



## How to Start a BCSCA Chapter

### **WHAT IS A BCSCA CHAPTER?**

A British Columbia School Counsellors Association (BCSCA) Chapter affords opportunity for teacher-counsellors to discuss problems and to exchange ideas. A group of enthusiastic teacher-counsellors can invite speakers to Chapter-sponsored workshops, can work through the local union(s) on local conditions that need improvement, can work through the BCSCA to obtain guidance and support and advocate on provincial concerns, and can apply for grants from the BCSCA to support its work.

### **A BCSCA Chapter aligns itself with the goals of the BCSCA:**

1. Enhance the awareness of school counsellors as qualified mental health professionals
2. Support school counsellors' well-being
3. Improve students' access to school counsellors

**\*\*NB: A Chapter is NOT the same as an LSA. See [this document](#) for further clarification.**

## **TIMELINE**

### **November 2025:**

- Application form for 2025-2026 year available

### **December 1, 2025, 7pm:**

- Informational Zoom Meeting for Membership

### **January 23, 2026**

- Applications for 2025-2026 Chapters due (email [bcscal Liaison@gmail.com](mailto:bcscal Liaison@gmail.com) for information on how to apply)

### **February 14, 2026**

- Chapter applications considered and approved/declined by BCSCA executive; Decisions communicated to president(s) of applying Chapter(s)

### **March 30, 2026**

- New Chapter Grant applications due:  
<https://forms.gle/17zZwrwYopTmzzJQ6>
- ProD Grant applications due: <https://forms.gle/YY7kLtUii1eh7g8C8>

### **April, 2026:**

- Chapter grant applications considered and approved/declined by BCSCA executive; Decisions communicated to president(s) of applying Chapter(s)
- Update on Chapter business conducted will be requested by BCSCA Local Liaison Chair

### **June, 2026:**

- Update on Chapter Business conducted will be requested by BCSCA Local Liaison Chair
- Opportunity for Chapter achievements to be featured in BCSCA newsletter or magazine

## **ORGANIZATION OF A CHAPTER**

1. Any interested group may apply to form a Chapter. As soon as members have decided to organize, they should inform the BCSCA ([bcsca.liaison@gmail.com](mailto:bcsca.liaison@gmail.com)). The Local Liaison Chair will then provide information on how to apply and supporting documentation (application form; constitution, agenda, and meeting minutes templates; New Chapter Grant application form; Chapter Professional Development application form)
2. The majority of Chapter members must belong to the BCSCA (this membership can be purchased at any time, or is included in the fees for our annual conference on PSA Day).
3. A Chapter has certain responsibilities to its local union(s). It should keep the executive informed of its plans and projects and should go through the local union in any business with the school board or superintendent.
4. The executive of a Chapter is elected from the membership at a general meeting of members held annually (usually in the late spring for the following term). All members of the Chapter executive must be BCSCA members and active BCTF members.
5. Finances for the chapter:
  - 5.1. A fee may be charged to all members of a Chapter.
  - 5.2. A registration fee may be charged for workshops; often a collection is taken to offset the cost of refreshments.
  - 5.3. The local teachers' union(s) may have an in-service education budget; consult the PD chairperson.
  - 5.4. The school board may allow in-service education expenses for groups or individual teachers. Apply through the PD chairperson.
  - 5.5. The BCSCA offers grants to its chapters.
6. Attendance at meetings: A chapter may invite any people it wishes to attend its meetings, but only members of the BCSCA may vote and/or hold office.
7. Notices of meeting should go to all members at their homes. Duplicated minutes or reports of meetings might be sent to the members. It helps

everyone to keep in touch with the group, especially if it is not convenient for all the members to attend every meeting. It is important that material sent out by a Chapter be carefully prepared, neat, and accurate.

8. The executive will assume the responsibility of organizing activities, but the members should be informed of its plans and decisions. The membership is free to question or to offer suggestions at any time.
9. Each chapter determines the offices needed. Suggested: president, vice-president [president elect], secretary, treasurer, representative to the local union, program convener, social convener, committee heads for special projects, nominations chairperson.
10. Meeting dates should be set well in advance and should be well publicized. Choose times and places that are convenient for the majority.
11. It is better to have a few good meetings than many poor ones.

### **EACH BCSCA CHAPTER IS EXPECTED TO:**

1. Maintain a legislative organization and ratify a constitution.
2. Ensure that as many local/regional members as possible join the BCSCA.
3. Study the BCSCA's constitution, literature, and goals.
4. Develop goals in alignment with the BCSCA's goals.
5. Communicate and co-operate with the BCSCA.
  - a. Respond to 3 check-ins per year sent by the Local Liaison Chair
6. Direct appropriate action through the BCSCA executive.
7. Direct appropriate action through the local teachers' union (PD chairperson).
8. Keep information flowing.
9. Ensure representation in the executive of the group(s) the Chapter represents (e.g. Burnaby School Counsellors Chapter would need both elementary and secondary school counsellors on the executive; a regional Chapter would need counsellors from all locals in that region on the executive)

## **FAQs:**

**Q:** Can there be multiple Chapters in a single local or region?

**A:** Yes, as long as each has a distinct purview (e.g. Burnaby Secondary Counsellors Chapter/Burnaby Elementary Counsellors Chapter)

**Q:** Can an LSA be a Chapter?

**A:** Yes, as long as it meets both the requirements of the local to be an LSA and the requirements of the BCSCA to be a Chapter

## **READY TO APPLY TO BE A BCSCA CHAPTER?**

Email [bcscaliason@gmail.com](mailto:bcscaliason@gmail.com) to get started!