

## ISLAND PACIFIC SCHOOL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

### Context:

Island Pacific School is incorporated under the British Columbia *Society Act*, RSBC 1996, c. 433 and its governance structure is based on by-laws created at the time of its inception and revised in July of 2008.

Initially the membership of the IPS Society included only the Board of Directors.<sup>1</sup> During the fall of 2007 and spring of 2008, the Governance Committee comprising Joanne Forbes (Chair), Dr. Janis Sarra and David McCullum dialogued with IPS parents and board members, past and present, with the goal of revising the membership and governance structure of IPS to ensure that its oversight be transparent and accountable. The guiding principles for the new governance structure were as follows:

- Transparency in governance structure
- Simple, accessible and accountable
- Increased democracy in selection of the Board of Directors and approval of financial statements
- Create a structure that continues to encourage involvement of all parents, alumni and volunteers in the life of the school, while allowing members a voice in the governance of the society

Our revised by-laws are the backbone for the new governance structure as described below. The mission statement has been a work in progress over the course of several years and has now been finalized.

### Island Pacific School Vision & Mission Statements

**Vision:** *To be the best middle school in Canada*

**Mission:** *Island Pacific School focuses exclusively on meeting the unique educational needs of middle school students. We provide young adolescents with an enriched four year program that fosters scholarship, citizenship, leadership, and self advocacy. We are a small school by design because we know independent spirits grow best when personally challenged. Our graduates appreciate that success in high school and beyond requires that they develop critical and reflective thinking skills that make room for self and others.*

**Core Values:** *Wisdom, Courage, and Integrity*

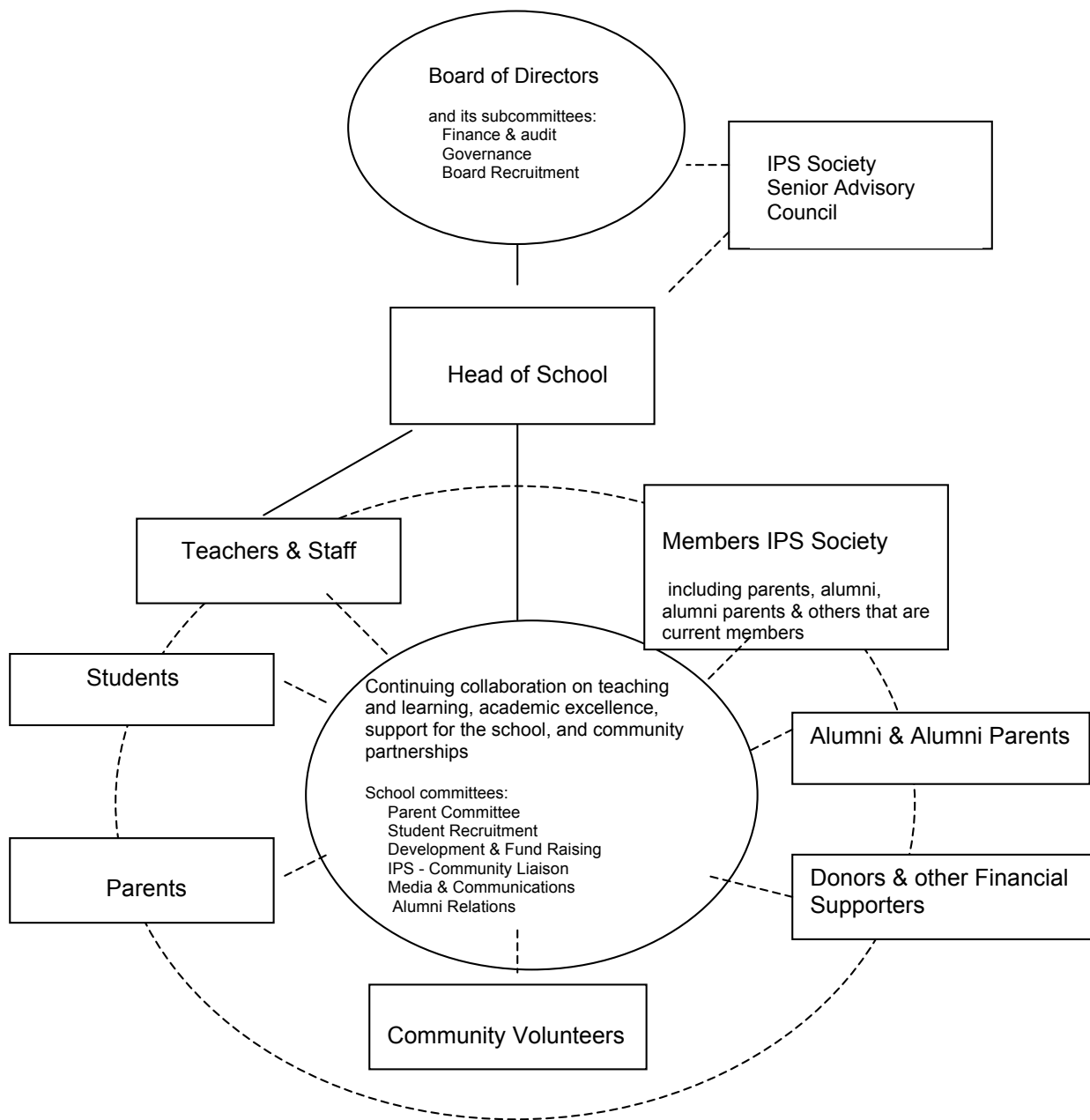
### Overview of Governance Structure

Island Pacific School is a broad community of individuals committed to excellence in teaching and learning, including members of IPS Society, students, parents and other community volunteers, alumni and parents of alumni, teachers, donors and other financial supporters. The attached organizational chart indicates that these relationships are inter-connected and they all support and foster a commitment to the mission and vision of the school.

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<sup>1</sup> The founding signatories to the documents creating the school were also members, however, they have subsequently resigned their membership.

## ISLAND PACIFIC SCHOOL SOCIETY Governance Structure



The Island Pacific School governance structure is collaborative, rather than hierarchical, advancing the learning objectives of fostering scholarship, citizenship, leadership and self-advocacy. Island Pacific School is comprised of members of IPS Society, students, parents and other community volunteers, alumni and parents of alumni, teachers and community members, donors and other financial supporters that share a vision of academic excellence during middle school years, with individuals participating in one or more of these categories.

## **IPS SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP**

### **Objective of Membership**

- Membership in the Island Pacific School Society is aimed at increasing the level of democracy, transparency and accountability of governance of the IPS Society and participation in its long-term strategic planning and development.
- Members agree to support the express mission of IPS.

### **Expanded Membership Structure of the IPS Society**

- Membership will be automatic for all parents of children or persons in the role of parent of children currently registered at IPS.
- Membership will be available to all IPS alumni over age 19, regardless of when they decide to join.
- Membership will be available to all former board members and school founders.
- Membership will also be available by invitation of the IPS Board to parents of alumni and volunteers that have given time to the school.
- Membership will be automatic for all members of the Senior Advisory Council for the period of their service to the Advisory Council.
- Membership will be renewed automatically each year for parents of currently registered children at IPS and will be renewed annually for other members by filing a renewal form electronically.

### **Society Membership Rights**

- Members will receive notice of all IPS Society general meetings, and once notice has been given, quorum will be those members present at the meeting.
- Members will have the right to vote:
  - to approve the financial statements at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the IPS Society each year;
  - to endorse the Board's selection of the auditor at the AGM; and
  - vote for six directors at the AGM.
- Members will each have a right to vote, to a maximum of two votes per family.<sup>1</sup>
- Members will receive interim and annual reports of the directors to the members.
- Members will receive the IPS newsletter and be invited to all major events at IPS.
- All members will have the right to:
  - receive an outline of rights and responsibilities of members and board members;
  - receive a copy of the constitution and its by-laws;
  - have the opportunity to provide advice annually on strategic vision and planning of the school, including both curricular and financial advice;
  - have the right to make a proposal to the Board for matters properly within the purview of the Board or ask to present a proposal at a board meeting or sub-committee meeting; and to
  - requisition a meeting of members where 10% or more of voting members requisition the board to hold such a meeting.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The definition of family for purposes of voting will include the parents of a child registered in the school that have shared custody or shared care and control, regardless of whether they live together full-time with the child; and will include legal guardians or other persons acting in the role of parents while the child is enrolled at IPS.

<sup>2</sup> The *Society Act* specifies that members have the right to requisition a meeting of members and that the directors, on requisition of 10% or more of voting members, must convene a general meeting of the society without delay.

### Membership Fees

- Membership fees can be set by the board, but will initially be set at \$ 0 for the first two years, 2008-2010.
  - If a fee amount is set in the future:
    - membership fees for alumni over age 19 that are members will be waived until they have completed their full time university or college studies;
    - the board will be authorised to waive the annual membership fees in cases of financial hardship;
    - any future increase in the amount of membership fees will require the recommendation of the Board and ratification by society members at a general meeting, with a majority of members in attendance at the meeting voting in favour of a proposed increase; and
    - the board can determine the method and timing of payment of any membership fees.

### IPS Society Board of Directors

Composition of the Board of Directors:

- A minimum of six directors, but in the normal course at least eight directors, elected by members of the IPS Society, including members of the IPS Society Senior Advisory Council.
  - at least four directors must be parents of a child currently enrolled in the school; and
  - at least one director must be an outside director, defined as not employed by the school and not currently having a child registered at the school.
- One additional director that will have oversight of alumni relations and of building a much stronger community network, called the Director of Alumni Relations.<sup>1</sup>
- The immediate past president will attend all board meetings for one year after she or he departs as a non-voting *ex officio* participant at the meetings.
- The Head of School will attend all board meetings, except in-camera sessions, and will invite other teaching faculty as required. The school head and any other attending faculty will be a non-voting participant at the meetings.

Qualification of Board members:

- Directors must have demonstrated team-work experience on a parent volunteer committee for the school or on a volunteer committee in the community.

Duties of Board members (see description in the IPS Society Board Manual and the *Society Act* for a full list of duties)

- Oversight of the IPS Society
- Obligation to exercise good faith, care and diligence in discharging duties
- Recruit, hire, support and periodic review of the Head of School
- Participate in at least one strategic planning session per year
- Participate in Board sub-committees, specifically, the Finance and Audit, Governance, and Board Recruitment Committees
- Bring experience to the oversight of the IPS Society gained through previous volunteer contributions to the school and the community.

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<sup>1</sup> As discussed below, alumni and alumni parents will have the ability to nominate and vote for this director, although the Board will appoint the position, in order to comply with the *Society Act* requirements.

#### Term of serving as director on the Board:

- Three year board terms for the directors, renewing 1/3 of the board each year.
- The Director of Alumni Relations has a one-year term, but can be elected by alumni and appointed by the board up to three consecutive years.
- If a board member leaves during the term, a replacement can be appointed by the Board for the balance of the term.

#### Nominations for the Board:

- The Board will designate a sub-committee each year to have responsibility for recruiting potential board members, looking for the appropriate mix of skills and experience, and considering current and previous volunteer contributions to IPS on parent committees and other activities of the school.
- Any member of the IPS Society, including the IPS Senior Advisory Council will have the right to nominate a board member, in addition to the nominees selected by the board committee with carriage of the nomination process.
- All nominated candidates must agree in writing to stand for election and must sign an acknowledgement that they have read and understand the requirements of the *Society Act*, the IPS Society Bylaws, and the Board Manual; and acknowledge that they agree to work to the best of their ability to comply with all legal, financial and other requirements of their duties as directors if they are elected.
- Nominated candidates for board membership will have the ability, along with the board's nominees, to set out their reasons for running for election to the Board and their objectives for the Board at the AGM prior to members voting.
- Nominations will be closed Labour Day weekend each year.

#### Voting for the Board:

- The AGM will be held during the second week of the school year, immediately following the new parents' orientation. The AGM will be followed by a social gathering each year so that new members and existing members have an opportunity early in the school year to meet one another.
- Ballots will be per individual candidate, i.e. society members may select who from the proposed candidates they support.
- Approval of directors is by majority vote (50% plus one) of members present and voting.<sup>1</sup>
- Members can elect to vote by written proxy, sent with another member to the AGM.

#### Officers of the Board and Chairs of Board Committees:

- The Board, at its first meeting after the AGM, will select the officers of the Board, e.g. president, treasurer, committee chairs, and will designate committees.
- The duties of the Board and its officers are to be revised and updated and circulated to all members of the society.

#### Decision making by the Board of Directors:

- Generally decisions will be made by consensus.
- Where a formal vote is necessary, decisions will be made by the majority of directors present and voting.
- There will be three board sub-committees, Finance and Audit, Governance, and Board Nomination Committees, that will report directly to the board and make recommendations for approval.

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<sup>1</sup> Note: Future changes in the by-laws under the *Society Act* require a special resolution to be approved by members, requiring more than 75% of votes of members of the Society.

## **IPS Society Senior Advisory Council**

Integral to the new proposed governance structure is an IPS Senior Advisory Council, comprised of individuals with a demonstrated commitment to the mission and vision of IPS.

- The objective of the IPS Senior Advisory Council is to provide long-term advice to the Board and the Head of School and to share Council members' history, experience and insights in respect of their previous and current commitment to the school.
- The initial members of the Senior Advisory Council will be drawn from the founding members, former board members, two alumni over age 19, and other invited persons that have demonstrated a commitment to IPS and its objectives.
- The initial size of the Council will be 15 to 20 people, and can be adjusted by the Board in consultation with the Senior Advisory Council.
- The members of the IPS Senior Advisory Council will meet two times per year with the IPS Board and Head of School to engage in strategic planning and provide advice to the Board and Head of School.
- The IPS Senior Advisory Council members are given membership in IPS Society for the period of their service to the Advisory Council and have the ability to nominate and vote on Board members.
- The Board of the IPS Society shall appoint a Chair of the Senior Advisory Council on an annual basis.
  - The Chair of the Senior Advisory Council will be the Member's Moderator pursuant to the bylaws for purposes of conducting general meetings of IPS Society; but where the Chair is not available to act, the Board will appoint a replacement Member's Moderator.
- The IPS Senior Advisory Council does not report to anyone, but rather, serves in an advisory capacity to the IPS Society Board of Directors and to the Head of School. Its structure will not be included in the new by-laws of IPS Society.
- In addition to the two meetings per year, the IPS Senior Advisory Council can, by ordinary vote of its members, request a meeting with the Board of Directors or the Head of School.
- One member of the IPS Senior Advisory Council will serve as voluntary historian for the IPS Society, helping to create a permanent record of its history and development.

## **PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN ISLAND PACIFIC SCHOOL**

Island Pacific School is a community of students, teachers, parents and volunteers, donors and other financial supporters; and the time and dedication given to volunteering is a vitally important and integral part of the continued success of the school.

In addition to support of activities of the school and teachers, the Head of School has oversight of six standing committees of IPS: the Parent Committee, the Student Recruitment Committee, the Media and Communications Committee, the Development and Fund Raising Committee, the Alumni Relations Committee and the IPS – Community Liaison Committee. All parents are encouraged to participate on committees as an essential part of the continued growth and development of the school. The Head of School will also designate *ad hoc* committees or other standing committees as required from time to time.

#### Parent Committee:

- The objective of the parent committee is to provide ongoing advice to the Head of School and provide support for the school's educational program and community and other activities.
- There will be representation on the committee by grade.
- The committee will work with and report to the Head of School.

#### Student Recruitment Committee:

- The committee will have responsibility for devising and carrying out a student recruitment and retention strategy each year.
- The student recruitment committee will work with and report to the Head of School.

#### Media and Communications Committee

- The media and communications committee will have responsibility for developing and implementing strategies to better communicate the activities of the school, the accomplishments of students, and oversight of publications to be issued by the school to the public in respect of its teaching, learning and community activities.
- The committee will work with and report to the Head of School.

#### Development and Fund Raising Committee

- The development and fund raising committee will have responsibility for developing and implementing a strategic plan to raise funds for the school, to ensure its long-term sustainability.
- The committee will work with and support the Head of School in his or her fundraising activities.

#### Alumni Relations Committee

- The alumni relations committee will develop and implement a strategy to enhance the relationship with graduates of IPS and with alumni parents.
- The committee will periodically undertake consultation with or conduct a survey of alumni to seek their advice and input on how they would like to be engaged.
- The committee will work with and report to the Head of School.

#### Island Public School - Community Liaison Committee

- The community liaison committee will have responsibility for developing and implementing a strategy to enhance the relationship of IPS with the community.
- The committee will be comprised of parents, community members and alumni.
- The committee will work with and report to the Head of School.

### **ALUMNI AND ALUMNI PARENTS OF ISLAND PACIFIC SCHOOL**

Alumni of Island Pacific School, including both former students and alumni parents of former students, are essential stakeholders in the school. The new governance structure will continue to recognize their continuing contribution to the school and the broader community.

**Objective:** *The Island Pacific School Society is strongly committed to our alumni. We wish to maintain and enhance relationships with current and future alumni and alumni parents, in order to allow alumni to share their experiences with current students and parents. A strong alumni program will allow alumni to stay in touch with one another; and will enhance the quality of teaching and learning through contributing insights about their experiences at IPS and in the world beyond.*

*Alumni have an ongoing engagement and commitment to IPS and its vision. Through the continuing contributions and insights of alumni and their long-term support of the school's vision, the IPS Society Board, the teachers and parents will have a deeper appreciation of the need to balance current needs of the school with its long-term advancement.*

## **Alumni Rights**

All alumni and alumni parents who continue to provide current e-mail and mailing addresses will have the following rights:

### Communication:

- Alumni and alumni parents will receive the alumni newsletters and other significant reports from the school.

### Participation:

- Alumni and alumni parents will receive invitations to IPS school and community events.
- At least two alumni that are current IPS Society members will serve on the IPS Society Senior Advisory Council.
- Alumni and alumni parents will have opportunities for participation on school committees, including taking a leadership role in the alumni relations committee.
- Alumni and alumni parents will have opportunities to serve advisors on Masterworks committees, sharing their experience and expertise in particular subject areas.
- Alumni will have opportunities for input on teaching and learning developments at the school, as well as opportunities to engage in strategic planning.

### Society Membership:

- Alumni that are over age 19 have the right to join as members of the IPS Society, regardless of when they decide to join.
- Membership will entail the rights and responsibilities as set out in above the “IPS Society Membership” provisions

### Director of Alumni Relations:

- Alumni have the right to nominate and vote on the Director of Alumni Relations
  - The Director of Alumni Relations is a volunteer board position that will have oversight of alumni relations and of building a much stronger community network.
  - While the vote for Director of Alumni Relations will not be binding on the board of directors, given the requirements of the *Society Act*, the Board will endorse the choice reflected by the alumni vote, unless there are compelling circumstances.
  - The Board will set up a process, such that any alumni or alumni parent can nominate candidates for this director position.

- The Director of Alumni relations should ideally be either one of the alumni or alumni parents.
- The Board will explore the possibility of conducting alumni voting for the director by internet.
- The successful candidate will be the one with the most votes by alumni and alumni parents.
- Nominations and voting will occur by Labour Day each year.
- The Director of Alumni Relations has a one-year term, but can be elected by alumni and appointed by the board up to three years consecutively.