

Burnaby District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC) Special Budget Working Meeting Summary

Date: Monday, April 20, 2026

Meeting Type: Special Budget Working Meeting / Strategy Session

1. Purpose of Meeting

The meeting was held as a follow-up to the April 15, 2026 General Meeting and School District budget presentation.

The purpose was to:

- discuss the 2026/27 budget situation;
- consider parent feedback and advocacy priorities;
- prepare for upcoming partner group feedback;
- organize next steps related to the teacher salary arbitration funding issue.

This was a working / strategy session rather than a regular General Meeting.

2. Budget and Funding Context

Members discussed the financial impact of the teacher salary arbitration decision presented by the School District on April 15.

Discussion focused on:

- the potential approximately \$9.4 million financial impact;
- uncertainty regarding provincial funding;
- the distinction between locally controlled budget decisions and costs arising from provincial bargaining;
- possible impacts on School District reserves and services if funding was not provided.

Members generally agreed that the issue should be communicated as a provincial funding responsibility rather than a dispute with teachers.

3. Parent Advocacy

Members discussed how DPAC could support clear and constructive parent advocacy.

Themes included:

- providing parents with plain-language information;
- identifying the appropriate provincial decision-makers;
- encouraging communication with the Minister of Education and Child Care, Treasury Board, and local MLAs;
- making it easier for parents to participate;
- keeping messaging focused on provincially negotiated costs being provincially funded;
- avoiding language that could create conflict between parents, teachers, and other education partners.

Members also discussed possible coordination with other parent and education organizations.

4. Parent-Facing Information

Members discussed the development of information and advocacy materials.

Suggested materials included:

- a short fact sheet / backgrounder;
- sample parent email or letter;
- key messages;
- possible media communication;
- links to relevant background information.

Members emphasized that materials should be:

- factual;
- concise;
- easy to understand;
- clear about who parents should contact;
- suitable for sharing through PAC networks;
- translated where practical.

5. Working Groups and Follow-Up

Members identified areas of work to be advanced following the meeting, including:

- parent letter / email template;
- key messages and supporting information;
- possible media / press communication;
- fact sheet / background material;
- outreach to other DPACs and education partners.

Members volunteered to support different parts of the work.

6. Other Budget-Related Discussion

Members also raised broader concerns about ongoing public education funding pressures and the cumulative impact of previous budget reductions.

There was general agreement that longer-term underfunding remained an important issue, but that the immediate advocacy focus should remain on the teacher salary arbitration funding issue.

A question was also raised regarding community access to school facilities / theatre space and the need for clearer information on related impacts.

7. Emerging Consensus

The meeting concluded with general agreement that:

- the immediate priority was the teacher salary arbitration funding issue;
- parent communication should be simple and focused;
- advocacy should be directed toward the Province;
- messaging should not blame teachers;
- DPAC should make it easy for parents to participate;
- longer-term education funding advocacy should continue after the immediate issue.

8. Actions

Work included:

- preparing parent-facing information;
- preparing a sample advocacy letter / email;
- developing key messages;
- media communication;
- coordinating with partner groups where appropriate;

- considering outreach to other DPACs;
- clarifying outstanding facility / theatre questions.

9. Status of Record

As this was a special working / strategy session rather than a regular General Meeting, this summary is provided for information.