

COPACS

The Confederation of Parents' Advisory Councils of Saanich

February 20, 2023

Dear Superintendent Eberwein and Board Chair Dunford,

As Parents and Guardians, we play an important role as [partners in our children's education](#) and we acknowledge the importance that educational partners place on parent and guardian input to such critical topics as strategic plans, budget decision-making and policy reviews.

Based on discussions at our November 2022 meeting, COPACS wishes to share feedback on SD 63 parent/guardian engagement processes in hopes that this might be helpful in further supporting parent/guardians participation in future.

It would be helpful if engagement activities and communications outline:

- The **level of engagement** - what level of input is being requested (e.g using the [IAP2 spectrum of engagement](#), whether the engagement seeks to 'inform', 'consult', 'involve', 'collaborate' or 'empower' parents and guardians)?
- Consider the **timing of feedback**. The Parent/Guardian survey for the SD 63 Strategic Plan, for example, sought feedback once the proposed priority areas were already identified.
- Stating the **timelines** for engagement
- Include **relevant background information** (Board packages or research documents) (IAP2 [Core Value 6](#)). For example, during the Transportation survey, the [analysis of other BC School Division transportation policies](#) made available for the Policy Development Committee may have been helpful for some parents in reflecting on the questions posed.
- Information shared be reviewed for **readability** level ([online tools](#) are available).
- Most parents and guardians are unfamiliar with acronyms, system processes and tables/bodies that may be well understood within the education system. It would be helpful to **provide context and background sufficient for an outsider or someone new to a conversation to understand**.
- **Alternate means of engaging**, particularly for parents and guardians not typically engaged in surveys or families that face challenges in participating in written surveys (IAP2 [Core Value 5](#)), potentially through additional outreach, information or supports

- Provide parents/guardians communication as to **how their input affected** the decision (IAP2 [Core Value 7](#))

We wished to respectfully bring these matters forward for your consideration in the spirit of supporting the widest and fullest extent of parents, guardian and caregiver involvement in education system feedback processes.

Kind regards,

Megan Misovic

President COPACS

CC:

Trustee VanWell

Trustee Dunford

Trustee Elder

Trustee McMurphy

Trustee Silzer

Trustee Vandall

Trustee Hickman

COPACS exec members

BCC:

School PACs and COPACS reps