

## John William Bird

September 16, 1954 - February 21, 2017

It is with deep sorrow that the BCCPAC Board of Directors must announce the passing of our former President and dear friend, Mr. John Bird. After a courageous battle with cancer, John passed in his sleep with his loving family at his side.

With John's passing, B.C.'s students and parents have lost a tireless and passionate advocate for public education. John was involved in the school system for close to thirty years as a parent and a volunteer. He spent twenty years coaching, served as a director on six different PACs over thirteen years and was part of the Victoria DPAC executive for fifteen years, nine of those as the president. John was also very active with BCCPAC, most recently taking on the role of president.

John was profoundly passionate about educating children in a public system that ensures the success of every student. He believed that parents are grossly underrepresented in the decisions that are made about children in our schools and he wanted to see that changed.

He was a strong voice for the most vulnerable of our students, and for the right of each unique learner to be able to access the resources and supports they need to be successful in their local schools. In addition to advocating for large scale change, John helped countless families to advocate for the needs of their individual children in school districts across the Province.

In his words: *"Parents are the primary advocates for children. BCCPAC must ensure that parents are involved and that their expertise is incorporated into all levels of decisions that affect our children's school experience."*

Dedicating almost three decades in service to his PAC, District PAC and the BCCPAC, John was a devoted and tireless advocate for parents and students in public education. With his extensive knowledge of educational issues and his skill as a negotiator, John was able to successfully advance the interests of parents and students with the Ministry of Education and to forge alliances with other key partners in Education.

In his brief time as President, John lead BCCPAC in many successes in its role as a key partner in education. From parents to politics, John's strength in forging strong relationships with our partners in education cannot be overstated. First and foremost he always reminded us *"It's about the kids."*

Above all of his tireless volunteer work, John was a devoted and loving husband and father, and a kind and dedicated friend. He inspired us all with his wisdom, his compassion, and his strong, yet gentle leadership. Words cannot adequately express how deeply he will be missed.