

## Information Sheet No.22

# Spending P&C funds

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Fundraising and spending by a P&C association is facilitated by good communication between the school principal, the board and the P&C association. The following principles should apply to the expenditure of funds raised by P&C associations:

- Consult your P&C's own constitution, to make sure that you comply with the rules about expenditure of funds.
- P&C associations raise funds to provide extras for their children's education in the expectation that the basics are provided by the government. For example, a P&C association should not agree to fund an ongoing educational program (which might involve the employment of a teacher).
- P&C associations should ensure that they are able to meet their own financial obligations. For example, the costs of affiliation fees to P&C Council, P&C insurance, long service leave and superannuation entitlements of employees, and PAYG tax installments must all be met **before** money is expended on other projects.
- The school board/principal should not request that P&C associations make up shortfalls in the school's budget, nor request specific amounts of money from the P&C association to "balance the books".

P&C associations often choose to help the school by raising funds for specific items, events or services that will benefit the students at the school. This may include the purchase and installation of fans for classrooms, sports equipment, home readers, library books or interactive whiteboards. Sometimes, P&Cs may support projects that directly benefit the schools or teachers because there are flow-on benefits to students.

In order to get the support of the parent community for fundraising, it is important to involve it in determining priorities for fundraising and expenditure, publicize the intended purpose and provide opportunities for the school community to see the results of the expenditure in active use. There may also be potential to engage the Student Representative Council in identifying priorities.

Deciding how to spend the money raised by the P&C, including voluntary contributions, should be discussed as widely as possible in the school community. The P&C meeting is the ideal forum for a discussion on how to spend the funds raised, as both the principal and at least one of the parent members of the school board are likely to be present to explain the school's needs and to suggest priorities.

In many some schools, the School Board provides a "wish list" for the P&C to consider. Any expenditure should be formally moved and seconded at a meeting of the P&C. Major proposed expenditure should be notified in advance of the P&C meeting so as many parents as possible have the opportunity to vote or have a say. The wider school community should be informed of the decisions reached in such discussions, and the school newsletter is an appropriate way to do this. The P&C should explain its reasons for supporting or not supporting the expenditure of funds for particular items requested by the school board.

The beginning and end of this subject is clear communication and goodwill between the School Board and the P&C association. Both organizations should be working to the same goal of benefiting the school and its students. ★