

Burnaby District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC)

General Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, January 19, 2026

Time: 7:00 PM –9:00 PM

Location: Burnaby Central Secondary School, Room A206

Attendees: Paul Kwon (Chair), Vivien Pollon-Gomes (Vice-Chair), Brock Stephenson (Secretary), Heide Baer (Treasurer), Ruchika Bhatia (Member-at-large).

Guests: Kristin Schnider (Chair, Board of Education), Jen Mezei (Vice-Chair, Board of Education), Peter Cech (Trustee), Gary Wong (Trustee), Karim Hachlaf (Superintendent, SD41), Roberto Bombelli (Deputy Superintendent, SD41), Ishver Khunguray (Secretary-Treasurer, SD41), Jake Sawatsky (Member of Parliament), Ryan Erwin (on behalf of MLA Anne Kang), Rea Park (on behalf of MLA Paul Choi).

1. Welcome, Land Acknowledgement & Meeting Purpose

The Chair called the meeting to order and provided a land acknowledgement recognizing that the meeting took place on the unceded, traditional, and ancestral territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, Tsleil-Waututh, and Kwikwetlem peoples.

The Chair reviewed the purpose and structure of the meeting, noting that January was intentionally designed as a context-setting session to support shared understanding of:

- how the School District budget process works,
- what decisions are made provincially versus locally, and
- how parent feedback will be incorporated later in the consultation cycle.

It was clarified that no budget decisions, scenarios, or allocations would be discussed at this meeting.

2. School District Presentation: Budget Context

Presenter: Ishver Khunguray, Secretary-Treasurer, School District 41

The [presentation](#) provided a high-level overview of:

- The Board's legal requirement to pass a balanced budget by June 30 each year.
- Enrolment-based funding, including the primary September enrolment count and limited subsequent counts.
- Key funding sources and fund types (operating, capital, local capital, and restricted/special-purpose funds).
- High-level expenditure patterns, noting that the majority of district spending is on staffing, with limited flexibility in non-staff costs.
- The annual budget cycle, including enrolment projections, provincial funding confirmation, amended budgets, and year-end financial reporting.

- Public-facing budget documents available on the School District website (annual budget report; financial statement discussion and analysis).

The presenter also discussed current context factors, including:

- Recent enrolment growth and expectations of slower or flatter growth in the near term.
- The District's reliance on provincial funding.
- Reserve levels relative to Board policy targets.
- Cost pressures, including benefit costs and inflationary pressures.

A brief question-and-answer period focused on clarification of process, trends, and timing.

The Chair thanked the presenter and reiterated that the information shared was intended to establish a common baseline for future engagement.

3. DPAC Parent Feedback Survey: High-Level Themes & Partner Listening

Presenter: Brock Stephenson, DPAC Secretary

DPAC reported that the [Parent Feedback Survey](#) received 236 responses, with over 80% identifying as parents/guardians, representing families from elementary and secondary schools across the district.

High-level, system-wide themes shared included:

- Concerns regarding the adequacy of provincial funding and the impact of inflation.
- Staffing pressures affecting student support and learning conditions.
- Facilities and capacity challenges, including portables and overcrowding.
- Impacts of recent program reductions on families.
- Limited clarity among respondents about where and when parent feedback is most effective.

DPAC emphasized that:

- Themes were shared at a system level,
- The purpose was to inform DPAC's advisory role during later consultation stages.

Guest and Partner Participation (in response to survey themes)

Trustees, School District leadership, representatives from MLA offices, and a Member of Parliament were present in a listening capacity during this portion of the meeting.

- A Member of Parliament briefly introduced themselves, noted areas where federal levers may apply (e.g., school food programs, settlement supports), and indicated willingness to amplify provincial concerns as appropriate.
- A representative from an MLA constituency office encouraged parents to identify their MLA and engage through written correspondence during relevant consultation windows.

Questions and comments from attendees during this segment focused on:

- how survey feedback would be used next,
- advocacy timing and effectiveness,
- potential pathways for collaboration on programs and supports, and
- the importance of aligning engagement with formal decision-making windows.

4. Approval of Minutes and Agenda

Motions were carried to:

- Approve the November 17, 2025 DPAC General Meeting minutes.
- Approve the January 19, 2026 DPAC General Meeting agenda.

5. Tabletop Discussion – Summary of Themes

Participants engaged in brief, small-group tabletop discussions. Common themes raised included:

- A desire for clearer next steps following the sharing of survey results.
- Questions about how DPAC translates parent input into effective advisory and advocacy action.
- Challenges related to parent engagement and volunteer capacity, despite strong concern and interest.
- Requests for clearer guidance on when and how to engage trustees, MLAs, and other decision-makers.
- Continued concern about facilities, capacity pressures, and access to programs.
- Childcare challenges before and after school hours.

Notes from tabletop discussions will be used to inform DPAC's planning and advisory work.

6. DPAC Updates & Upcoming Consultation Windows

DPAC provided updates on the following:

Three-Year School Calendar Consultation

- The consultation window remains open until the end of January.

- DPAC will share the link, collect feedback from PACs and parents, and consolidate input for submission to the School District ahead of Board consideration.

Budget Process & Upcoming Meetings

- The next DPAC General Meeting will include a presentation on the amended 2025–26 budget, scheduled for February 18, 2026 (moved from February 17).
- DPAC noted adjustments to spring meeting dates to better align DPAC engagement with the public release of the proposed 2026–27 budget, enabling more informed questions and feedback. The DPAC Special Budget Meeting will be held April 15, 2026.

Committees & Vacancies

- A call was made for volunteers for School District committees, including sustainability and accessibility.
- DPAC executive vacancies were noted, and members were encouraged to express interest.
- Adrianna was nominated to join the DPAC Executive. The nomination was seconded, and a vote was carried. Adrianna accepted the nomination and will join the Executive.

Treasurer's Report

- It was noted that there had been no significant financial activity since the previous reporting period.

7. Show & Tell

Members shared brief updates from their school communities, including:

- experiences with before and after school childcare access challenges at Brantford
- facility and capacity updates at Alpha, and
- Brentwood Parks reflections on engagement with elected representatives.

8. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was carried, and the meeting concluded.