

**DATE: September 8, 2008**

**TO: PAC Chairs, DPAC Reps, and Principals – North Vancouver**  
**FROM: North Vancouver PAC**

**RE: Parent Communications Protocol 2008/9**

Welcome back to a new school year for 2008/9!

North Vancouver Parent Advisory Council (NVPAC) operates in SD#44 as the District Parent Advisory Council, as legislated under the School Act. We are here to represent the voice of parents and our member PACs at the District level. We look forward to continuing our excellent working relationship with parents, staff, and our elected officials in School District #44 in this coming school year.

We believe that a well-informed parent community is essential to the success and growth of our school district. With this in mind, I am writing to introduce you, as parent leaders and school-based administrators, to a new protocol designed to ensure effective communication with parents at your school.

During the past school year, NVPAC initiated meetings with various representatives of the School District's administration and the parent community to develop a framework to improve communications with the parent community across all schools in the district, while addressing particular concerns with respect to privacy and appropriate use of electronic communications. Our goal was to create a document outlining appropriate communications procedures that would be acceptable to both parents and administrators, at both the local school and district levels.

With the support of Superintendent John Lewis and senior administration at the School District, and with input from various members of the parent and school community, NVPAC is pleased to launch the "Parent Communications Protocol" for September 2008.

At this time, we would encourage all school PACs and Administrators to work towards ensuring that all parents have the ability to be well informed about what is going on at all levels of our educational community in North Vancouver. The framework proposed in NVPAC's "*Parent Communications Protocol*" document provides a template for setting up an effective email-network and family phone directory in your individual school community. The documents outlines a volunteer-run communications system that has the support of the school-based administration to ensure its success.

By way of providing a quick overview of what can be done at your school, please consider following these easy steps listed on the following pages, to consult with your own school community and to move forward with implementing more effective email and phone communication networks at your school this year.

Many thanks for working with NVPAC on behalf of ensuring that parents of North Vancouver students have every opportunity to be well-informed about our educational community.

*Lisa Cartwright, NVPAC Chair on behalf of your NVPAC Executive*  
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**First Steps to Better Communications with your School's Parent Community**  
**- A framework provided by NVPAC North Vancouver Parent Advisory Council**  
**to assist with the implementation of the "Parent Communications Protocol" -**

**A. GETTING STARTED:** Based on the more detailed information and guidelines provided in the "*Parent Communications Protocol*" for All-Parent Email Network and Directory Projects", here are some first steps that can be taken to establish better communications in our schools.

**PAC Chairs:**

1. Talk to your PAC Executive and DPAC Rep about the *NVPAC Parent Communications Protocol* and the implementation of an All-Parent email network in your school.
2. Find a parent volunteer(s) that would be willing to implement and administer the email communications on behalf of your PAC and parent community. Make a "Communications Coordinator" position a priority within your own PAC.
3. Talk to your Principal about establishing the All-Parent Email communication network within your own school community.
4. Agree to approve and manage the implementation of the parent-run email network under the guidelines provided in the NVPAC Parent Communications Protocol which has been sanctioned by the Superintendent in cooperation with NVPAC and representatives of the Principals/Vice Principals group.
5. Commit to managing the use of the Parent Email Network in a responsible and effective way to provide your school's parent community with relevant and timely information via email. Take on the Directory project if your parent community desires.

**Principals:**

1. Talk to your PAC Chair/Exec about establishing a Parent Email communication network within your own school community.
2. Agree to approve the implementation of the parent-run email network under the guidelines provided in the NVPAC Parent Communications Protocol which has been sanctioned by the Superintendent in cooperation with NVPAC and representatives of the Principals/Vice Principals group.
3. Support the PAC in distributing the appropriate consent forms to all parents in your school.
4. Encourage your PAC to provide your school's parent community with relevant and timely information via email.
5. Encourage your PAC to elect a DPAC rep and to participate actively in NVPAC activities and communications so that we can all share successes and learn from each other.

**B. MAKING IT HAPPEN:** Once it has been agreed that the Parent Communications Network will be established, here are some next steps for implementation:

1. PAC Exec to appoint a Communications/ClassRep Coordinator to manage the system for that school community.
2. Design and distribute a PAC "*Contact Permission Form*" form (based on the template provided in *Appendix D* of the "*Parent Communications Protocol*" document. This form will serve to collect email and phone contact information for each family along with their written consent to release this information for the appropriate use of the PAC in an all-parent email network, and, potentially, a printed school telephone directory, if the community desires.

3. Collect completed consent forms and build email address lists as appropriate for each school and as outlined in the Communications Protocol, using class reps and/or appropriate email list tools.
4. Distribute appropriate information to the parent community according to the procedures and guidelines outlined in the Communications Protocol.
5. As a PAC, be well informed, and share the information in a meaningful way with your own parent community for the benefit of all of our students in North Vancouver.

### **C. NVPAC COMMUNICATIONS WORKSHOP and SUPPORT:**

NVPAC is planning to host a *Communications Workshop* on Saturday, September 27<sup>th</sup> (details to follow) in conjunction with our annual PAC-Education day. We will use the “*Parent Communications Protocol*” as a guideline for this workshop, and will provide both administrative and technical assistance to help PACs successfully setup and manage their own school’s email and/or directory system, as well as the opportunity to share out what is happening at other schools.

Please plan on sending your PAC Communications Coordinator or other PAC representative(s) to this workshop. This is also a great opportunity to meet other parent volunteers from across North Vancouver and to share information and get new ideas. We will send out more detailed information on this workshop soon, so please note the date and recruit some keen parents to handle communications at your school!

### **NVPAC Contact information and followup:**

Don’t hesitate to contact any of our NVPAC Executive for assistance in the meantime – we hope to see many of our NVPAC Reps and PAC Chairs at our:

- o NVPAC General Meeting and Social to start up the year on Thursday, September 25, 2008
- o and the Communications Workshop on Saturday, September 27, 2008.

(Details will follow soon for both of these events.)

<http://www.nvsd44.bc.ca/AboutUs/NVPAC.aspx>

We are still in the process of updating our website for the new school year, but the list of your NVPAC Executive for 2008/9 is now current – full contact information to follow soon....please keep in touch with us!

Please refer to the attached NVPAC *Parent Communications Protocol (September 2008)* document for full details.

***Lisa Cartwright, NVPAC Chair on behalf of your NVPAC Executive***  
***Ph:604-980-4915 email: [lisacartwright@shaw.ca](mailto:lisacartwright@shaw.ca)***

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