

February 26, 2020

Principals, Athletic Directors, Coaches and Partners  
BC School Sports Member Schools and Partners

**RE: BCSS Governance Committee Recommendation**

To all Member Schools, Stakeholders and Partners:

On behalf of the BC School Sports (BCSS) Board of Directors, it gives me great pleasure to present the recommendation from the BCSS Governance Ad-Hoc Committee. The committee has worked hard for over a year to create this recommendation, which has been entirely supported and endorsed by the Board of Directors. This recommendation will be brought forward to the 2020 BCSS Annual General Meeting by the Board of Directors for a vote by the Member Schools.

The committee with the support of the BCSS staff has worked hard to prepare numerous resources that will help educate our administrators, athletic directors, coaches and stakeholders on the various aspects of the recommendation. It is our request that each stakeholder invests the time to read the report and supplemental materials to understand the process, recommendation and rationale.

Additionally, there has been a short video created to provide a high-level understanding of the recommendation. Lastly, we know that even after understanding the recommendation there will be additional questions, and the committee and staff have worked to anticipate many of these questions and have produced a detailed FAQ.

On a personal note, some of you may not be aware that I, for many years, was an open critic of BCSS and the direction the organization was heading. I felt it was important to be part of the solution, educate myself and lead the organization to act in a more transparent and consistent manner. Now four years later and concluding my 2<sup>nd</sup> and final term as President, I can share that I have learned much I wasn't aware of about the complexities and challenges of school sport. I have continued to question why certain things are done, or where there may be room for improvement. It has become increasingly apparent during my tenure that our structure continues to be a significant outlier across North America and creates significant challenges for BCSS. As my time as President nears completion, I have no reservations in supporting this recommendation because of the belief in the process which began in 2017 with plenty of member engagement and continued with the work of focus groups, consultations, updates and a lot of hard work by the Governance Committee and BCSS staff. The result is an ideal model for BCSS and what I, along with my fellow Board members believe is truly what is best for the long term health and sustainability of school sport. It is our hope that you will join us in supporting the change.

Should you have any questions about anything within the recommendation, please don't hesitate to reach out to the BCSS office.

Respectfully,



Mike Allina  
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BC SCHOOL SPORTS

# GOVERNANCE RECOMMENDATION

BCSS GOVERNANCE AD-HOC COMMITTEE



February 26, 2020

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*While we encourage all interested parties and stakeholders to read the full report, as it will contain far greater depth of background, process, and rationale of the recommendation, this executive summary provides a quick, easy to understand snapshot of the recommendations made by the Governance Ad-Hoc Committee.*

## Executive Summary

In late 2017 BCSS undertook a significant strategic planning process to assess organizational strengths and weaknesses, and to develop a long-term vision for the future. This process involved the engagement of the BCSS membership through member-wide surveys, focus groups, and interviews with key stakeholders. The feedback collected from the membership along with the best practices review identified an overwhelming need to address limitations of the existing BCSS governance structure.

In December of 2018, the BCSS Board of Directors appointed the Ad-Hoc Governance Committee from various stakeholders including superintendents, school administrators, commissions, local associations, ADs, and coaches. The committee was tasked with completing a thorough review of the current structure strengths and weaknesses, assessing alternate models utilized by similar organizations in Canada and the U.S., and ultimately recommending changes or improvements.

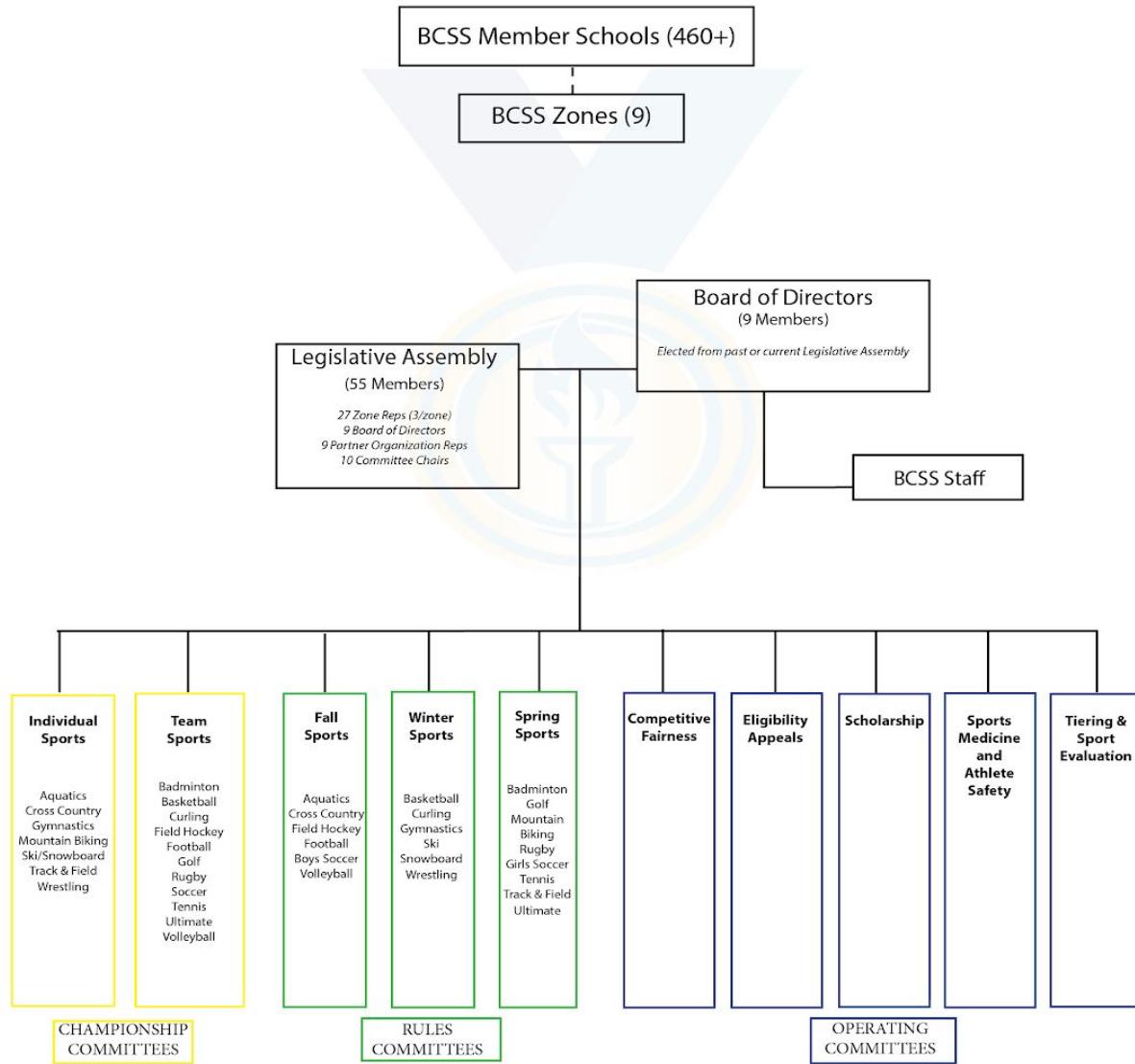
The committee began their work in January of 2019 meeting numerous times over the next 12 months, including a full-day meeting in November 2019. In particular, the committee's review revealed significant philosophical, financial, operational and legal limitations with the current organizational structure.

During this period the committee worked through a detailed 4 stage process as described below:

1. Review of the summarized feedback collected from the initial strategic planning process
2. Clarification of the most significant governance issues facing the organization
3. Completed a detailed examination of the governance structures of eight comparable organizations in Canada and the U.S. to identify best practices
4. Explored potential alternate structures for consideration as an improved model for BCSS

The year-long work of the committee culminated in a full-day workshop to complete a final analysis and deliberation of the potential models under consideration. Ultimately the following structure was identified as best meeting the key needs of the organization:

## BCSS Proposed Governance Structure



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## Why a Governance Review?

The Board of Directors initiated a strategic planning process in June 2017. The process led by DACATA Performance Group included 2 member-wide surveys for coaches, athletic directors, school administrators and district administrators to provide feedback on the direction for BC School Sports. In addition, the development of the plan sought feedback from smaller working groups and 1-on-1 interviews with Commissioners, Athletic Association Presidents, Staff and Board Members. The end result was a strategic plan released to the membership in May 2018, which focused on 3 core pillars for the next 5 years. The highest priority Phase I target of the Strategic Plan was to conduct a thorough governance review.

The Board, based on their high level of satisfaction with DACATA Performance Group throughout the Strategic Planning process and their familiarity with BCSS, again engaged them to lead the Governance Ad-Hoc Committee in the governance review process.

### Committee Composition/Members and Mandate

The Committee was made up of:

- Kim Senecal, Lead Consultant, DACATA Performance Group
- Greg Kitchen, Assistant Superintendent, School District 61 (Victoria)
- James Johnston, Principal, Semiahmoo Secondary
- Troy White, Principal, Kelowna Secondary School
- Lindsay Brooke, Athletic Director, St. Michaels University School
- Rick Thiessen, Athletic Director/Vice Principal, MEI
- Mark Fenn, Athletic Director, Sentinel Secondary School
- Jordan Abney, Executive Director, BC School Sports

The members of the Governance Ad-Hoc committee were appointed by the Board of Directors in December 2018 and began work in January 2019. Their mandate was to explore all aspects of governance, specifically but not limited to, Membership Classes, General Meetings, Board Composition, Voting Rights, Tiering, Sport Commissions, and Local Associations. The committee was encouraged to examine best practices and requested to create an expert recommendation.

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## Governance Review Process

### Results of Exploration of Current Structure Strengths and Weaknesses

The Committee began by exploring the current BCSS structure and assessing its limitations as well as its strengths. The committee broke down many identified areas into 4 categories:

#### **1) Philosophical**

- a) Representation
  - i) While providing a vote to each of the 460+ member schools, this model does not foster an appropriate forum for educated, informed discussion and decision making, which often leads to drastic non-uniform policy decisions year-over-year motivated by small special interests;
  - ii) Entertains proxies and advanced voting which leads to a large number of ballots cast without engaging members in appropriate discussion to understand the issues and impact of the decisions - this approach reinforces special interests;
  - iii) Lack of diversity and appropriate representation on decision making bodies such as region, gender, school type, etc. (i.e. one female on Board in the last four years, or 2 members from outside Lower Mainland in the past 4 years).
- b) Competing approaches
  - i) Education vs. sport development focus; whereas the organization has struggled as a result of its structure to ensure the focus remains centred around educational values and objectives;
  - ii) Multisport vs. single sport focus; where the organization, as a result of its structure, often made decisions considering only one sport, as opposed to its multisport effect.

#### **2) Financial**

- a) Questionable reliability of funding from Government sources (i.e. letter from Gaming Branch in July 2018);
- b) Challenges in transparency and accountability due to BCSS Sport Commissions independent finance and accounting practices;
- c) BCSS does not derive financial benefit from our championships to sustain ongoing operations; profits or benefits go directly to independent commissions;
- d) The current commission model does not allow a global corporate approach towards sponsorship to support the operations of the organization.

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### **3) *Operational***

- a) We have 19 BCSS Sport Commissions, each operating at various levels of autonomy and each with different memberships, rules, processes and procedures;
- b) Due to this decentralized model, a heavy burden is placed on stakeholders, especially athletic directors, to be aware of the various bylaws, policies, and constantly changing requirements which contributes to an increase in athletic director burnout. (Approximately 30% of AD's turnover every year);
- c) BCSS Staff spends a significant amount of time responding to constantly changing commission decisions and directives that limit staff from serving member schools through programming and other services.

### **4) *Legal / Liability***

- a) BCSS purchases the insurance for commissions and its volunteers, creating exposure through the independent decision making of these bodies, with no consultation of the greater BCSS membership who is paying for the insurance and inheriting this risk (i.e. Should a commission make a decision independently that ends up in a legal challenge, BCSS and its member schools will inherit the costs of defending the challenge);
- b) Each Commission is listed as a standing committee under BCSS bylaws and policy, yet functions in an autonomous manner, leading to further ambiguity about finances, risk exposure and decision-making;
- c) Commissions often pass bylaws or policies of their own that are in conflict with BCSS member-approved policies (i.e. appointing a President/Commissioner who is not an active teacher, as per the requirements of a commissioner in the BCSS Policies).

## **Findings of Exploration of Alternative School Sport Jurisdictions**

After understanding some of the strengths and limitations of our current structure, the committee then engaged in a comprehensive review of other school sport governing bodies.

The committee performed a thorough examination of the organizational structures and governing mechanisms in Alberta, Arizona, Colorado, Iowa, Nevada, Ontario, Oregon and Washington. The committee examined the Mission and Vision of these organizations, as well as their Legislative practices and procedures, governing body composition, committee purposes and composition and tiering philosophy and approach.

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These provinces and states were chosen for their similarities in approximate population and some cultural similarities to BC. For example, the committee did not look at Texas, California or Louisiana due to the significant differences in population size and culture.

With the understanding of our current structure's weaknesses and the knowledge of other similarly purposed organizations, the committee was tasked with finding common principles to begin exploring potential options. The committee agreed that:

- 1) The current BCSS structure was a significant outlier and not consistent with the generally accepted best practices or commonly used governance structures.
- 2) Provinces and States had specifics and purpose to the structure of their organization that ensured the appropriate diversity of representation were present in decision making bodies.
- 3) A new BCSS structure should:
  - a) Ideally include a voting body of 40-60 people
  - b) Build in the appropriate diversity in decision making bodies appropriate of a provincial organization relative to geographic diversity, recognition of both urban and rural schools, gender, school size etc.
  - c) The Legislative Assembly, Board of Directors, and committees should have a diversity of district administrators, school administrators and athletic directors where appropriate

### **Summary of Options Explored by Committee**

Kim Senecal, Lead Consultant, DACATA Performance Group along with the BCSS staff, then took these agreed upon principles from the Governance Committee and built many high level variations of potential governance models. In all there were two significantly different approaches, with four to six different variations within each model.

The Governance Committee was presented with the different approaches and the variety of options within each approach. Each option was reviewed and evaluated. Some were immediately discarded, while others were tweaked. The committee quickly came to a consensus on the Legislative Assembly and then used pieces of three different Board of Directors options to create an entirely new structure.

Lastly, the governance committee had long deliberations and debate around the role of commissions and operating committees. The majority of our day-long face to face meeting was around this topic. Discussion took place on the various implications and scenarios based on the options. The committee was ultimately able to come to a consensus, which is presented below.

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## **Recommendation from Governance Committee**

### **Legislative Assembly (55 Members)**

#### **Composition:**

- Three (3) representatives from each BCSS Zone (27)
  - Must include one (1) administrator and one (1) person of the opposite gender from the other two representatives (can't have 3 males or females from a zone)
- Board of Directors Members (9)
  - Each member elected to the Board of Directors will be a member of the legislative assembly
- One (1) representative from each of the following partner organizations (9):
  - BC Schools Superintendents' Association
  - BC School Trustees' Association
  - BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils
  - BC Principals and Vice Principals Association
  - Ministry of Education
  - Ministry of Tourism, Arts & Culture (Sport Branch)
  - BC Teachers Federation
  - Federation of Independent Schools
  - BCSS Individual Membership Representative
- The chair of each of the ten (10) BCSS Major Committees
  - Individual Sports Championships Committee
  - Team Sports Championship Committee
  - Fall Sports Rules Committee
  - Winter Sports Rules Committee
  - Spring Sports Rules Committee
  - Eligibility Appeals Committee
  - Competitive Fairness Committee Chair
  - Scholarship Committee Chair
  - Sport Medicine & Athlete Safety Chair
  - Tiering & Sport Evaluation Committee Chair

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### **Roles & Responsibilities:**

The Legislative Assembly is responsible to the membership for reviewing, discussing and passing the bylaws, policies, and rules of play for the organization. ("The Rule-Making Body")

### **Frequency of Meetings:**

The Legislative Assembly will meet twice per year, for 1.5-2 days at each meeting, where official business can be conducted (debating and passing motions, when required)

- Fall Planning Meeting (Fall)
- Annual General Meeting (Spring)

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## Board of Directors (9 members)

### Composition:

The Board of Directors consists of the following persons, elected by the Legislative Assembly:

Position:	Requirements and Terms:	Notes:
<b>PRESIDENT</b> <i>and either</i> <b>VICE PRESIDENT</b> <i>or</i> <b>PAST-PRESIDENT</b>	Elected as Vice President and serves 1-year as VP. Automatically assumes Presidency after one year. Serves 2-year term as President, serves 1-year as Past-President, in a voting capacity. (4-year commitment)  The Board will have either a Vice President or Past-President, but never both concurrently.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Board positions are elected by the Legislative Assembly</li><li>• Section Directors have a set rotation where a female candidate must come forward. (1 section at a time, or once every 9 years per section)</li><li>• To be eligible for election by the Legislative Assembly, candidates must be an Athletic Director, School Administrator, or District Administrator at a Member School in good standing.. Certain positions may have defined requirements</li></ul>
<b>DIRECTOR AT LARGE</b>	School or District Administrator: A/AA School (3-year term)	
<b>DIRECTOR AT LARGE</b>	School or District Administrator: AAA/AAAA School (3-year term)	
<b>DIRECTOR AT LARGE</b>	Rural/Semi-Rural School (3-year term)	
<b>DIRECTOR AT LARGE: SECTION 1</b>	Okanagan & Vancouver Island Zones (3-year term)	
<b>DIRECTOR AT LARGE: SECTION 2</b>	North Central, Northwest & Kootenays Zones (3-year term)	
<b>DIRECTOR AT LARGE: SECTION 3</b>	Eastern Valley, South Fraser, Fraser North & Vancouver Sea-2-Sky Zones (3-year term)	
<b>FEMALE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR</b>	Must be a female in an AD role. (2-year term)	

**NOTE:** Sections are used for governance purposes only and have no effect on competition or championship berthing. They are used to ensure geographic diversity and representation by commonality.

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## **Roles & Responsibilities:**

The Board of Directors is responsible for the interpretation, implementation and enforcement of the policies and rules as created by the Legislative Assembly. It also has the responsibility for the traditional Board oversight of the organization which includes:

- Strategic Planning
- Budget Approval and Fiscal Oversight
- Managing Risk (ie. Legal, Insurance etc.)
- Hiring, Supervising and Supporting the Executive Director/CEO
- Alignment of Mission and Vision
- Monitor Programs and Deliverables

## **Frequency of Meetings:**

The Board of Directors will meet as required; generally 7-9 times per year.

## **Standing Committees**

### **Sport Championship Committees**

- Two separate committees: Team Sports Championship Committee and Individual Sports Championship Committee.
- Committees are focused on Policy of Championships, not the hosting or coordination of championships. Focuses will include:
  - Size of Championships
  - Berthing
  - Seeding, Ranking (policies and process, not actually conducting the seeding/ranking)
  - Discipline and Appeal Policies for Zone and Provincial Championship contests
- The Chair of each committee is appointed from the Board of Directors
- One committee member from each fully recognized sport
  - Individual Sport Committee: Aquatics, Cross-Country, Gymnastics, Mountain Biking, Skiing, Snowboarding, Track & Field, Wrestling
  - Team Sport Championship Committee: Badminton, Basketball, Curling, Field Hockey, Football, Golf, Rugby, Soccer, Tennis, Ultimate, Volleyball
- Members appointed by Board of Directors, upon submissions of interest from the membership
- Members of this committee must be an Athletic Director or Administrator

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- Will meet 3-4 times per year, predominately by video conference

## **Rules Committees**

- Three (3) separate committees, by the Season of Play (Fall Sports Rules Committee, Winter Sports Rules Committees, Spring Sports Rules Committees)
- Committees are focused on the rules of play including:
  - Technical Rules and Game Protocols
  - Field of Play Specifications/Requirements
  - Uniforms
  - Equipment
  - Officials/Scoring
- The Chair is elected by the Legislative Assembly and must be an AD or Administrator
- One appointee from each BCSS fully recognized activity that competes in the appropriate season based on an expression of interest to the Board of Directors
- Minimum 2 Coaches and 2 Females on the committee
- Must be an active coach employed by a school or district, an AD or administrator to sit on this committee

## **Eligibility Appeals Committee**

No Change in Mandate or Structure

## **Competitive Fairness Committee**

No Change in Mandate or Structure

## **Sport Medicine & Athlete Safety Committee**

No change in mandate or Structure

## **Scholarship Committee**

No change in Mandate or Structure

## **Tiering & Sport Evaluation Committee (new)**

- Responsible to make recommendations for the addition and removal of sports based on established criteria and data
- Create and evaluate application process for adding new sports to make recommendations to the Legislative Assembly
- Make recommendations to the Legislative Assembly on Tiering thresholds and structures and timelines

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- Composition:
    - BCSS Board of Directors Member
    - Team Sport Championship Committee Member
    - Individual Sport Championship Committee Member
    - BC Superintendent Association Representative
    - BC Principals and Vice Principals Association Representative
  - Meets twice per year

**NOTE: All committees make recommendations to the Legislative Assembly and have no ability to directly change the policies or rules of the organization.**

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## **Strengths of structure and Rationale for Recommendations**

### **1. Philosophical**

- a. Representation
  - a. A Legislative Assembly of 55 persons, two meetings per year, to spend the appropriate time educating themselves and each other on each issue and the various viewpoints from around the province before making a fully informed decision.
  - b. Eliminates proxy and electronic votes, to ensure a small group of people do not control the meeting and the people discussing and voting on issues are well informed and present for all discussions.
  - c. The proposed model mandates diversity requirements for all bodies (Legislative Assembly, Board of Directors, and committees) to ensure appropriate representation based on region, gender, school type, etc. (details provided in structure descriptions).
- b. Competing approaches
  - a. The proposed model emphasizes and reinforces an education focus.
  - b. The proposed model emphasizes and reinforces a multisport focus where all BCSS activities are provided equitable support.

### **2. Financial**

- a. Government concerns regarding the future of gaming funds are addressed through these changes, leading to a better chance of success in achieving gaming funds consistently in the future.
- b. The BCSS budget and financials will include the finances for championships in a consistent and transparent manner, and will continue to be externally audited. All committees will receive the appropriate budget within the BCSS budget.
- c. The proposed model ensures that any revenue generated from BCSS Championships will directly benefit all BCSS members by sustaining ongoing operations.
- d. The proposed model allows for a global corporate approach to sponsorship, providing support to operations of the entire organization and all of its activities.

### **3. Operational**

- a. The proposed model ensures that all activities are operating under a common set of shared rules, processes and procedures.
- b. The proposed model will streamline information for AD's relative to BCSS and its activities, which should support retention in the role.

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- c. The proposed model creates consistency in the decision-making process, ensuring a more proactive approach can be developed. This will reduce the significant policy changes from year to year and allow more time for BCSS staff to focus on delivering programming and services.
4. ***Legal / Liability***
- a. The Legislative Assembly, representing the membership, will be responsible for approving any changes to rules or activities. Thus, ensuring decision making is aligned with the philosophy of the organization and minimizing unknown risk.
  - b. Adopts a multi-sport model for discussing rule changes, which eliminates single-sport bias and potential for conflict or inequity between activities.
  - c. The proposed model eliminates independent commissions which ensures all activities have equitable representation within committees and the Legislative Assembly.

## **Legislative Assembly**

The best way to think of the Legislative Assembly is the “Rule Makers” of the organization. This body is responsible for managing all BCSS Bylaws, Policies and Rules. Any change to these must be approved by the Legislative Assembly. The current voting body of BCSS is the entire membership with each school receiving a vote. The committee could not find one other school sport governing body in North America that followed this model. It was noted by the committee that as a result of the current structure, the AGM is much more transactional than discussion-based. Many of the attendees have limited knowledge of BCSS policies and are generally approaching any motion with a singular focus of their school or sport of choice, rather than a more holistic approach. In addition, we currently use both proxy and advance voting, both of which are not accepted as best practices for good governance. Before Advance Voting was introduced, 2-3 people would carry the majority vote and would control the entire direction of the organization. Advanced voting was introduced to provide a more balanced voice among all member schools, but the downside is often members using this voting method are doing so without any true understanding of BCSS policy or the desired or sometimes unintended effects of motions.

When looking at other organizations, most had a legislative entity responsible for the discussion and approval of policies, in the range of 40-60 people that was composed specifically to ensure a proper diversity of voices. With a group this size, people in attendance are expected to be well versed in the issues at hand, and can partake in substantive discussion before voting on any motions.

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Further, with a smaller legislative body, we would be able to meet twice per year to conduct business. This allows more time to discuss concepts and ideas while providing an opportunity for further consultation with the schools throughout the year. It also reduces the challenge spring sports currently have where the BCSS AGM happens before their season of play concludes, which can mean a full 2 year delay before implementation of desired changes.

When considering the appropriate composition of the Legislative Assembly, the committee felt that it was important to have equal representation from each of the BCSS zones, which is consistent with common practice across North America. The committee also felt it was important to have a mix of administrators and athletic directors, as well as both male and female representation.

The recommendation of the committee is that each zone have three (3) representatives in the Legislative Assembly. This will make up the majority of the Legislative Assembly. Of those three persons, one must be the opposite gender of the other two, and at least one must be an administrator. This will guarantee there will be at least 9 administrators and 9 females from the zone representatives, providing the desired perspective and diversity.

The Committee also recommends the inclusion of the Board of Directors in the Legislative Assembly as this is common practice in nearly all organizations. Currently, many of the motions at our AGM come from the Board. However, as they do not have a formal voice or vote at the AGM, the motions are attached to a school rather than the Board, causing greater confusion on the origin of a motion. The new model would ensure the Board of Directors has a formal voice and vote at the AGM. The Board of Directors would be elected by the Legislative Assembly. Note, the rationale for the recommendation as it pertains to the Board of Directors is in the next section.

It is also common to have various partners and stakeholder organizations with a seat at the decision-making table. This provides a strong and formal connection with the organizations so they feel a level of ownership and responsibility which helps unify and support the educational purposes of BCSS. Each of these organizations would have one vote.

Lastly, the committee's recommendation is to include the standing committee chairs on the Legislative Assembly. A strong organization relies on its committees to dig expertly into various issues to bring information and recommendations forward to the Legislative Assembly. To do that properly, the chair of these committees should have a voice and vote. Currently, committee chairs and even BCSS Sport Commissioners don't have a voice at our AGM. This again means many sport related motions come through schools that have little-to-no responsibility for the authoring of the motion.

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In summary this structure will allow enhanced geographical diversity, gender diversity, and administrative presence while allowing the organization to conduct business twice a year. The intended outcome is to have a more stable legislative process, with an engaged and educated legislative body responsible to ensure proper consideration is given to future policy changes.

## **Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors will assume many of its current duties. The Board of Directors is elected by the Legislative Assembly, ensuring the member representatives are democratically electing the people who are most involved in the oversight and direction of the organization.

In addition to traditional organizational oversight and responsibilities, such as fiscal accountability, hiring of the CEO/Executive Director, Strategic Planning and more, the Board of Directors is also responsible for the interpretation, application and enforcement of the policies as created by the Legislative Assembly. Think of them as the “Rule Enforcers.”

The Committee’s recommendation includes a combination of identified best practices, such as sectional representation, succession planning as well as gender and administrative considerations.

The role of the President is critical for any organization and BCSS is no different. In this new model, the Presidential term is 2 years, but includes one-year as a Vice President which automatically ascends to the Presidency and one year as a Past-President in a voting capacity. The Board of Directors will never have both a Vice President and Past President at the same time. It will always be one or the other in alternating years, allowing the Board of Directors to remain at 9 members at all times while ensuring a smooth and continual transition of leadership.

The rest of the positions are designed to bring forth different perspectives. The committee aspired to bring both Athletic Directors and Administrators together, from different regions, different sized schools, and different experiences in the proposed structure.

There are two positions that must be filled by administrators. Many organizations in Canada and the US require the President or in some cases, all the Officer positions to be filled by administrators. Some organizations even require superintendents to fill the Board of Director roles. The recommendation put forward ensures that there will be a minimum of two school administrators on the Board of Directors. In addition, the structure also ensures there will be a minimum of two females on the Board at all times. The sport sector in BC and in Canada, much like society is working to promote females in leadership roles through sport. While we stand rooted firmly in education, a

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quick glance back at the historical composition of our Boards, reveals a terrible track record of ensuring gender diversity is present in our decision-making bodies.

The concept of Sections is new for BC School Sports. It is borrowed from the NFHS and many different states, where regions are grouped together for governance purposes. It's important to note that Sections will be used for governance and administrative purposes only and will have no effect on competitive pathways for provincials. It is simply a way to group zones of similar characteristics together to ensure the proper diversity of voices. They are broken out as follows:

- Section I: Vancouver Island Zone, Okanagan Zone
- Section II: Northwest Zone, North Central Zone, Kootenay Zone
- Section III: Vancouver Sea-2-Sky Zone, Valley East Zone, South Fraser Zone, Fraser North Zone

Each of these sections will have a representative on the Board of Directors in 3-year terms. One of the three section representatives will be a female as per an established rotation. Of course, if others are nominated and elected, that is certainly encouraged, but the designated section on the rotation will be required to put forth a female nominee.

Ultimately, the Board of Directors will be an appropriate cross-section of persons, from different regions and experiences, elected by the Legislative Assembly to manage the affairs of the association and enforce the rules the Legislative Assembly passes.

## **Commissions and Committees**

When looking at the appropriate structure for committees, it became apparent to those on the committee that BCSS was very much the outlier with its current commission structure. As previously stated, there is no other governing body for school sport in North America that has the semi-autonomous bodies make decisions outside of the formal decision-making process. This is a holdover from our creation as an organization over 50 years ago when we were formed with the support of the Provincial Government bringing together the associations that had formed to handle a specific sport in the school setting. BCSS was created, but our governance didn't evolve over time with best practices and never resulted in centralized decision making.

The decision making within commissions has predominantly been done by coaches. We are lucky to have over 7000 school coaches in BC, for without them, school sport could not happen. However, with the significant increase of non-educators coaching in schools, we have seen an increase in decision-making centered on the purpose and philosophy of sport development; often with the

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narrow focus of a specific sport or sometimes only a specific tier. This is in contrast to the desired educational, multi-sport, organization-wide focus we strive to maintain.

Despite no other governing bodies operating in this way, the committee wrestled with the notion of this change, understanding that the recommendation presented in this document will be a significant paradigm shift. Ultimately, the committee felt based on their research and discussions this model will provide the highest level of consistency and sustainability for school sport in the long term, and keeps school-based athletics firmly rooted within education.

Operationally, the Legislative Assembly will identify which championships will be school-based, as we have many wonderful school based events. These events will be awarded by either bid or rotation as per the decisions of the Legislative Assembly. The other events will be neutral-site events and will be coordinated by BC School Sports. To be clear, BCSS does not have the manpower to physically act as coordinator or event director for each of these events. The staff will engage someone to work as the Event Director under contract for BCSS, with the link between the Sport Liaison in the office and the Event Director bringing consistency and efficiency to our events.

There is a lot of history in the BCSS commissions, including a history of coordinating some amazing championship experiences for our student-athletes. BCSS plans to retain this history and work with our member schools and stakeholders to maintain a high quality of championship events moving forward. We are confident that those individuals who have been committed to seeing school sport succeed within a commission framework, will continue to work with BCSS to ensure the student-athletes are a priority.

There will be two (2) committees responsible for Championship policy. Due to the nature of the differences in the types of sports, one committee will be responsible for Team Sports while the other will be responsible for Individual Sports. These committees will bring forth recommendations to the Legislative Assembly regarding policies for championship size, berthing, draw types and details, rankings/seedings and discipline at zone and provincial championships. It is important to recognize these committees are not responsible for executing or hosting championships but to be experts in the area with a multi-sport focus to provide recommendations, which becomes the framework for our provincial championships in our team sports. There will be another committee with the same mandate but for individual sports. They will investigate the same types of issues, but also include discussion on which disciplines to include in championships. These committees, consistent with all BCSS committees, can not execute any changes independently but have the responsibility to bring forth the recommendations to the Legislative Assembly.

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The other major set of committees will be the creation of three (3) rules committees. These committees will be broken down by season of play. They will be responsible for evaluating the rules of play, and making suggestions to the Legislative Assembly with regards to Technical Rules, Field of Play Specifications, Equipment, Uniforms and Scoring. The committees will consist of a variety of educators with multi-sport backgrounds, who will become knowledgeable and receive feedback from coaches and schools, consider suggestions, and where appropriate make recommendations for approval by the Legislative Assembly.

The existing operating committees (Eligibility Appeals Committee, Competitive Fairness Committee, Scholarships Committee, and lastly, the Sport Medicine and Athlete Safety Committee will all continue to operate under their current terms of reference. The final new committee is the Sport Evaluation and Tiering Committee, whose role will be to provide recommendations to the Legislative Assembly on the inclusion of new sports, the removal of current sports and the tiering of the organization.

This structure will bring BCSS in alignment with best practices across North America and should streamline the experience and process for all stakeholders. It will provide a multi-sport and holistic lens upon decision making for all BCSS activities.

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## **Conclusion**

This recommendation has been carefully crafted by the committee after over a year of research, discussion, consideration and debate. It is intended to bring BCSS in alignment with best practices in not-for-profit governance and utilizes a combination of strategies and structures from a number of school sport governing bodies, modified in a way that is appropriate for the challenges unique to British Columbia. This recommendation is made with the intent to ensure educational athletics remains under the direction of the education system while ensuring stability, sustainability, and increasing the diversity and provincial representation of those making decisions. Should this recommendation be approved by the membership at the 2020 Annual General Meeting, it will allow for BCSS to strengthen its focus on program delivery and creating meaningful experiences for student-athletes across BC.

The Board of Directors, who are elected by the membership to guide the operations for the organization, have fully endorsed this recommendation and feel it is in the best interest of the organization moving forward. They encourage all member schools to support the recommendation and look for ways to become involved in supporting the continued growth and evolution of BC School Sports.

# **BCSS Proposed Governance Changes: FAQ's**

BCSS recognizes that the report with the recommendation provides a lot of insight into the process, background and rationale for the recommendation from the Governance Committee. However, we expect there will be many questions on what the effect on operations will look like if this proposed structure is approved by the membership. We have prepared the following FAQ's to help the members understand what will happen.

## ***Why is this coming forward, and why now?***

As noted in the report, there were a lot of frustrations that were a result of our current governance structure from the membership during the strategic planning process. The Board was also acutely aware of how different and challenging our current structure is from the norm. With that, the Board engaged an external expert and the help of a diverse committee to investigate and make a recommendation. As for the timing, this committee has been working on this for 13 months, but the process began back in 2017 with the strategic plan. The Board felt it was important to have a thorough understanding of the challenges and develop a plan to execute this change in a complete and efficient manner. There is no easy time to make a change like this, but the frustrations and inefficiencies would continue as long as the current structure is in place. Once the Board received the recommendation from the committee, and after a lengthy discussion on the appropriate timeline, the Board felt that implementation for Fall 2020 was the best-case scenario.

## ***How are motions considered at the Fall or Annual General Meetings?***

There will be many ways motions can find their way to be discussed by the Legislative Assembly. The Board of Directors, BCSS committees, or BCSS Zones may all bring motions forward, upon a majority vote of their schools (or members in the case of the board or committee). An individual school would bring their motions to their zone, and with majority support from the zone, it would then be brought forward to the AGM. If there isn't support at the zone level for the concept, the school could ask the appropriate committee or Board to consider the idea to be brought forward.

## ***How can the current zone reps and BCSS Sport Commissioners be involved?***

BCSS has been and will continue to be an organization heavily reliant on volunteers. We are optimistic that people who have served in some capacity will continue to give their time in the areas they are passionate and knowledgeable. There will be 10 operational committees, including Rules of Play and Championship Committees, there will be tournament host committees as well as ranking and seeding procedures that will require input from various persons around the province. Essentially, if you are involved, and want to stay involved, it's very likely there is a place for you!

## ***How does BCSS expect to handle the increased load with only 4 Full-Time Staff?***

It will be a big task, but our staff are up for it. They continue each day to do so much, with very little. It is likely that the BCSS staff will grow by one body. This would allow each staff to have 4-6 sports for which they are the direct liaison. They would be responsible for working with host schools or sites, event planning, budgets, sponsors and working with the hosting team to ensure a great experience for the student-athlete.

### ***How do Championships work? Will they even happen without Commissions?***

As you likely noticed in the report, there is no other school sport governing body in North America using this commission model, and yes, they still manage to each run great championships. The Legislative Assembly will identify which championships will be school-based and which will be run at a neutral site. As this may take a year or two for the Legislative Assembly to complete, the intention is that BCSS will honour the hosting commitments made by the commissions. Once the school-based championships are identified, there will be a rotation or bid process put in place, and hosts ideally awarded 18-24 months in advance. The BCSS staff liaison will work directly with the AD or school appointed tournament chair in ensuring the school has the committee, tools and support in place to execute a great championship. Currently, our neutral-site events received a significant amount of attention and often have more visibility than our school-based events. We want to make sure school-based events have the same level of excitement and importance as any of our BCSS Provincial Championships.

For the neutral site events, BCSS will work to identify a tournament director, and committee to run the event, no different than the current operation. We are again optimistic, that many of the people who have given their time to assist with championships, will continue to do so.

It is important to note that this has been the model for the BCSS Ultimate Championships the past two years, which have been wonderful events that were driven and planned by BCSS and supported by a great team of educators in various capacities.

In the end, we want the experience of attending a BCSS Provincial Championship to be a great one, regardless of the event location or the sport. Many of our commissions already do a great job of this, and we will be working with those involved to ensure we retain what has made them successful. We will still be relying on an army of volunteers who are committed to school sport, but the coordination and direction will come from the BCSS office.

### ***How will ranking and seeding be completed?***

The process in most sports for ranking will likely remain similar but will be managed by the BCSS staff. In each sport and tier, there will be an assortment of people, similar to our current zone reps, who will be asked to participate. This is standard practice across the country and we think that many of the same people with many of the same processes will work, but with the workload for tabulation and review inherited by the BCSS office.

As for seeding at Provincial Championships, the Championships committee will be responsible for defining the policy to guide the process. We are acutely aware of the gravity of tournament seeding, especially in sports that don't allow for pool play, such as basketball, where the tournament is contested in a single-elimination structure. It is expected that many of the same processes being used now will be used moving forward, especially during the first years of transition.

***How will each zone determine who is on the legislative assembly?***

The 3 representatives for each zone will be at the discretion of the zone. The zone will be able to submit new representatives each year, but it is our hope that many zone representatives will remain for many years to allow some continuity around the table. Each June, prior to the end of the school year, the Zone President will need to confirm the three representatives for the following school year, ensuring the zone meets requirements of at least one school or district administrator, and both a male and female present among the 3 representatives. (ie. 2 female AD's, and a male Principal). The zone will also be able to indicate two alternates that will be able to attend the Fall General Meeting or the Annual General Meeting should one of the 3 representatives be unable to attend at the last minute. Zones are encouraged to discuss the best way to ensure appropriate diversity among their representatives. Some zones will have a rotation, some will have appointees, and some will just have officers of their zone leadership, while others may choose some form of election. BCSS must receive the names of the representatives by the end of June on the designated form.

***What happens if a Legislative Assembly representative gets elected onto the Board of Directors?***

A zone or organization does not lose a seat by having someone elected to the Board of Directors. The election for the Board of Directors will be the last agenda item of each Annual General Meeting held in the spring. When a zone or partner organization are required to designate their representative for the following academic year, they will do so in June, already knowing who has been elected to the Board of Directors. Members of the Board of Directors already sit on the Legislative Assembly, so that elected Board of Director will not be able to be named to a second seat on the Legislative Assembly, allowing the zone or organization to appoint someone else the following year.

***Why is there a focus on increasing female and administrator involvement?***

Given that approximately 47% of our participants are female, and more than 50% of educators are female, BCSS has had stunningly low participation of females in leadership roles within BCSS. While our targets are still disproportionately low, we feel this is a good first step to providing the opportunity for females to serve in a leadership capacity that provides a more versatile and diverse knowledge base for discussion and decision making. Additionally, both Sport Canada and the government of BC have made it known that they would like to see equity of women in sport leadership positions by 2025. This is a step in that direction and given that education is not a sector that is entirely dominated by men, we are confident there are plenty of strong female leaders able to contribute their knowledge to BCSS in addition to being positive role models for our female student-athletes.

Administrators have had a diminishing role in BCSS over the past 15 years. In our comparison, we found some organizations were led entirely by superintendents, while others entirely by Principals. The committee felt that AD's have a ton of valuable experience and perspective and a blended approach was both sustainable and achievable. The perspective of a district administrator is drastically different from that of a school administrator which is again, different from an AD or coach. The recommendation brings a balance of perspectives from different levels of the education system as well as regions of the province.

***What will happen to the money that Commissions have in their bank accounts?***

At year-end (June 2019), the 11 Commissions for which BCSS does the accounting for held roughly \$350,000 in their bank accounts. This doesn't account for the 7 commissions where BCSS does not do the books. No matter on whether a Commission is incorporated under the Society Act or not, or whether its books are with BCSS or not, the Commission will have the autonomy to decide where this money should go.

We are hopeful that many Commissions will decide that their funds should be transferred to BCSS to support the onboarding of many operations under the new structure, but there is no obligation to do so. Each commission has a different decision-making process with different memberships and requirements and they will independently decide on where this money will be spent or allocated. It should be noted that these balances have been compiled based on the success of various BC School Sports Provincial Championships and through the entry fees of students and schools, in addition to the annual funding provided directly from BCSS. If a commission decides not to provide the funds to BCSS, we are strongly encouraging commissions not to simply provide a one-time windfall of scholarships to effectively "use-up" these funds. The Gaming Branch provides a large portion of our revenue and has strict requirements on the organizations that source gaming funds, and for the use of the funds awarded. One requirement is that scholarships can't be awarded by a funded organization unless that is the primary purpose of the organization as stated in its Constitution. We have managed to work with Gaming to maintain our longstanding scholarships, but as scholarships are not a core function of BCSS, we do not feel it would be appropriate for a small number of scholarship winners to benefit from commission dollars that have built up over a number of years and it would likely jeopardize our ability to access gaming funds. BCSS believes reinvestment in school sport and to the service of all member schools would be far more beneficial.

***What will BCSS do with the Commission funds, if received?***

Should commissions decide to give their tournament operating profits to BCSS, it will go back into the BCSS operation in fulfilling our mission and executing our strategic plan. It will support the operation of championships and ensuring our student-athletes continue to receive quality events and championships. It will also allow us to expand programming and offer better resources to our stakeholders. We welcome a discussion with each of the BCSS Sport Commissions at the appropriate time.

***What are the financial impacts anticipated by BC School Sports as a result of this change***

BCSS has already met with our auditor to plan for a transition to a financial system that includes the operations of our championships. There are various factors at play when assessing the impact on member schools and operations, and the answer is quite dependent on the decisions of commissions relative to their money. As noted previously, BCSS would likely have to increase our staff count by 1.0 FTE, but it is also anticipated that savings could be had through the efficiencies of the new structure. However, many of these costs are incurred currently by Commissions, so the savings may be hard to quantify. Realistically, it will take a few years to see the financial benefits of the change and achieve success in a new sponsorship structure. It is the hope that some of that money from the commissions can go to offset the transition period. Should most commissions decide not to give their savings to BCSS, then it would be expected the member schools would see a modest increase (approx. 10%, ranging from \$7 for the smallest schools to \$200 for the largest) in dues to assist in the transition

period. This amount of the increase is also dependent on other motions from the membership that are approved at the AGM and that may have financial impacts.

***How are Rural and Semi-Rural Schools Determined?***

The Competitive Fairness Committee, whose recommendations are not being presented at this time, has worked through developing criteria for determining rural and semi-rural schools. In an effort to ensure we have some rural school representation, the Governance Committee felt using that designation would be appropriate to ensure representation on the Board of Directors. The determination of Rural and Semi-Rural schools are as follows:

Urban	Schools in a municipality with a population of 30,000 or greater, or a population less than 30,000 but within 85km of the nearest school within an urban centre
Semi-Rural	Schools in a municipality with a population of 15,000 – 29,999 and more than 85km from the nearest school within an urban municipality
Rural	Schools in a municipality with a population of fewer than 15,000 and more than 125km from the nearest school in an urban municipality.

With this working definition, we then established which schools would qualify as rural or semi-rural. The use of this framework results in 83 schools being designated as Rural, and a further 23 being designated as semi-rural. Meaning of our approximately 458 member schools, 106 of them would be classified as semi-rural or rural.

***What is the actual mechanism for the governance structure to be approved? How will this happen?***

There will be two motions coming to the membership at the AGM. The first will be a special resolution, therefore requiring a vote of 2/3, which will, if passed, replace the current bylaws with the new bylaws. The second will be an ordinary resolution to replace the policies of the Handbook with a new Handbook. Contained within both will be all the changes represented within the recommendation. Once those motions are dealt with, the meeting will then proceed with a Pathway A (governance approved) or Pathway B (governance defeated) where the other applicable motions will then be considered. In some cases, motions will appear in both pathways, wherein others, there may be different motions depending on their content. The new Bylaws, for transition purposes, will take effect immediately, with the Handbook changes taking effect on August 1, 2020, as per standard BCSS policy.

***What happens if this doesn't pass at the AGM?***

We are hopeful that after the amount of due diligence completed by the committee, board and staff in preparing this recommendation that the new structure will be approved; however, if it is defeated, then we will continue to operate with the current structure. Some secondary outcomes will likely mean raising membership fees as the current structure is not sustainable long term, and BCSS will continue to consider drastic policy changes from year-to-year based on narrow or specific interests and perspectives.