



Illinois State Board of Education

BILINGUAL PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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Equity • Quality • Collaboration • Community

BPAC FAQ

INTRODUCTION

A Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee (BPAC)

- **Represents** the interests of a School District's EL students in TBE program(s), their parents/guardians, and community members.
- **Ensures** the district recognizes these community voices and acts to meet their needs.
- **Advises** and **focuses** on helping bilingual parents and community members better understand bilingual programming.
- **Advocates** for the academic needs of EL students in TBE.

[105 ILCS 5/14C-10; Ill. Admin. Code title 23, 228.30 \(c\)\(4\)](#)



BPAC FAQ

INTRODUCTION

A Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee (**BPAC**) *cont'd*

- Offers a detailed overview of the bilingual programs
- Provides access to resources.
- Encourages involvement in the school district.
- Strengthens community investment in EL Student outcomes.

[105 ILCS 5/14C-10; Ill. Admin. Code title 23, 228.30 \(c\)\(4\)](#)



BPAC FAQ

This presentation covers the main points of the [BPAC FAQ document](#).

BPAC FAQ

1. What are the school district responsibilities regarding the BPAC?



- ✓ Ensure the establishment of the BPAC
- ✓ Provide annual training needed to develop the BPAC in the language that the parent members understand. Shall encompass but need not be limited to:
 - Information on the basic requirements of the BPAC
 - Information related to instructional approaches and methods in bilingual education
 - Provisions of State and federal law related to students' participation and parents' rights
 - Accountability measures relevant to students in bilingual programs

BPAC FAQ

School district responsibilities regarding the BPAC:



- ✓ Ensure the BPAC is meeting at least four times a year.
- ✓ Provide the BPAC with the Bilingual Service Plan (BSP); the EL portions of the Evidence-Based Funding Spending Plan; and other documents requested for review, such as a Consolidated District Plan (CDP) or Title III applications.
- ✓ Provide a space and materials for the BPAC to meet.
- ✓ Provide technical support as needed for the BPAC to conduct meetings.

BPAC FAQ

School district responsibilities regarding the BPAC:



- ✓ Ensure meeting minutes are filed properly and documentation is available as needed.
- ✓ Ensure a district representative attends each BPAC meeting.
- ✓ Provide interpreters and translators for each meeting to ensure meaningful access for parents/guardians who don't speak English.

It is recommended that a district representative attends each BPAC meeting.

BPAC FAQ

2. When Is a district required to have a BPAC?



It is mandated that a school district establish a BPAC when:

- One (or more) attendance center(s) has 20 or more EL students who share the same home language in any grades from K-12.
- One (or more) attendance center(s) has 20 or more EL students who share the same home language in pre-K.

The 20-plus number **includes** students with parent refusals.

*Once a BPAC is established, it is recommended that a district maintain the BPAC even if numbers fluctuate below 20.

BPAC FAQ

3. What are the responsibilities of the BPAC?



An established BPAC shall do the following:

- ✓ Operate autonomously -- including the election of officers; establishment of documented internal rules and procedures.
- ✓ Receive training from the district to make informed decisions.
- ✓ Meet at least four times per year.
- ✓ Record minutes of all meetings, which shall remain on file with the school district.

BPAC FAQ

Responsibilities of the BPAC:



- ✓ Review the district's program applications for each school year:
 - Bilingual Service Plan
 - Evidence-Based Spending Plan (English Learner portions)
- ✓ Collaborate with school district leadership regarding bilingual programs.
- ✓ Provide recommendations for bilingual programs.
- ✓ Participate in the planning, operation, and evaluation of the EL program within the district.

BPAC FAQ

4. What are the requirements for BPAC membership?



BPAC members must be parents or legal guardians of children enrolled in Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) programs or Transitional Programs of Instruction (TPIs) or transitional bilingual education teachers, counselors, and representatives from the community.

BPAC FAQ

5. How many members are required for a BPAC?



Membership requirements are met when the BPAC consists of individuals that are representative of the various home languages of students receiving TBE services in the district, to the extent possible.

Committee sizes will vary depending on the sizes of districts and the number of TBE programs represented, with a minimum of 3 members (majority of parents/guardians of children in the TBE program).

BPAC FAQ

6. Does the BPAC need to have representatives from all languages that have a TBE program?



It is recommended.

If the EL student enrollment number in the district's TBE program dictates the requirement for a BPAC, the district should attempt to include all the languages represented in the TBE program(s) as well as other languages of students receiving EL services in the district.

BPAC FAQ

7. Must the majority of BPAC parents be the parents of EL students who are currently enrolled in the TBE program, or can they be just any EL parents?



Any EL parents may join, but the BPAC majority must consist of parents or legal guardians of students currently enrolled in the TBE program(s). Additionally, teachers, other school staff members, and community members may join the committee. Community members may include parents/guardians of non-EL students in two-way dual language program(s).

BPAC FAQ

8. Can parents continue as BPAC members after their child/children exit services?



Yes. However, the majority of the BPAC membership must be parents/guardians of students enrolled in the TBE program(s).

BPAC FAQ

9. What is the role of the BPAC in a two-way dual language program?



The BPAC's role is to represent and advocate for the needs of a school district's EL students being serviced in a two-way dual language program. The list of action items that fall under the role/responsibilities BPAC are otherwise unchanged. Parents/guardians of non-EL students in dual language program(s) can serve as community members on the committee.

BPAC FAQ

10. Is the BPAC's role advisory? Does the BPAC have the authority to approve or disapprove district plans?



A Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee does not have the authority to make decisions for a school district or approve/disapprove district plans. Based upon the BPAC's insight into the needs of its bilingual community and students in TBE program(s), its role is to advise the district and give recommendations for bilingual programming. Additionally, it may explore new opportunities that may benefit the community and present its findings to district leadership.

BPAC FAQ

11. Can the BPAC meetings be supported by Title III funds?



Yes, Title III funds may be used if they are allocated for supplemental activities.

TITLE III funds may be used for effective activities and strategies that enhance or supplement language instruction educational programs for English Learners, which shall include supplemental EL parent/family and community engaged activities, cultural events, guest speakers, etc.

BPAC FAQ

12. What does it mean 'to function autonomously'?



“To function autonomously” means the BPAC shall operate independently without control or influence from the school district. It may make internal decisions and carry out actions on its own without reliance on district intervention or approval.

BPAC FAQ

13. The BPAC is to function autonomously once established. When is a BPAC considered to be established?



The BPAC is considered established when the committee has consistent membership that includes parents/guardians of EL students attending TBE program(s) who actively participate in leading and autonomously managing the committee. This involves electing officers and creating documented internal rules, guidelines, and procedures.

BPAC FAQ

14. Can the district's school personnel, such as principal, bilingual program director, and superintendent, be the chair of the BPAC?



It is recommended that the BPAC chairperson be a parent or guardian of a student who is currently enrolled in an EL TBE program to avoid a conflict of interest.



BPAC FAQ

15. Does the BPAC need to have a bylaw or a written standing rule and procedure for the election of officers and to conduct their business?



BPACs should document their autonomously produced rules and procedures, which may include bylaws. All BPAC meeting minutes shall be recorded and filed with the district.



BPAC FAQ

16. Should BPAC meetings be made open to the public (EL parents)? Are districts required to notify the EL parents of BPAC meetings and share the agenda?



Per the Open Meetings Act, the actions and deliberations of a public body are to be conducted openly. It also is the policy of the state that its citizens be notified in advance and afforded the right to attend all meetings.

Districts should consult with their attorneys regarding whether the BPAC for their district falls under the definition of "public body."

<https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/fulltext.asp?DocName=000501200K1.02>

BPAC FAQ

17. When a district has TBE programs in multiple languages in different attendance centers, is the district required to have more than one BPAC?



A single BPAC should be established, and it is recommended to have members representing the various TBE programs across multiple attendance centers in the school district. Depending on the district's size, there is an option to have parent committees at the school level that cater to the specific needs of the local population. These school-level committees can then provide feedback to the main district-level BPAC. Additionally, a district may choose to hold multiple meetings for the district-level BPAC to accommodate the language requirements of committee members.



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Additional Questions?

Contact your Assigned Principal Consultant

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