



2024 Executive Board Election Candidate

Representative to the Executive Board

Name: Chris Payne

Title: University Guidance Counsellor

Institution: Collingwood School

Location/Region: Canada/Canada & U.S.

Member Group: Secondary (High School)

All Applicant Questions

Discuss your involvement with International ACAC, highlighting specific roles (with dates) and contributions made during your volunteer or leadership tenure.

I am excited to be a candidate for the role of Representative and I am also extremely proud to not only represent high school counsellors but my country of Canada. While there are many members from Canada many are on the university side and it is time to get more representation from the the high school side of the desk from around the world. I have been attending and participating in the International ACAC since 2007 (Vancouver). For the past five years I have been a member of the Admissions Practices Committee assisting with the membership audit for the past three years. I have also co-presented at the following International ACAC conferences (2016, 2018, 2019) and jumped in during the 2022 session on Admissions and Ethical Practices. During the conference at Tulane I was also a mentor for the first-timers session.

Identify and articulate a critical issue in college admissions for international students that you would like to or have championed, emphasizing its importance and potential impact on the community.

An issue often overlooked in international education is students who are neurodivergent, this would include students with dyslexia, dyscalcula, dysgraphia, ADHD, autism and the list goes on. International ACAC has capacity and a tremendous opportunity to raise issues in international education to help support any student who is neurodivergent. Over the past few years I have worked with more and more students that have presented neurodivergence in how they approach education. I have the privilege of working in a developed country where there are resources and access points for students who learn differently. Not only do I think this is a critical issue in college admissions I think this is an issue that has not been emphasized enough for international students who have not had access to resources. If elected I want to be a champion for students who are neurodivergent and advocate for ways for our members to more aware of students who learn differently in the admissions and college advising process.

Detail additional experiences that have equipped you with skills and insights applicable to the position you're applying for, emphasizing transferable accomplishments.

Throughout my career in education I have excelled when put into ad-hoc committees. I like to think of myself as an adaptable leader who can jump into any situation and find solutions while working with others. During 2010 when Vancouver hosted the Olympics I led a team of tour guides at The University of British Columbia to handle the increase in the number of visitors. In 2018, I was assigned to a committee to implement a new admissions and recruitment system at The University of British Columbia and was in charge of training a team of new users. I also chaired the annual Canada Reception at the NACAC Conference in 2019 in Salt Lake City. More recently I have organized Collingwood School's first ever admissions case studies program working with university representatives and other local counsellors to provide students' an insider's look at the university admissions process.

Outline your comprehension of the role you are applying for, specifying changes you'd like to implement while acknowledging current practices or programs you feel are effective.

As a candidate for the role of Representative to the Executive Board we need someone who can be adaptable and step in and help other members of the Executive. One of the changes I will implement is the transparency of how decisions are made in International ACAC. There have been a lot of changes to by-laws and roles in the past few years and I think we need more clarification on the roles of the Executive. The strength of International ACAC is the diversity of our membership but I think sometimes we hear from the same voices too often. A change I would like to make is to provide an easier way for membership to access Executive members to ask questions, get involved and have their opinions valued and heard. When I am elected I will work with the Executive and the membership to implement these changes but also look for ways to improve involvement and provide advocacy opportunities to new and experienced members.

Describe your leadership philosophy and strategies for effectively managing and leading a volunteer committee, emphasizing communication, collaboration, and recognition.

I believe in collaborative leadership. When managing a volunteer committee you need to respect that people are taking time out of their jobs to help make things better and contribute. If elected I will make sure everyone on a committee that I manage is heard and respected. It would be naive to think that everyone on a committee would have the same ideas and there would be disagreement, this disagreement needs to be embraced and explored to ensure everyone feels heard. This way of managing will lead to recognition, even if an idea from a member is not adopted or moved forward it is important to take the time and recognize every member of the committee so they continue to contribute. As the manager of a committee I will ensure that everyone who contributes will be heard and recognized for their contributions.

Explain how you would leverage the position to contribute to International ACAC's strategic plan, aligning your goals with the organization's three pillars: enhancing member experience globally, clarifying the international brand, and optimizing internal operations.

The Representative to the Executive Board is well suited to support the three pillars of International ACAC's strategic plan. This position can enhance the member experience globally by providing listening spaces so members who are not on the Executive or a committee can provide feedback to make the International ACAC a truly global listening community. This position can also help clarify our international

brand by learning and listening about the different educational barriers in all of our communities. Every region of the world presents challenges for students and counsellors and admissions folks, by listening to what those challenges are we can help clarify our international brand as one of assistance and help.

Share details about a notable contribution you have made in the field, underscoring its impact on the profession and industry. Highlight specific initiatives, programs, or leadership roles that showcase your commitment and expertise.

After nearly 20 years in international education there have been many leadership roles I have assumed but I am most proud of the way I have approached my journey through empathy and mentorship. I had many mentors throughout my career so far and as a leader of many international outreach initiatives and helping new colleagues in the profession learn and grow in their own careers. Recently I have been a member of the Admissions Practices committee where I have helped guide others on what good ethical practice looks like. Within Canada I am a member of the Admissions Practices committee for the Canadian Association of Independent School counsellors. Locally in British Columbia I am a member of the Independent School Associations of British Columbia counsellor committee where I am most proud of advocating for more accessibility not only for the students in my school but across British Columbia by providing admissions case studies and college fairs to our local communities.

Share why you want to volunteer for a leadership role for International ACAC and why this particular position.

International ACAC has always been an organization that has helped me throughout my career. I have given back to the organization by volunteering my time with the Admissions Practices committee and I wish to take on a larger role. I have always been taken aback that while we may disagree from time to time that all of us want to put students rights first. As your candidate to be a representative to the Executive Board I am excited to give back and show everyone who comes to our conference and takes part in our workshops and events why International ACAC is a great organization with members who are energetic, fun and passionate about education.