needed

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# Thank You!

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**@BCCPAC**



**@YOURBCCPAC**



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