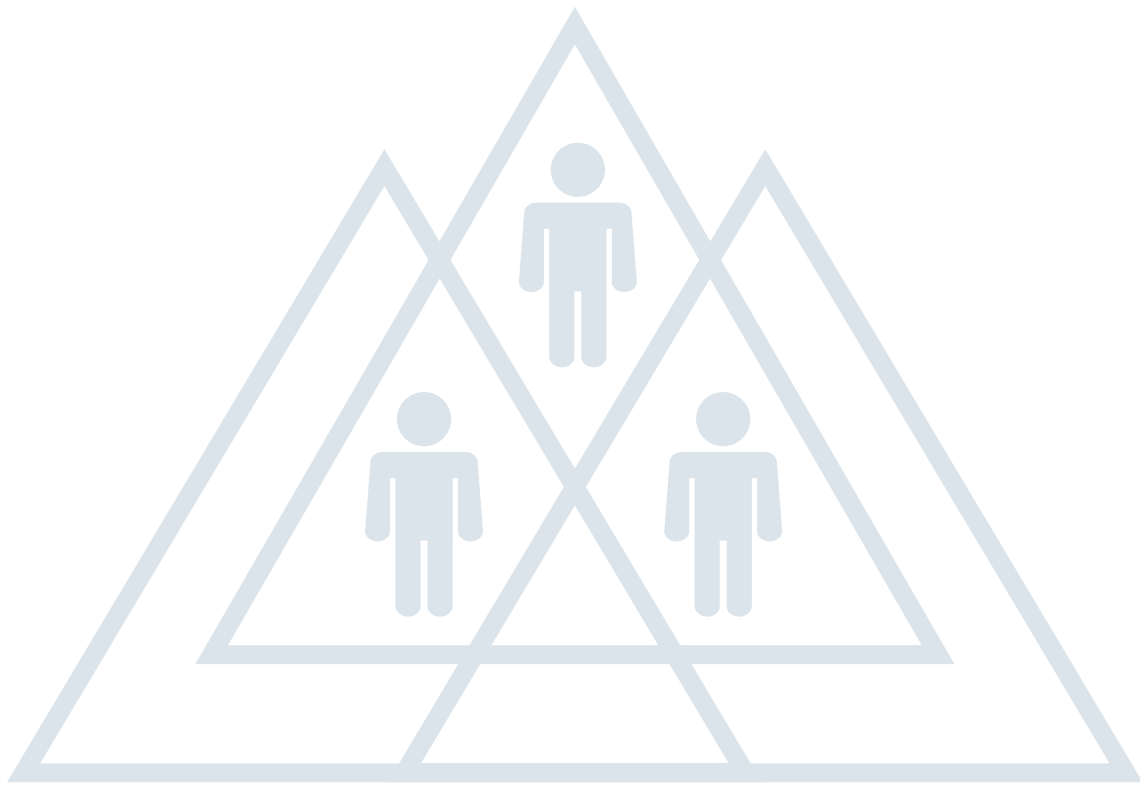


Q&A Handbook

Frequently Asked Questions



WACSSO

**The Western Australian Council
of State School Organisations Inc.**

Every care has been taken to ensure the accuracy of the information contained herein, but no responsibility is taken for any lack of coincidence with the School Education Act 1999, the School Education Regulations 2000 or the Associations Incorporation Act 1987(as amended). These Acts of Parliament, together with the P&C Constitution are the definitive documents in this area.

All references to meeting protocol have been taken from Foyster & Carr's '**Take the Chair**' produced by the Australian Rostrum Council. See also Appendix C of the WACSSO Constitution and Rules.

Contents

Meetings	1
Financial Matters	9
Correspondence	16
Membership	18
Sub-Committee	18
Records	19
Insurance	20
Executive Committee/Office Bearers	21
Canteen/Uniform Shop	25
Volunteers	30
Employees	32
Miscellaneous	33
School Council Questions	35
School Council Meetings	41
WACSSO	42
Public Liability Insurance/Volunteer Personal Accident Insurance	42
Other Insurance	43
Training	43
WACSSO State Councillor	43
Department of Education	43
WACSSO Conference	43
Advice and Information	43
Index	44

Frequently Asked Questions

Meetings

Question: Do the minutes of a P&C executive have to be circulated to all the financial and ex officio members?

Answer: Best practice is that P&C executive minutes are circulated at least 7 days prior to a scheduled general meeting. Financial and ex officio members of the P&C should be given the opportunity to read the minutes of an executive committee meeting prior to a scheduled general meeting at which they will be adopted. The P&C should decide on the method of circulating/distributing the executive minutes. The minutes can be posted or emailed to each financial and ex officio member in draft format, pending ratification.

Question: Is there a quorum for a general meeting of the P&C Association?

Answer: Yes, according to the current P&C Constitution Rule 17.3 at a general meeting you must have ten (10) financial members present if your school has over 100 students and five (5) financial members if your school has less than 100 students to hold a legal P&C meeting. This does not include the Principal unless they have paid the membership fee to the P&C.

Question: Can P&C meeting minutes be ratified by any P&C member?

Answer: No, only a financial member that was present at the former meeting can accept meeting minutes as a true account of what took place. Amendments if required are accepted prior to the ratification process.

Question: Do the minutes of a P&C Meeting have to be circulated to all of the financial and ex officio members?

Answer: Yes, all financial members and ex officio members of the P&C must be given the opportunity to read the minutes of a General or Executive Committee Meeting prior to the meeting at which they are to be adopted. The P&C should decide on the method of distributing the minutes. The minutes can be posted, emailed, publicised in the school newsletter, hand delivered, or put on the school notice board.

Question: Do you have to provide minutes of a P&C Meeting at which a quorum was not present?

Answer: No, a discussion does not constitute a meeting no minutes are required in this case and no action can be undertaken from what is discussed. The Chairperson establishes if there is a quorum present at a General or an Executive Committee Meeting of the P&C prior to the meeting commencing. It is a bit disappointing for those financial and ex officio members who have turned up only to find that a meeting cannot go ahead because of a lack of a quorum.

There are two things to do when this happens. The first option is that once it has been established that there are not sufficient financial members present to hold a General P&C Meeting and the required quorum of 5 of the elected Executive Committee members is present, then the President can declare to those present that the meeting becomes an Executive Committee Meeting. In this instance common sense must

prevail, it would be unwise to send those present home when it is possible to hold an Executive Committee Meeting. It is possible to convert a General Meeting to an Executive Meeting as all members will have been given 7 days notice of the General Meeting. It must be remembered that members of the Executive Committee are firstly financial members of the P&C and secondly Office Bearers and Executive Committee members.

Those financial members present who are not Executive Committee members may participate in the meeting but are not able to vote. The P&C Constitution allows the Executive Committee to manage the affairs and finances of the P&C when a P&C General Meeting is not in session (P&C Constitution Rule 9.1). The Executive Committee must provide minutes of this meeting to the next General Meeting of the P&C for adoption or ratification of any decisions made. A quorum must be present at the next General Meeting of the P&C in order to adopt these minutes.

The second option is for the President to seek approval from the financial members present to continue with the General Meeting of the P&C knowing that there is not a quorum present. The meeting may discuss the items of business on the agenda and make recommendations to the next General Meeting of the P&C. The meeting should not make decisions or any resolutions to spend money, minutes must be taken tabled and adopted or ratified at the next General Meeting of the P&C. A quorum must be present at the next General Meeting of the P&C in order to adopt these minutes.

In some cases, the Chairperson and P&C members may not have been aware of the constitutional requirement regarding a quorum for General Meetings and, acting in good faith, continued with the meeting. If this occurs, any decisions or resolutions made and carried out and the validity of the meeting may be contested at a later meeting. It would be appropriate that all decisions or resolutions that have not been acted upon are "frozen" until a subsequent meeting of the P&C is held. This would include the accepting of resignations and filling vacant positions. However, actions acted upon generally remain unchanged.

There is no illegality to hold a meeting without a quorum being present but the members present must understand that they should not be making decisions or passing resolutions to spend money. Any financial or ex officio member may contest the validity of such a meeting on the ground that there was not a quorum present. A meeting cannot just be declared null and void because there was not a quorum present and therefore no minutes are required. This is not the case, only a General P&C Meeting can declare a meeting null and void. This is done by resolution eg: "That the meeting of theP&C held on such and such a date is declared null and void as it was unconstitutional in that there was not a quorum present". This motion cannot be put forward where decisions made have already been acted on.

When minutes of a meeting at which a quorum was present are adopted, by a subsequent General Meeting of the P&C, then these decisions or resolutions are "set in stone". The only way to remove this resolution from the minutes is by rescinding them.

Question: Do members have to be present at a P&C Meeting to vote?

Answer: Yes, the P&C Constitution Rule 18.1 states that financial and ex officio members present at a meeting are entitled to vote. There is no mention of proxy voting in the Constitution. Today people are able to be present at a meeting remotely by teleconference, via Skype or video conference with the introduction of new technology this enables this to take place. The guidelines for this procedure is that the Chairperson

must mention that a member will participate remotely identify them when they are present and it must be mentioned in the minutes when they are present, via what medium, stating what time they entered the meeting. It is important they are present for the whole time for an important decision on a particular topic, the whole discussion and the voting procedure for transparency. They should be able to ask questions the same as every other member if required throughout the discussion. If challenged all members can see they were able to make an informed decision prior to voting. It should be noted in the minutes when they leave the meeting and note whether the quorum changes and adjust the meeting accordingly.

Question: Can the P&C insist that the Principal and teachers attend meetings and give reports?

Answer: No, the Principal is an ex officio member of the P&C and has the right to attend any meeting of the P&C meetings if they wish and has all the rights of a financial member. All teachers may join the P&C as financial members, they need to keep in mind any conflict of interest when participating in the decision making process. Neither the Principal nor teachers are obliged to give reports at P&C meetings. The Principal is only required to be a financial member if they wish to be counted in the quorum of a General Meeting otherwise it is not required for them to participate at Executive or General Meetings.

Question: Is there a quorum for a General Meeting of the P&C Association?

Answer: Yes, currently at a General Meeting you must have ten (10) financial members present to hold the meeting for over 100 students. Five (5) financial members present for fewer than 100 students. This does not include the Principal unless they have paid the membership fee to the P&C. The P&C can hold a meeting without the Principal present.

Question: What happens if our P&C does not get a quorum at meetings?

Answer: Your meeting minutes should reflect this in the attendance and indicate that a discussion was had by those members attending to discuss issues but no financial decisions was made due to the lack of a quorum. Any decisions requiring insurance coverage would be delayed also as a fully ratified decision is only one covered by insurers. A few members making illegal decisions on the expenditure of P&C funds is inappropriate and unacceptable. P&Cs in this situation need to revise their volunteer recruitment strategies or review what barriers might exist to preventing new membership.

Question: Does a person have to be present at a P&C Meeting to nominate for a position on the P&C?

Answer: No, however they do need to be aware of that the nomination will take place. It is important that the person nominating another person for a position on the P&C is present at the meeting. This enables the person to vote should an election be required for the position. If it is impossible for a person to attend the meeting then it is preferable that they indicate in writing to the President prior to the meeting that they are willing to accept a position should they be nominated and elected.

Question: What is the difference between a meeting "MOTION" and a "RESOLUTION?"

Answer: A "motion" is simply a formal proposal for action to be taken, it requires approval or it could be an idea or option to be discussed then approved. In other words, if you want the P&C to make a decision about something, an individual needs to put forward a motion. The motion becomes a "resolution" once voted on by all the financial members present and it is carried.

Question: What happens when the Chairperson loses control of a meeting?

Answer: It is important that the Chairperson maintain control of the meeting at all times. Having an agenda, meeting format, meeting procedures and a 'Code of Conduct for members will give tools for the Chairperson to utilize and implement for meeting control. The Chairperson and P&C members should be familiar with the formal "Rules of Debate and Standing Orders" for P&C Associations in case they are used within a meeting. These are included in all the role bearers' guidebooks, in the WACSSO Constitution and are outlined clearly in the WACSSO Meeting Guidelines booklet available in hard copy or on the WACSSO website. www.wacssso.wa.edu.au

Where there is a breach of standing orders, the Chairperson may request a member to retract the offensive statement, and may debar that member from taking part in any further debate until the statement be retracted. The Chairperson has the power to close the meeting at any time. The Rules of Debate explain the formalities of how a motion is debated formally, for example speakers for and against, method of address at meetings and amending motions. Unruly meetings should be discouraged and the P&C needs to address and implement formal rules of behaviour as a precedent to set a standard for future meetings.

Question: The Principal is unable to attend a P&C Meeting and sends the deputy principal, who is not a P&C member, in his place. Can the deputy principal vote on recommendations put to the P&C?

Answer: No, there is no allowance in the P&C Constitution for proxy voting. Voting is normally by show of hands, so a person must be present at a meeting to register a vote. The deputy principal would need to become a financial member of the P&C to be able to vote unless they are acting in the Principals role full time for an extended period of time.

Question: If the Principal is unable to attend a P&C Meeting, can the P&C still have a meeting?

Answer: Yes, the Principal may send the Deputy Principal in his or her place. The Deputy Principal would need to become a financial member of the P&C to be able to vote.

Question: Can the P&C have their meetings away from the school?

Answer: If for some reason the meeting of the P&C cannot be held on school grounds, it would be suggested to have the meeting at a local café, restaurant or community hall. It is not suggested that the meetings are held at a P&C member's home as other members might feel they are unable to express their views freely in an unbiased manner. Conducting a P&C meeting in a licensed venue might offend some members and limit their attendance and need to consider the P&C have a duty of care to their members. Outside venues need to be compliant for volunteer insurance coverage.

Question: What happens if the P&C meeting becomes out of control?

Answer: It is important that the Chairperson maintain control of the meeting at all times. It is a good idea that the Chairperson and P&C members become familiar with the "Rules of Debate and Standing Orders" for P&C Associations. These can be found in the P&C President Guide, P&C Secretary's Guide, Meeting Guidelines booklet and the WACSSO Constitution. These are on the WACSSO website see P&C Resources on www.wacssso.wa.edu.au

Where there is a breach of standing orders the Chairperson may request the member to retract any offensive statement and may debar that member from taking part in debate until such time as the statement is retracted. The Chairperson has the power to close the meeting at any time.

Question: How can the P&C prevent people from stacking meetings?

Answer: What does stacking a meeting mean? It usually involves a number of people attending a P&C meeting and becoming members so that they can put a motion to the meeting and have the numbers to vote that motion through. Often, these people have had no prior contact with the P&C and do not attend again after they have forced through their motion. Members can feel very intimidated by the stand-over tactics often used by these individuals. The P&C Constitution contains no provision to allow P&Cs to stop people from joining the P&C at any time they choose. This unfortunately allows less scrupulous people to stack meetings in an attempt to force issues through the P&C. But there are a number of ways in which P&Cs can try to avoid the problem:

- P&C's may decide to only take motions on notice ie members must give prior notice of issues they wish to discuss at a meeting.
- If the Chairperson asks at the beginning of the meeting if anyone present has any other items they wish to add to the agenda. This gives the Chairperson the opportunity to prioritise the agenda and everyone is forewarned of what will be discussed. If people do not take advantage of this and wait until the end of the meeting to bring up a topic, the Chairperson is well within their right to advise the person that this new piece of business will be carried over to the next meeting where it will become General Business. It also helps if your P&C has an advertised starting and finishing time for their meetings.
- The Chairperson and the Secretary should look very carefully at all motions proposed. Often the subject matter may be one that the P&C has no legal right to discuss, as it could be a school issue.

Question: Who has speaking, moving and voting rights at meetings of your P&C?

Answer: Every financial and ex officio member of the P&C present at the meeting. This includes the Principal and all office bearers such as the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. They all have the right to move a motion, speak to a motion, and participate in any debate or discussion. Importantly all can vote on any issue being considered by the P&C. Unfortunately all observers in a meeting, do not have speaking or voting rights, but on request can speak if given the right to by the Chairperson.

The Chairperson should vacate the chair to move a motion, speak for or against an issue or participate in general discussion on any issue, especially if there is any conflict of interest.

The Chairperson does not have to stand aside from chairing for the entire meeting, only that portion dealing with the issue that they wish to have active involvement in. Usually the Vice President would chair the meeting for the time required. However, should the Vice President also wish to be actively involved in the current debate or not be in attendance at the meeting then the meeting can select another chairperson.

Naturally, should any Executive member of the P&C have a vested interest in an issue being considered by the P&C they should declare the nature of the interest and remain impartial by not taking part in the debate or discussion and not voting. Removing themselves from the room to allow for free debate is also required.

Question: What can we discuss at a Special General Meeting of the P&C?

Answer: The business discussed must be in the notice of the meeting that requires formal notice of seven (7) days for special General Meetings and can be on one topic only. There can be three motions put forward all related to the one topic but no new business or reporting is undertaken within a Special Meeting. Members should be given every opportunity to be fully informed of the reasons for calling the meeting and of the background to the issues to be determined. Special General Meetings are called if an important item has arisen, and the P&C feel due care should be taken to ensure all legal requirements are met.

At the meeting, business will be limited to the items on the notice paper. If a substantial amendment is proposed, or if new business suddenly arises, it will be necessary to adjourn the meeting to allow absent members to be informed, or the meeting may agree to call another special meeting after the required period of notice.

Question: How do P&Cs decide on when they will conduct meetings as an Association?

Answer: In order to retain and encourage new membership, P&Cs need to look at the wider school opinion regarding when to hold meetings and accommodate the general needs as best as possible. Many P&Cs do face the difficult decision whether to have P&C meeting in the evenings or daytime. Having an alternative day and night meeting has the advantage of offering all parents the opportunity to attend a P&C meeting but numbers will be the deciding factor as a quorum is a requirement to hold a legal meeting. Both timeframes have the disadvantage of not meeting the needs of everyone in the school community or the Office Bearers volunteering in the roles. The P&C Constitution 15.1 states *'The Annual General Meeting and General Meetings of the Association shall be held at such times and places as shall be determined by a General Meeting providing that at least one General Meeting shall be held in each term of the school year'*.

Question: Can the Principal edit and change P&C Meeting minutes?

Answer: No, the P&C minutes are the responsibility of the P&C Secretary to produce in a clear unbiased and professional manner. If for some reason the correct process is not being undertaken the P&C Executive or WACSSO can suggest appropriate changes before distribution to the general P&C members.

A P&C Secretary needs to produce minutes that are generic, with no names attached, with unbiased content that conveys a general overview of the topic discussed, states a motion, the outcome of the motion and if any action is to take place. At this point names used will indicate who will undertake the action. The ramifications of inappropriate minutes can result in extreme cases legal action, loss of membership, breach of confidentiality, privacy and dissent within the P&C. If a P&C Secretary is uncertain of correct minute taking procedures then WACSSO have many resources and P&C training freely available to affiliated P&C members. The positive benefits of undertaking a role bearers tasks correctly is the mainstay of working together as a P&C.

Question: What can we do if our P&C meetings are too long?

Answer: Some good tips for encouraging more timely meetings:

- Having properly debated discussions can limit meetings from going over timeframe and might suit the majority of members.
- Keep to the agenda and any new topics are discussed only if time allows otherwise they are placed on the next meeting's agenda (this gives others time to consider the topics).

- Have a Chairperson who controls the flow of the meeting so it finishes on time.
- Limit the agenda items to a set number as this allows each item to be given the consideration they deserve.
- Advertise the timeframe of the meeting and keep to it. Members will thank the Chairperson and new members can make an informed decision if they are able to come along.
- The Executive can meet to discuss the agenda items prior to advertising the meeting to check if research is completed for all topics and documentation will be available for the meeting. Are the topics valid for P&Cs to discuss or do they need referring to the appropriate source.
- Consider having a timekeeper at meetings to remind members if they are monopolizing the meetings and not giving all members a fair opportunity to speak.

Question: Is the P&C able to discuss school policies at P&C meetings?

Answer: Yes, members of the P&C Association are able to discuss any school policy and make recommendations based on their discussions. The P&C representative on School Council can present any P&C recommendations to the School Council. When discussing school policies avoid being negative and overly critical. Remember to outline alternative solutions to perceived or identified problems. P&C members need to keep in mind that a P&C's opinion does not change a school policy, as it is the School Council or school board responsibility to make decisions on school policy issues. Parents have elected parent representatives on School Council that they can lobby if they feel strongly enough about an issue. Any management issue is the responsibility of the school principal and these concerns should not arise in P&C meetings. Any parental management concerns need to be taken to the principal through the right school processes and not directed at the principal in a P&C meeting. Prior notice of all agenda items should eliminate controversial issues arising in this forum and it is the Chairperson's responsibility to inform members when a topic needs redirecting.

Question: What are the restrictions on discussions topics at a P&C Meeting?

Answer: It would be inappropriate for a General Meeting to discuss school management issues or any school community individual, parent, student, or school staff member. These should be private discussions held between the parents, the teacher and the Principal. The P&C under the provisions of the School Education Act 1999 precludes them from intervening in the control or management of a school, intervening in the educational instruction of students and exercising authority over the teaching staff or other persons employed at the school other than their own staff. These are the only restrictions, which leaves the field wide open to discuss general education, safety, health issues, matters that have a bearing on the welfare of students as well as a whole range of local, state or national issues that arise. Remember, the P&C is a public forum for parents to discuss the education of their children, and members should be encouraged to embark on wide issue discussions.

Question: What does a P&C do when there is dissent between individual members that inhibits P&C Meetings?

Answer: WACSSO provides a brochure on P&C "Code of Conduct". This code of conduct if adopted by a P&C Association as their expectation of what they consider as best practice behaviour within their meetings. The brochure content is only a guide and is adjustable for individual P&Cs. When unacceptable behaviour extends to outside the meeting in public forum, members representing the P&C could be breaching the code of conduct's requirements of membership or could be in breach of common law. WACSSO encourages P&Cs to adopt a code of conduct to demonstrate to the school community that they

respect, value, and model best practices in their Association. Individuals choosing to be part of a P&C need to keep sight of the goal of an association which is "assisting the public education of children within the school" and focus their energies being part of a positive team with other like-minded parents. A P&C consists of a wide variety of individual parents that as a team can make a difference to public education.

Question: Do members have to be present at a P&C Meeting to vote?

Answer: Yes, the P&C Constitution Rule 18.1 states that financial and ex officio members present at a meeting are entitled to vote. There is no mention of proxy voting in the Constitution. Today people are able to be present at a meeting remotely by teleconference, via Skype or video conference with the introduction of new technology this enables this to take place. The guidelines for this procedure is the Chairperson must mention that a member will participate remotely identify them when they are present and it must be mentioned in the minutes when they are present, via what medium, stating what time they entered the meeting. It is important they are present for the whole time for an important decision on a particular topic, the whole discussion and the voting procedure for transparency. They should be able to ask questions the same as every other member if required throughout the discussion. If challenged all members can see they were able to make an informed decision prior to voting. It should be noted in the minutes when they leave the meeting and note whether the quorum changes and adjust the meeting accordingly.

Question: If I am unable to attend a meeting of the P&C Association, can I place a proxy vote?

Answer: No, the P&C Constitution 18.1 states that "Financial members (including the person presiding at the meeting) and ex-officio members present at the meeting and entitled to remain thereat shall be entitled to exercise a deliberative vote on any proposition before or election held at the meeting. No other person shall be entitled to a vote at any Meeting of the Association". This disallows any proxy voting.

Question: How should voting be undertaken at a P&C meeting?

Answer: Voting should be by a clear show of hands. The Chairperson can ask for either those against or those for the motion to indicate with a show of hands. If a motion is closely contested then an independent person should be asked to count the votes to verify if the motion has been passed or lost. A motion can only be passed with an 'absolute majority' that is 50% plus 1 of a correct quorum of those members present.

Question: Can resolutions carried at a P&C meeting be rescinded?

Answer: Resolutions can be rescinded in two ways either at the same meeting where it was passed or at a later meeting of the P&C.

To rescind a resolution at the same meeting:

A motion be put to the meeting "That resolution be rescinded". For this motion to be passed it would require a two-thirds majority vote of the financial members present at the meeting.

To rescind a resolution at a later meeting:

The financial member wishing to rescind a resolution is required to give notice in writing to the President of the P&C, not less than 7 days prior to the next meeting of their intention to move to rescind. A motion "That resolutionbe rescinded". For this motion to be passed it would require a simple majority vote of financial members present at the meeting.

Question: When does the P&C have to hold its Annual General Meeting (AGM)?

Answer: P&C Associations are required to be incorporated which means they are governed by legislation enshrined in the Associations Incorporation Act 1987. Section 23 of this Act refers to the AGM and states "... an incorporated association shall hold an AGM in every calendar year within 4 months after the end of the association's financial year or such longer period as may in a particular case be allowed by the Commissioner."

For the majority of P&Cs the financial year is the calendar year starting on January 1 and ending on December 31 of the same year. Therefore, these P&Cs must hold an AGM sometime before the end of April in the following year.

P&Cs are able to change the date of their year end and thereby change the date of the AGM. For details on how to do this please contact the WACSSO office for details on the correct process to be undertaken.

Question: What is the role of the Principal of the school at a P&C Meeting?

Answer: The School Education Act 1999 allows the school Principal to be an ex officio member of the P&C and a member of the Executive Committee. The Principal has no more power at a P&C and Executive Committee Meeting than any other member does. Where the P&C manages the canteen, the P&C may form a canteen sub-committee. All sub-committees of the P&C must have terms of reference to enable them to operate. The P&C may appoint the Principal as an ex officio member of these committees. The Principal does not have the power to close the canteen, have control over the employees or dictate what is sold in the canteen as long as it is operated according to the Healthy Food and Drink Policy outlined by the Department of Education. Their input is the same as any member of the P&C or a sub-committee formed for that purpose.

Financial Matters

Question: The P&C would like to request parents make a once a year payment to the P&C instead of, or in addition to the usual fundraising events, should it be called a P&C 'Levy' or P&C 'Donation'?

Answer: The definitions from the Macquarie Dictionary are:

LEVY: "a raising or collecting, as of money or troops, by authority or force"

DONATION: "a gift, as to a fund"

The use of the word "levy" implies a compulsion to pay. The P&C does not have the authority to impose a compulsory payment on the parents of children enrolled at the school. P&Cs should consider advertising the payment as a P&C Contribution as this does imply compulsion but choice.

Note: This does not apply to the P&C membership subscription. People wishing to be a member of the P&C must pay a subscription not exceeding \$1 (Regulation 124(2)(a), School Education Regulations 2000). Payment of a donation to the P&C does not confer membership on that person.

Question: The P&C want to purchase an item of equipment for the school but would like to avoid paying the GST on this item can this be achieved?

Answer: All schools register for the GST and hence can claim back any GST paid for equipment used within the school. P&Cs can endorse the school to purchase equipment and the school needs to provide a purchase document for the P&C to pay on account. Original accounts or a certified copy needs to be kept by the P&C for auditing and taxation purposes.

Question: Can the P&C pay accounts or reimburse people by cash?

Answer: No, Section 12.4 of the P&C Constitution states that all payments must be made by cheque or similar type, to allow for accountability and transparency for auditing purposes, the P&C should not deal in cash transactions.

Question: Does the P&C Treasurer have to have accounting skills to take on the role?

Answer: Yes, it is advisable when the P&C accepts a nomination for their P&C Treasurer they ask for someone with suitable skills or qualifications in this area. This role is not one to be undertaken lightly as the Treasurer is responsible for all the P&C finances and they need to be fully conversant with legal obligations and responsibilities prior to applying for the position. A nomination accepted simply because a member has put up their hand could have a detrimental effect on the P&C. Their lack of skills and knowledge can be stressful for the nominee who has all good intent. The result could be a P&C being in financial difficulties and disarray very easily. All members are responsible for lack of accountability and decision-making as members all have an equal vote. Advertise the need for suitable attributes, background skills, and the availability to do the role. A P&C needs someone who can provide continuity, stability and clarity with all they undertake, very similar to other roles within the P&C.

Question: Does the P&C Treasurer have to give a receipt for money received?

Answer: Yes, the P&C Treasurer must issue a receipt for *all* money received including membership subscriptions, or donations. It is important that the P&C adopt a standard process for all fundraising activities. This includes the procedure for collecting, counting and banking the money and the persons involved should sign a receipt to verify the amount collected. Any large sums of money handed to the P&C Treasurer should be counted in front of the person handing over the money and a receipt given, even if it is for a fundraising event. All receipts need to meet the taxation standards and requirements.

Question: Is it appropriate for a school to make an assumption of receiving funds from the P&C Association when compiling the school budget?

Answer: One of the objects of a P&C Association as stated in the *School Education Act 1999* is “to assist in the provision of resources, facilities and amenities for the school”. However, this is not the only object of a P&C Association and many P&Cs do not undertake any fundraising at all. It is becoming increasingly difficult for any community-based organisations to recruit volunteers and raise funds. Therefore, any monies that a P&C donate to the school for purchases should be considered a bonus. Consider also that fundraising is an unreliable income and it would be unrealistic for a school to rely on this income as part of their school budget. The P&C would be placed under undue pressure and stress if they committed to any large ongoing amounts of funds.

Question: Can the P&C Treasurer give a verbal financial report to the P&C meeting?

Answer: No, a written report is a Constitutional requirement Rule 12.8 and P&Cs should ensure proper accountability of their financial affairs. WACSSO recommends that all financial reports be in writing and contain a statement of receipts and expenditure, up-to-date bank reconciliation statement and a copy of the relevant bank statements. This would include the P&C general account and where relevant, from those committees which handle money and have their own bank account such as Canteen, Uniform, or fundraising committee. All P&C money-handling processes need to be accountable and transparent.

Question: Is the P&C fund raising part of the school budget?

Answer: No, the school budget is made up of funds provided by the Government through the Department of Education budgeting process. Extra funds are received and spent to the benefit of students in that school, but the financial planning and management for the running of that school should not be dependent on those additional dollars. For instance, a school could receive a bequest from a loyal ex-student, a school could receive donations for purchase of library books from sponsors, and - most importantly - the P&C spends its own funds on projects decided by the P&C for the students in that school. The hard earned dollars from P&C fundraising belong to the P&C. The money in the P&C account is not just an extension of the school's operating monies from the Department. The school should not take for granted that these dollars will be part of the school's available monies. When the school is forward planning for the year's budget, the P&C's projected fund raising should not be included or treated as a 'given'.

Question: How can I easily view our P&C Bank Statements?

Answer: Any member of the P&C is permitted to view any documents or accounts of the P&C Association, however sometimes it becomes difficult to view the bank statements as the Treasurer may not have them handy or you may feel uncomfortable asking for fear of implying that you do not trust the Treasurer. A suggestion recommended by one of our P&Cs is to apply for Internet Banking, you can set it so that certain people have 'view only' rights and this way the statements can be viewed easily and without having to wait for the Treasurer.

It is *crucial* that members know the true financial situation of the Association and therefore ask questions of the Treasurer if they do not understand a report and that the bank statements reflect the Treasurer's report. If you are a Treasurer and are questioned in this fashion, don't take it as doubting your ability or honesty, rather that the members understand the importance of your role and ensuring that the P&C funds are being spent to benefit students attending Government Schools.

Question: The P&C Association is holding considerable funds in the bank account, what should be done with the money?

Answer: According to the Constitution of the P&C, income shall be spent to 'promote the interests and moral, physical, social and educational welfare of the children of the government school/s in relation to which it is formed". Having lots of money sitting in a bank account does little to promote the interests or education of the children in government schools. WACSSO recommends to P&C Associations that the money is best spent in the year that it is raised. This is a reasonable expectation unless the P&C is saving

for a particular purchase, such as a big-ticket item. The school community's expectation is that money raised throughout the year is spent to benefit the current kids in the school, not 'saved for a rainy day'.

Question: Does the P&C Treasurer have to personally bank P&C money or can this be delegated to another person?

Answer: The P&C Treasurer is responsible for the safety of money received and should ensure that it is deposited with the bank as soon as possible after it is received. The responsibility for counting and banking the money from the canteen and the uniform shop can be delegated to another person. For this to happen the P&C Treasurer, the P&C Executive Committee or the relevant sub-committee, must identify this person and put a process in place, to ensure due diligence is undertaken by establishing a job description for this task. If the P&C has insurance to cover money, check the terms of the policy as many stipulate that money must be banked on the next working day, or the cover is not valid. Try to avoid holding money on Friday when you are unable to get to the bank until Monday. Circumstances can vary according to the P&Cs location and ease of accessibility to a banking facility is not always possible for example remote locations.

Question: When the P&C Association holds reserves in their bank account under canteen and uniform accounts is this ok?

Answer: It is sensible to maintain some funds in these accounts for contingencies, particularly if the P&C Association operates a uniform shop and canteen and employs staff. Employing staff comes with obligations such as annual leave, sick leave, long service leave and then any outstanding operational accounts. Money must be set aside for these obligations as they are mandatory payments. WACSSO suggest that separate accounts are set up for canteen and uniform to offer clarity in reporting.

It is not advisable to tie up large amounts of money in P&C accounts 'for a rainy day' unless it is for a particular purpose. Remember that parents contributing to the funds raised in any year will expect to see that money spent to the benefit of their children while they are attending the school. It is good practice for the P&C Treasurer, together with the P&C Executive, to prepare an annual budget based on expected income and proposed expenditure. This would allow the Executive Committee to determine how much money needs to be set aside for operational contingencies.

Question: Should P&C's run their uniform shop and canteen as a business?

Answer: Yes, best business practice is not to overstock the uniform shop or canteen. Only carry enough stock for immediate business needs. Price items to make a sufficient profit to cover costs and future expenses, keep good records, provide correct receipts according to the ATO requirements, insure stock in case of loss or damage, bank all monies taken in a timely manner and have set procedures for operation of the uniform shop and the canteen. Adhere to staff requirements and be conversant with any legal guidelines. Have a 'Terms of Reference' (operational guidelines for accountability and transparency) for the sub-committee of the uniform shop and canteen committee to follow.

The P&C can hand over the running of the uniform shop or the canteen to the school to operate or the school can apply to outsource the business to an external provider. The school can take back the full operation of either business if they so choose.

Question: Do P&C Associations need to have their books audited?

Answer: Yes, the P&C Constitution states the P&C books are to be audited annually by an appropriately qualified person (Rule 14.1). The School Education Act 1999 Section 147 and the P&C Constitution Rule 12.9 requires that the P&C give the Principal and WACSSO a copy of the audited annual financial statements. The P&C Treasurer should ensure that any audit of the P&C books of account include all sub-committees where money is handled for example canteen, uniform shop, Pre-primary, fundraising or any other committee created. All these books need to be audited at the same time and by the same person or persons to give an operational overview of the whole of the P&Cs finances.

Question: If a member of a P&C is involved in a fundraising project and their business stands to gain financial benefit from that project should they be allowed to vote in decisions made for that project. If the P&C is deciding whether to make a financial commitment to a project should their vote count or would it be seen as influencing a decision for their own benefit.

Answer: This is a clear conflict of interest and must be addressed if the Executive member does not declare themselves as impartial.

Specific obligations stated with respect to members of the Executive Committee, is they must:

- declare any direct or indirect personal or pecuniary interest in a contract or proposed contract [*Associations Incorporation Act, Section 21(1)*]. The committee member is also not allowed to participate in any discussions or voting relating to such a contract [*Associations Incorporation Act, Section 22(1)*].
- make sure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that the P&C Association fulfills its legal obligations under the *Associations Incorporation Act, Section 42*.

Failure to comply with any of these requirements may result in a fine of \$500. It is therefore important that members of the Executive Committee are aware of both their own and the P&C's legal obligations under the *Associations Incorporation Act*.

Ballot voting on these issues is recommended so that all members feel free to vote accordingly.

Question: Can the School Registrar be the auditor for the P&C?

Answer: Yes, provided there is no conflict of interest, the P&C Constitution requires the auditor is someone "preferably with appropriate qualifications" so it is up to the P&C to decide if they are suitable. Consider asking a registrar from another local school to do the auditing process is an alternative.

Question: Can the school's auditors ask to view the P&Cs books?

Answer: No, the P&C Association's books of account, including those of any sub-committees are not part of the school's financial records and are therefore not subject to audit by the school's auditors. However, the P&C must supply the Principal with a copy of the audited financial statement according to the School Education Act 1999 Section 147(b)) and P&C Constitution Rule 12.9 and this report should demonstrate that best practice is being undertaken by the P&C with their financial affairs.

Question: What is the correct use of P&C funds?

Answer: The School Education Act 1999 Section 143 (3) states that "an association is not to expend its funds that are in excess of administrative costs otherwise than for the benefit of students at a government school". The P&C Constitution (Rule 4.1) reiterates this objective. WACSSO does not recommend P&C

funds be used to purchase gifts or to provide entertainment for teachers, volunteers, or P&C members but suggests looking at other ways of supporting these particular objectives.

Question: Can P&C money be used to fund P&C social functions, gifts or staff farewells?

Answer: WACSSO supports the legal stance that P&C money should not be used to fund social functions for P&C members, gifts or staff farewells. As an incorporated association your P&C is governed by the rules of the Associations Incorporation Act 1987 which states that "The property and income of the association shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the objects or purposes of the association and no part of that property or income may be paid or otherwise distributed, directly or indirectly, to members of the association, except in good faith in the promotion of those objects or purposes".

The School Education Act 1999 clearly states that "An association is not to expend its funds that are in excess of administrative costs otherwise than for the benefit of students at a government school".

A suggestion to overcome this issue is for a P&C to advertise and hold a fundraiser and advertise that the purpose is so the P&C bank the money raised to purchase the occasional bereavement card, farewell flowers, plaque or gift. The P&C would need to motion any purchases and list them in the Treasurers reconciliation presented to the general members for accountability. This would be a fair and equitable way of undertaking any purchases of this nature and still abide within the regulations. If your P&C choose to spend some of this specially raised money to have a thank you morning tea or barbecue for your volunteers, the expenditure is transparently accountable to all parents in the school community assisting to maintain the P&Cs legal obligations. All decisions to spend this specially raised money would require a correctly ratified motion passed within a General Meeting.

Question: Can the P&C use a debt collection agency to recoup money?

Answer: There is nothing to stop a P&C from using a debt collection agency, though it would be preferable that it did not get to this stage. Before you take this step, you need to look at the process used when distributing fund raising items. If items are sent home without the parents consenting to accept them as part of a fund raising exercise then, in law, they may be seen to be an unsolicited gift and you may not have legal recourse to get them (or your money) back. If the parents have signed for them and agreed to take them knowing they are a fundraiser and must be paid for or returned unsold, then you do have the law on your side.

Remember, also, that debt collection agencies charge up to 50% of the money they recoup. It may not be worthwhile taking this extreme step. Best practice within P&C businesses such as a canteen or uniform shop is a "No Credit Policy" therefore not extending or offering credit in any format regardless the client.

Question: Can P&Cs use internet banking?

Answer: Yes, WACSSO has determined that the process of electronic payments (Internet Banking) satisfies the requirements of P&C Constitution Rule 12.4 and 12.5, provided there are two separate members logging on with passwords, and no individual person can make payments without the second authorisation. Those two members logging on with passwords must be authorised signatories as per Constitution rule 12.5. A third person registered to be a signatory is advisable in case one member is unavailable. This has become an efficient method of banking for P&Cs and secure options are available through many banking institutions.

Question: How do I ensure the Tax Office can speak to my P&C's representative?

Answer: The Australian Tax Office needs to know when certain changes occur with the P&C. They include changes that might occur to

- The legal or trading name,
- Postal, email or business address
- Authorised contact person
- Associate details (including public officer, director, office bearer, partner or trustee)
- Main business activity, or
- Financial institution account details

As many non-profit organisations elect office bearers for an annual term, the authorised contact people often change from year to year. To assist the tax office protect the organisation's privacy and provide office bearers with access to the information they require to perform their duties, the tax office ask that non-profits and other organisations notify them when there has been a change of office bearers authorised to make enquiries about the organisation's tax affairs.

To do this, you can contact the ATO on 13 2869 between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday. You will need to provide proof of identity requirements. For further information regarding these, see the fact sheet "How do I ensure the Tax Office can speak to my organisation's representative" on the Australian Taxation Office's website through the 'Non-Profit Fact Sheets' site

<http://www.ato.gov.au/nonprofit/content.aspx?doc=/content/24372.htm&pc=001/004/042/005&mnu=0&mfp=&st=&cy=>

Alternatively, you can change your organisation's ABN registration details online through ABN lookup at www.abn.business.gov.au . To be able to change your organisation's details online, your P&C will need register for the ATOs online services. If you want to register, go to www.ato.gov.au/onlineservices.

Question: Can individual members, including the President, of a P&C make financial decisions alone?

Answer: No, all financial decisions must be made at an Executive or General meeting as a collective body passed by a vote with an 'absolute majority'. A P&C Association should actively involve or seek the school community opinion prior to making large financial decisions as best practice.

Question: Are the P&C required to get (3) quotes for any purchases they make and present them at a general meeting?

Answer: No, this is common policy for many organizations and can be discussed and introduced as a standard P&C Policy requirement. Also introducing an expenditure limit, within a Terms of Reference applicable to P&C quotes stating how they wish the P&C committee to undertake seeking quotations. Quotes would be dependent on the type of purchase, operational or otherwise. For operational expenses, the P&C might set a limit for decisions, so large expenses might require the full P&C approval. Reporting accountability is still required as standard practice by any sub-committee or the Executive. The majority of decisions would require P&C approval before any expenditure is made.

Question: Can a P&C ask for accountability and billing from school prior to donating?

Answer: Yes, it is fine for a P&C to ask the school for an initial bill or quote before donating money. For example, in a case where a P&C intends to go halves with the school in funding a new playground, it is perfectly reasonable to wait until the bill has arrived and an actual amount is known before a contribution is given.

Question: Can members of the P&C or volunteers in the canteen purchase bulk goods through the canteen at reduced prices?

Answer: This practice is not recommended by WACSSO as the canteen is not a commercial retail outlet. It is not good business practice and should not be encouraged. The business turnover can be misrepresented in the actual figures if bulk purchases are made for individual purposes. These purchases could give financial figures that do not show the true turnover of the business.

Correspondence

Question: How long do we keep P&C records such as correspondence, financial information, minutes and employment records?

Answer: General correspondence does not need to be kept longer than one (1) year unless it is of an ongoing nature, or referred to or is directly relevant to the minutes. Financial books of accounts legally kept for 5 years. Minutes archived permanently as these are the historical record of the P&C Association. You are required to keep employment records for a minimum of seven (7) years after the employee has left the position. P&C records are kept on the school grounds, preferably stored in a locked cabinet.

Question: How should the P&C handle anonymous correspondence?

Answer: Any correspondence received by the P&C that is unsigned should simply be ignored and most definitely not tabled at any meeting of the P&C or Executive committee. The letter should not be circulated by members of the P&C or in the school community. This type of correspondence can only cause conflict within the P&C, especially if the letter contains statements regarding another member of the P&C. It is a good idea for P&Cs to establish a complaints management process to deal with complaints or conflict between P&C members.

Based on the legislation (*School Education Act 1999* and *School Education Regulations 2000*), the Department of Education has policies in place that identify processes whereby parents and members of the school community can lodge legitimate complaints about principals and teaching staff. The P&C is not the forum for disgruntled parents to express their complaints about the management of the school verbally or written (signed or anonymous). This applies to P&C email accounts where signed correspondence in and out is accepted. Printed out emails should be tabled and noted as correspondence received.

Question: Does all correspondence of the P&C including letters from any of its sub-committees have to be signed by the President of the P&C?

Answer: It is important that the President of the P&C is aware of any correspondence sent out in the name of the P&C. The P&C Constitution Rule 11.1 states that the P&C Secretary is responsible for all correspondence of the P&C. The President should sight and where possible sign all correspondence that goes out however the P&C Secretary is able to sign letters on behalf of the P&C with the President's approval. Conveners of sub-committees or individual members do not have the authority to write or sign letters on behalf of the P&C unless given authority through the sub-committee's Terms of Reference or by the general committee. Where a P&C sub-committee wishes to send out their own correspondence the General or Executive Committee of the P&C must give their approval and it must be sighted by either the P&C President or the P&C Secretary.

Question: Can the P&C Secretary write letters on behalf of the P&C without first obtaining the permission of the P&C?

Answer: No, any correspondence forwarded on behalf of the P&C and signed by the P&C President should be endorsed communication by a General Committee Meeting of the P&C. If the matter is of an urgent nature then an Executive Committee Meeting called giving 48 hours notice can address the issue and issue approval.

Question: Can the P&C President write and send letters on behalf of the P&C Association?

Answer: No, the P&C usually directs the P&C Secretary to write and send letters on behalf of the P&C. If the P&C has a Secretary who is happy to write the minutes but does not feel confident about putting together a letter then it is acceptable to direct the President to write the letter. A P&C President must be able to take the initiative if a P&C resolution has not been carried out by an office bearer. A lack of action by an office bearer could be detrimental to the P&C as a whole and the P&C President can ask for greater accountability from P&C office bearers. The P&C President cannot send out letters in the name of the P&C either if it has not been authorised by the P&C in some way.

Question: Who should open the P&C mail?

Answer: The P&C Secretary should open all P&C mail, regardless of whom it is addressed to unless it is marked 'Private' or 'Confidential'. Examples of mail that would be marked 'Private' or 'Confidential' could include employee information or police checks that should only be viewed by the recipient. All other mail entered, as received mail in the correspondence ledger by the P&C Secretary should be noted as passed on to the person intended.

Question: Can the Principal edit and change something the P&C submits in the school newsletter?

Answer: The school newsletter is distributed by the school therefore the Principal can determine what will appear. If the P&C wish to mail information directly to parents then the school would not have control over the content, but this does not have practical ramifications, as parent's addresses and personal details held at the school are confidential. Any letter distributed through the classroom to parents must have the administration's approval so consider the positive benefits of working together.

Membership

Question: When is someone a financial member of a P&C Association?

Answer: A person can choose become a P&C member at any time prior to the start of a P&C meeting. Financial membership is a requirement of the School Education Regulations 2000 and someone is a member of the P&C once they pay the subscription, which is to be no more than \$1 per member. Membership of a P&C is required to be renewed at every AGM of the Association. A request for the payment of a P&C voluntary contribution does not include P&C membership. A P&C member is required to pay an individual subscription fee and to register their details to complete their membership.

Question: Is P&C training available for all P&C members?

Answer: Yes, WACSSO offer the opportunity of P&C training to all affiliated P&Cs at no cost. Any school community member will find it worthwhile to refresh, enlighten, question, become involved, develop skills, gain knowledge and participate with like-minded people. Surrounding district schools are invited, promotion material and a Host Pack provided, enquire about the details of the arrangements with the WACSSO Training & Development Officer. P&C training is available at a school near you. Importantly let your P&C members and school community know about the opportunity!

Question: Can members call for a vote of no confidence or vote to remove current office bearers?

Answer: The Constitution currently does not allow for the removal of an office bearer. Putting forward a vote of no confidence clearly indicates to an office bearer the lack of support they have in the P&C and they should act accordingly. The P&C should make sure people who are prepared to stand for the office bearer positions at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) are the most suitable. Office bearers need to be fully prepared to undertake their responsibilities and obligations when they take on P&C positions.

Sub-committees

Question: Do you have to be a financial member of the P&C to be a member of a standing subcommittee?

Answer: Yes, all members of P&C standing committee such as canteen, uniform, pre-primary, fundraising must be financial members of the P&C. These members are elected onto these committees at the AGM or a general meeting of the P&C. All standing committees must have terms of reference to enable them to operate. In the case of the fundraising committee, it is important that the P&C approve all fundraising events to ensure that the activities are covered by the P&Cs public liability insurance. The P&C should also establish a process for fundraising events which includes the manner in which money is collected and documentation is held. Information regarding Standing Committees or Sub-Committees Terms of Reference are downloadable from the WACSSO website www.wacssso.wa.edu.au.

Question: Can the fundraising sub-committee of the P&C hold events without prior approval of the P&C?

Answer: No. in order for the activities of the fundraising sub-committee to be under the protection of Public Liability Insurance of the P&C, any event has to be an approved of the P&C. WACSSO recommends that the P&C and any fundraising sub-committee compile a calendar of events and approve it at the start of the year to eliminate any an oversight or misunderstanding.

Question: Is the P&C President an ex-officio of any sub-committee?

Answer: Yes, by right of their elected position the P&C President can sit on any sub-committee as a member and has all the rights of a sub-committee member, such as voting and speaking. But it is not a mandatory requirement they do attend meetings, they can be asked to come along to assist with an issue or simply go along to observe the meeting.

Question: How can the P&C Executive Committee handle the issue of sub-committees acting outside of their operational guidelines or Terms of Reference?

Answer: It is extremely important that all sub-committees of the P&C have a Terms of Reference. These are he operational guidelines endorsed by the Executive Committee. Once a P&C implement guidelines it is much easier to oversee a sub-committee and refer them to the content of the Terms of Reference if they are undertaking inappropriate processes. If a sub-committee continually ignores their Terms of Reference, the P&C Executive Committee may have no choice but to disband the committee. The Executive Committee would then take over the running of the business that the sub-committee was operating. It is usual to declare all positions on all sub-committees vacant at the AGM.

Records

Question: How long do we keep P&C records, such as correspondence, financial information, minutes and employment records?

Answer: General correspondence kept for only one year unless it is of an ongoing nature and relevant to the P&C minutes. Books of accounts are legal records and retained for 5 years. The P&C minutes are archived as permanent historical records of the P&C Association. You are legally required to keep all employment records for a minimum of seven years from resignation or termination of the employee. Archived P&C records kept at the school should be preferably in a locked cabinet or a secure area.

Question: In what format should the records kept?

Answer: The P&C minutes must be retained in hard copy format as they are signed by the Chairperson after each meeting to certify the copy being held. Digital technology is changing at such a rapid rate that recorded documentation held on CD or a removable hard drive or USB could be obsolete in the future and become unreadable. A P&C that hold digital records will also need to retain paper records.

Question: What if our P&C records are destroyed by a natural disaster?

Answer: A natural disaster is unavoidable and unfortunately could result in the loss of all of a school records. To take measures to ensure the protection of the P&C records it is suggested they are stored on the school grounds at all times and not members homes. If the school were struck by a natural disaster insurance would cover loss of P&C property but not their records. It is a P&C legal obligation that the Executive's details are given to the principal and WACSSO with a copy of the annual financial auditing statement. These documents would provide some records in case there was a natural disaster eventuating in a loss of P&C documentation.

Question: Can minutes be recorded in pencil or must they be in ink?

Answer: Minutes should be recorded in ink whether they are handwritten or keyed in on a laptop or computer. If minutes are recorded in electronic format and later printed, they should be transcribed exactly as written. Minutes are an overview of what took place at the time and cannot be altered or written from memory. P&C minutes are not a verbatim recording of the dialogue, no names are required to identify motions and emotive language is part of correct minutes, only action items name the person. Any amendments must be approved and agreed to prior to the minutes to ratification at the next meeting.

Question: What is the correct copy to keep of ratified minutes as the true record?

Answer: Minutes ratified as true and correct require the Chairperson at the time to sign them to authorize them as the true copy. P&Cs often overlook to get the Chairperson to sign the minutes but it is a standard requirement. The signature should also have the date under it so it matches the minutes taken on the day.

Question: Is the P&C under any legal obligation to keep accurate financial records

Answer: Yes, there are P&C Constitutional obligations 12.6, 12.7 that state the Honorary Treasurer keep accurate books of account and they are required to have the books audited and the statement presented at the P&C AGM. A copy of the executive members and the annual auditing statement needs to be provided to the Principal according to the Education Act 1999 and WACSSO according to the current P&C Constitutional rules 12.8 and 12.9.

Insurance

Question: Does the school's insurance cover money, uniforms and canteen stock owned by the P&C?

Answer: No. The P&C is an independent autonomous body and as a business is required to take out its own insurance cover for these items. As each P&Cs insurance needs will vary it is recommended that affiliated P&Cs contact WACSSO for information or the WACSSO insurer CentreWest direct on 9349 7900 for quotes and enquires.

Question: Can a P&C create fundraising event policies?

Answer: Policies that relate to the safety and responsibility of children at fundraising events could conflict with the P&C's Public Liability insurance coverage. Best practice is check with your insurer, anything conflicting with your insurance policy could make the P&C openly liable. Rather than creating event policies consider supplying a consent form parents must sign if they wish their child to attend an event. The form should describe the event and what safeguards is in place. Any children with medical conditions or any special needs would need to have their parent attend the event themselves to supervise their child. A disclaimer should be included on the form exonerating the P&C from any expenses, claims or responsibility if there was an accident. The signed copies should be taken to the event and later stored away for a period of at least 12 months in case of any possible disputes.

Question: Is Public Liability Insurance as provided through affiliation with WACSSO the same as Workers' Compensation (WorkCover)?

Answer: No, these are quite different types of insurance. When a P&C chooses to affiliate with WACSSO and pays the affiliation fee it accesses Public Liability Insurance currently to the value of 10 million dollars (\$10m). In May each year, P&Cs will receive information on canteen stock, uniform and WorkCover insurance and an invitation to take up these insurances with WACSSO's Insurance Broker.

Canteen stock insurance covers: Fire and extraneous perils, spoilage of goods, burglary and money.

Workcover Insurance also known as Workers' Compensation is compulsory for all employers to hold for all their employees.

Question: Are P&C members and other volunteers covered if they have an accident while volunteering for the P&C?

Answer: Volunteer Personal Accident Insurance coverage is included with WACSSO affiliation fees. This is only for volunteers acting on behalf of the P&C, but they do not have to be members of the P&C to be covered.

Office Bearers & Executive

Question: Is there a maximum number of years someone can serve as a P&C office bearer or executive member?

Answer: No, all office bearer positions and executive committee memberships come up for election every year at the Annual General Meeting and there is nothing stopping a person continuing to nominate and seek re-election.

Question: How many positions can a financial member hold on the Executive Committee?

Answer: The P&C Constitution only allows for one person to be elected to any position on the executive committee. The composition of the executive committee is 8 members made up of the President, Honorary

Secretary, Honorary Treasurer, the Vice-President, not less than 3 other financial members and the school principal who is ex-officio.

In some instances in order to fill the positions of Secretary and Treasurer P&Cs may have two people to carry out the duties of these positions. Only one of these persons is the “official elected” Secretary and Treasurer and the P&C must identify which ones when the election takes place. The other persons are “appointed” to either be the minute Secretary (or to carry out other Secretaries duties) and Assistant Treasurer also with defined duties. Only the “official elected” Secretary and Treasurer are signatories on chequebook of the P&C as stated at 12.5 of the P&C Constitution.

Question: Can the position of President be held by more than one person?

Answer: No, the P&C Constitution only allows for one person to hold any position on the Executive Committee including that of President. The composition of the executive committee is for 8 individuals. The role of the vice-president is to understudy the president. Some of the president’s tasks can be delegated to the vice-president. The constitution also allows for the vice-president to chair the meeting should the president be absent.

Question: Do you have to be present at a P&C meeting to nominate for a position on the P&C?

Answer: No, however it is important that a person nominating for a position on the P&C is present at the meeting. This will enable you to vote should there be a vote taken for the position. If it is impossible for you to attend the meeting but wish to nominate then it is preferable that you indicate in writing to the President prior to the meeting that you are willing to accept a position should you be nominated and elected. This avoids the situation where P&C members not present at a meeting are nominated and elected to a position they do not wish to hold.

Question: What is the role and responsibility of the Executive Committee and how often should it meet?

Answer: The P&C Constitution gives the Executive Committee the power to manage the finances and affairs of the P&C when the P&C is not meeting. The Executive Committee usually meets when items of business that were not dealt with at the P&C meeting have been referred to it for action or where an item of business of an urgent nature arises where a decision has to be made prior to the date of the next general meeting of the P&C. It is not usual for the Executive Committee to meet on a regular basis.

Should the Executive Committee hold a meeting then those persons elected at the AGM to the executive committee, (office bearers and not less than 3 other persons) plus the principal should be given not less than 48 hours notice of the date of the meeting. A quorum for an Executive Committee meeting is 5 of its members. All of the members of the Executive Committee must be notified not less than 48 hours prior to any meeting of the Executive Committee. (P&C Constitution Rule 16.2)

In small schools (less than 100 students) the quorum for an Executive Committee meeting is 3 members.

Minutes of such a meeting must be tabled at the next general meeting of the P&C for ratification of motions/resolutions/decisions made. A general meeting of the P&C is the higher body and has the power to override decisions made by the executive committee. Every effort should be made to avoid using an Executive Committee as the managing group of the P&C.

The Executive has the power to make financial decisions on behalf of the P&C. Some of the decisions the Executive might need to make are emergency decisions such as BER input decision, especially if there are time constraints between meetings and decisions need to be made, urgent replacement of equipment, wages and staff issue decisions are only made at Executive meetings.

If the Executive make a decision that the general committee do not agree with then the decision can be overturned as long as it has not been already acted on. The general committee can request and discuss a 'Terms of Reference' for the Executive, limiting expenditure decisions within the Executive (for example anything over a set amount). This means all big financial decisions made are by the general P&C as a team, especially where to allocated their funds.

All Executive members need to be informed if an Executive meeting is called, they need to be given 48 hours notice, to send apologies, or to indicate their attendance. General members do not need to be informed if an Executive meeting will take place, and if for some reason a general member wished to attend they need to ask the President if they can do so just in case the topic for discussion is of a confidential matter. If a general member does attend an Executive meeting, to view how the Executive operate (similar to a potential WACSSO Councillor) they are not able to speak at the meeting unless given the Chairpersons approval (same rules as WACSSO).

Meeting of Executive meetings are presented to the next General meeting for ratification and are not published to the general community.

Question: What powers do the office bearers (President, Secretary, Treasurer and the Vice-President) of a P&C have?

Answer: None, by themselves. The Executive Committee which consists of the office bearers and not less than 3 other members and the Principal has the power whilst a general meeting of the P&C is not in session to control and manage the affairs and finances of the P&C. The Executive Committee must provide minutes of its meetings to the next general meeting of the P&C for adoption/ratification of any decisions made.

Question: Can we have a secret ballot for the election of office bearers at the AGM?

Answer: Yes, voting is by a show of hands, unless a ballot is required under the Association's rules, or a ballot has been requested at the meeting. In the case of a ballot, the Chairperson should appoint returning officers eg: principal and one other person to distribute ballot papers, count the votes and advise the Chairperson of the result.

Question: What is the acceptable timeframe to find P&C Office Bearers.

Answer: If the AGM does not get any nominations to fill these roles then the P&C need to advertise another General Meeting for this purpose and consider the options of closure if the P&C remains unconstitutional. The Election of an Executive Committee is a requirement of the P&C Constitution, without Office Bearers, the P&C is not properly constituted.

Considerations taken into account are what would happen to the money from a P&C canteen or uniform shop especially concerning insurance, liabilities, employees, and worst-case scenario of a wind down, closure of the P&C. If the P&C has not succeeded to fill the Office Bearer positions within 3 months from the AGM, please contact WACSSO office.

Question: What powers do the Office Bearers (President, Secretary, Treasurer and Vice-President) of a P&C have?

Answer: None, by themselves. The Executive Committee, which consists of all Office Bearers and not less than three (3) other members and the Principal as an ex officio member in a school of over 100 students. In a school of less than 100 students all the Office Bearers plus two (2) other members and the Principal make up the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee have the power to control and manage the affairs and finances of the P&C when the full P&C cannot meet (refer to P&C Constitution Rule 9.2). The Executive Committee must provide minutes of its meetings to the next General Meeting of the P&C for adoption or ratification of any decisions made. A quorum is required for an Executive Committee Meeting and all of the members of the Executive Committee must be given not less than 48 hours notice of a meeting. (P&C Constitution Rule 16.2)

Question: How many positions can a financial member hold on the Executive Committee?

Answer: The P&C Constitution only allows for one person to be elected to any position on the Executive Committee. In some instances in order to fill the positions of Secretary and Treasurer P&Cs may have two people to carry out the duties of these positions. Only one of these persons is the official “elected” Secretary and Treasurer and the P&C must identify which one when the election takes place. The other persons are “appointed” to either be the minute Secretary or Assistant Treasurer with defined duties. Only the official “elected” Secretary and Treasurer are signatories on cheques of the P&C as stated at Rule 12.5 of the P&C Constitution. In some cases in small schools the P&C Secretary and Treasurer might be a collective role, and the Principal can hold a role if they choose.

Question: Can the position of President be held by more than one person?

Answer: No, the P&C Constitution only allows for one person to hold any position on the Executive Committee including that of President. The role of the Vice-President is to understudy the President. Some of the President’s tasks can be delegated to the Vice-President. The Constitution also allows for the Vice-President to chair the meeting should the President be absent

Question: Can an elected Office Bearer of the P&C hold a position on a P&C sub-committee?

Answer: Yes. The Secretary, Treasurer or Vice-President can be elected to any of the P&C’s sub-committees, eg: canteen, uniform and can hold a position such as Convener, Treasurer or Secretary of these committees. The President is an ex officio member of all sub-committees of the P&C. Where there is no sub-committee the P&C may appoint a person to carry out the Treasurer’s role on committees where money is handled. This person can also be an elected Office Bearer.

Question: What is the role and responsibility of the Executive Committee and how often should it meet?

Answer: The P&C Constitution gives the Executive Committee the power to manage the finances and affairs of the P&C when the P&C is not meeting. The Executive Committee usually meets when items of business that were not dealt with at the P&C Meeting have been referred to it for action or where an item of business of an urgent nature arises where a decision has to be made prior to the date of the next General Meeting of the P&C. It is not usual for the Executive Committee to meet on a regular basis.

Should the Executive Committee hold a meeting then those persons elected at the AGM to the Executive Committee plus the Principal should be given not less than 48 hours notice of the date of the meeting. Minutes of such a meeting must be tabled at the next General Meeting of the P&C for ratification of motions/resolutions/decisions made. A General Meeting of the P&C is the higher body and has the power to override decisions made by the Executive Committee. Every effort should be made to avoid an Executive Committee acting as the managing group of the P&C.

Question: What happens to our P&C if we are unable to get people to fill the Office Bearer positions?

Answer: The election of an Executive Committee is a requirement of the P&C Constitution. Without Office Bearers you do not have a properly constituted P&C and it will cease to exist. The implications of this are that any business currently run by the P&C e.g. canteen, uniform shop, would eventually have to cease trading.

Question: Can the Principal be an Office Bearer for the P&C?

Answer: Yes. As an ex officio member of the Executive Committee the Principal has the same rights and responsibilities as any other Executive Committee member. The Principal can propose motions, vote and be elected to sub-committees and Office Bearer positions.

Question: Is there a maximum number of years someone can serve as a P&C Office Bearer or Executive member?

Answer: No. All Office Bearer positions and Executive Committee memberships are declared vacant at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) to give other members the opportunity to nominate. There is, however, nothing to stop someone from continuing to nominate and seek re-election.

Question: Can the P&C President write and send letters on behalf of the P&C Association?

Answer: The P&C direct the Secretary to write and send letters on behalf of the members. The P&C may find that it has a Secretary who is happy to write the minutes but does not feel confident about putting together a letter to send to the Director-General of Education, the local Shire council, or the Minister for Education for example. Therefore, in these circumstances the President could write the letter and submit it for the next minutes. A P&C President must be aware of the P&C activities and be able to take the initiative if an Office Bearer has not carried out the resolution. This is essential if that lack of action could be detrimental to the P&C as a whole. If the matter is of an urgent nature then an Executive committee meeting can be called giving 48 hours notice to address the issue and give permission. Otherwise the P&C President must not send out letters in the name of the P&C that are unauthorized by the P&C.

Canteen and Uniform Shop

Question: Can children of compulsory school age undertake voluntary work in the school canteen?

Answer: No, there are two Acts that do not allow children to be in canteens. The first is the School Education Act 1999 Section 29 (2) which states that a child must not be "... engaged in work for the purpose of gain by a person even if the child is not paid for the work done." Breaches of this rule carry a \$5000 fine. Secondly, under the Occupational Safety and Health Act it is not permissible to introduce a hazard into a workplace. Young children especially would be considered a hazard in a canteen. Finally, if a child of compulsory school age is working in a canteen they are not insured either by the P&C or the school. Currently, the compulsory school age for children is from the beginning of the year in which the child reaches 6 until the end of the year in which the child reaches the age of 15. The only exception to the above is in circumstances where the students are accessing the canteen facilities as part of a detailed educational program within the school curriculum. This type of agreement must be fully discussed between the P&C and the school with careful consideration given to the Canteen Supervisor's role and responsibilities. There should be no expectation that the Canteen Supervisor takes on extra duties or has the workplace disrupted during normal working hours.

Question: What is the role of the principal of the school at a P&C meeting in regard to the management of the canteen?

Answer: The School Education Act 1999 states the school principal is an ex officio member of the P&C and the Executive Committee. The principal has same voting and speaking rights at a P&C and Executive Committee meeting as any other financial or elected member. Where the P&C manages the canteen, the P&C may form a canteen committee. All standing committees of the P&C must have terms of reference to enable them to operate. The P&C may appoint the principal as an ex officio member of these committees. The principal does not have the power to close a P&C canteen, does not have control over the employees of P&C canteen. As long as the P&C canteen adheres to the Healthy Food and Drink Policy advocated by the Department of Education as to goods sold in the canteen the Principal would have no input other than as a member of the P&C or a member of the standing committee formed for that purpose.

Question: Can the canteen employee be paid to do the banking?

Answer: If a canteen worker's job description or duty statement states they are required to do the banking then their employment contract should reflect this as part of their duties. If this duty occurs during working hours, the employee must be paid. The P&C must declare any fringe benefits paid to employees if considered part of their wage. An employee covered by WorkCover insurance on the way to the bank must use the most direct route from the place of work. WorkCover ceases once the employee leaves the bank. Any queries regarding WorkCover can be directed to Centrewest Insurance Brokers on 9349 7900.

Question: Can a P&C employee/volunteer claim their own vehicle expenses?

Answer: The P&C may require an employee or volunteer to use his or her own vehicle within the ordinary course of their employment or volunteering. When formulating an agreement relating to use of private vehicle the P&C should consider the following:

- The P&C should seek agreement that there is no expectation of recompense as a result of any damage incurred to a vehicle whilst being driven in the ordinary course of their employment or volunteering.

- The driver of the private vehicle must hold a current Western Australian motor vehicle drivers' licence of the correct class for the vehicle being driven and the number of passengers being transported.
- Private vehicles that are to be used for work related travel must be registered, mechanically sound and in a roadworthy condition.
- It is the responsibility of the driver to ensure that the vehicle is comprehensively insured, and any risk to the private vehicle is the sole responsibility of the owner.
- The driver of the private vehicle is responsible for paying all traffic and parking fines incurred in the course of work/volunteering related travel.
- Under the Western Australian Road Traffic Act, drivers are not eligible to drive a private vehicle if their blood alcohol level is above the legal limit (as specified under law), they are under the influence of illegal drugs or they are taking medication that cautions against driving.

Footnote:

Where it is part of an employee's job description or volunteer's role to use their private vehicle for any P&C business, such as banking it is the P&Cs responsibility to see the employee or volunteer has a current WA driver's licence and will be operating a licenced vehicle. Any mileage can be a tax deductible inclusion in their wages or claimed by the employee through their annual taxation claim. Any volunteer reimbursement made upon a tax receipt declared according to the P&C Constitution 12.8 reporting process.

Question: Is it necessary for the school principal to be a member of an interview panel to select a paid P&C employee?

Answer: No, the P&C or the committee responsible for operating the relevant facility at the school should determine the composition of any panel. The school principal as a member of the P&C and the Executive Committee can be invited to be a member of the panel but is not mandatory.

Question: Is it necessary for the P&C to have a Canteen Committee to operate the canteen?

Answer: No, the P&C is an autonomous body and can determine the manner in which it manages the canteen or uniform shop. Where the P&C chooses not to have a canteen committee or uniform committee a resolution should be made at a general meeting of the P&C to identify which body or person/s are responsible for the day to day management of the canteen/uniform shop. This can be a financial member of the P&C appointed to carry out this task or the Executive Committee can be given this responsibility.

In both instances the P&C should determine (by resolution at a general meeting), the type of reporting required, for example the presentation of a written statement of receipts and expenditure, up-to-date bank reconciliation statement and a copy of relevant bank statement/s balance sheet to each P&C meeting. An annual statement of receipts and expenditure and profit and loss must be prepared annually and all books passed to the P&C Treasurer for audit by the Association's honorary auditor.

The P&C should also establish the roles and responsibilities in relating to the canteen or uniform shop management by either the Executive Committee or the person appointed for this task. Where a person is appointed to carry out this task a "job description" and a title such as "Canteen/uniform Coordinator" should be established for that person. The Executive Committee must provide minutes of its meetings to the next general meeting of the P&C for adoption/ratification of any decisions made this would include those meetings called specifically for canteen management.

WACSSO recommends that where possible a canteen committee be formed and terms of reference adopted. Refer to WACSSO website www.wacssso.wa.edu.au for information and terms of reference for standing committees.

Question: Can the Principal run the school canteen?

Answer: Yes, the Principal can run the canteen with volunteer staff or paid staff. The school can also lease or outsource the canteen under the guidelines of the Department of Education. The option to allow the canteen to be leased to an outside provider can only be organised by the Principal **not** the P&C Association.

Question: Are canteen workers entitled to long service leave?

Answer: Yes, under the Long Service Leave Act all canteen employees are entitled to long service leave. A formula to calculate long service leave for canteen workers is available from the Department of Commerce 1300 655 266 and from their online website.

Question: Who can a canteen employee speak to if they have a problem or a grievance?

Answer: In the first instance the employee should speak to the canteen committee convenor. It is recommended that:

- the P&C and/or the Canteen Committee develop a grievance management process.
- A “Liaison Person” appointed to liaise with the paid canteen staff and the canteen sub-committee and/or P&C.
- A job description established for this position and be adopted by the P&C at a General Meeting.

If the P&C have elected a canteen sub-committee to carry out the management of the canteen, the P&C President is the “principal employer at law” and any paid or voluntary canteen staff may approach the President with any work related issues. The P&C President is an ex officio member of all committees of the P&C and be notified of time and dates of meetings. It is important that the P&C President is kept up to date on the activities of all P&C committees. All committees of the P&C must report to all general and/or Executive Committee meetings of the P&C in the manner determined by the P&C.

Question: Does the schools insurance cover money, uniforms and canteen stock owned by the P&C?

Answer: No, the P&C is an independent autonomous body and therefore is required to take out its own insurance cover for these items. This insurance will be relation to fire, theft, burglary, malicious damage, fusion and water damage. For insurance information, please contact Centrewest Insurance Brokers on 9349 7900.

Question: Can members of the P&C, employees or volunteers in the canteen purchase goods through the canteen at wholesale prices?

Answer: This practice is discouraged by WACSSO, as the canteen is business in its own right and incorrect trading figures can give a false overview to the Australian Taxation Organisation (ATO) of the businesses viability and trading capacity. It is not good business practice and should not be encouraged. Any misuse or misappropriation of the business ABN, business name or business stock is grounds for

dismissal for an employee and is serious misuse of a business name by a volunteer and would be viewed as a breach of the employer and P&Cs trust.

Question: Should the canteen sub-committee provide a report to the P&C Meetings?

Answer: Yes, the canteen sub-committee convener should provide a written report of the overview of the activities of the canteen containing recommendations where relevant to menu changes, employees, opening times etc. This report should contain a statement of receipts and expenditure, up-to-date bank reconciliation and a copy of the most recent bank statement. A statement of receipts and expenditure and profit and loss must be prepared annually and all books passed to the P&C Treasurer for audit by the Association's honorary auditor.

Question: Are P&Cs obligated to run the school canteen and the school uniform shop?

Answer: No, these are business ventures and there is no obligation for a P&C to operate them. If the P&C choose to concentrate on other fundraising options and get together to discuss educational topics of interest to stay involved in the school community this is acceptable. The *School Education Act 1999* recognises P&Cs as a forum where anyone interested in the welfare of government schools can meet to discuss educational issues. This means a P&Cs place in a school should be valued regardless of whether they operate the canteen or uniform shop. In saying this, many schools support P&Cs that are willing to operate a viable business successfully.

Question: Are any children allowed in the Canteen?

Answer: No, there are two Acts that do not allow children to be in canteens. The first is the School Education Act 1999 Section 29(2) that states a child must not be "...engaged in work for the purpose of gain by a person even if the child is not paid for the work done." Breaches of this rule carry a considerable fine. Secondly, under the Occupational Safety and Health Act it is not permissible to introduce a hazard into a workplace and a child especially a very young children would be considered a hazard in a canteen. Finally, if a child of compulsory school age works in a canteen they are not covered by insurance by either by the P&C or the school unless the student is undertaking studies directly relevant to the canteen environment and it is an approved course by the Department of Education. A P&C can refuse to accommodate students in their business if the staff indicate it would present undue pressure or stress on them as employees. Currently, the compulsory school age for children is from the beginning of the year in which the child reaches 6 until the end of the year in which the child reached the age of 17.

The only exception to the above is in circumstances where the students are accessing the canteen facilities as part of a detailed educational program within the school curriculum. This type of agreement must be fully discussed between the P&C and the school with careful consideration given to the Canteen Supervisor's role and responsibilities. The Canteen Supervisor should not be expected to take on extra duties or have the workplace disrupted during normal working hours.

Question: Can an Office Bearer of the P&C be a paid canteen employee?

Answer: Yes, however WACSSO does not recommend this. A P&C needs to make it quite clear to the persons concerned that in relation to the management of the canteen they are employees and not office bearers. They must carry out any instructions given to them by the canteen managing body, eg canteen committee or the executive committee of the P&C. At no time should they be participating in debate or voting on issues regard pay and conditions of canteen employees. If the person is a signatory on P&C

accounts then they should not be signing their own pay cheques. It also would not be prudent for this person to hold a position on the canteen committee. This information would also apply where the canteen employee becomes an office bearer of the P&C.

Question: Who officially should be in the canteen?

Answer: The only people who should be in the canteen whilst food is being prepared or when students are being served are the paid employees and those volunteers on roster to work in the canteen for the day. It is not appropriate for P&C members and school staff to be in the canteen to pick up documentation or to sign cheques whilst the canteen staff and volunteers are preparing food or serving students.

P&C Executive members and members of the canteen sub-committee including the canteen sub-committee convenor should not make a habit of “dropping in” to the canteen during working hours. Any instructions or information given to the canteen staff prior to the opening of the canteen or after the canteen is closed. It is best to make an appointment with the canteen staff for a suitable time to discuss relevant issues.

These guidelines are insurance and Occupational Safety & Health requirements to cover any claims that arise from within the canteen.

Question: Are employees and volunteers required to sign in and out before entering and leaving the canteen or uniform shop?

Answer: Yes, for insurance and employment requirements employees and volunteers working in a business must sign and state the hours they were present in the workplace or venue. This clarifies pay disputes, acknowledges correct pay processes and can verify an insurance claim.

Volunteers

Question: Do you have to be a financial member of the P&C to work as a volunteer in the canteen?

Answer: No, any person who is not a student of compulsory school age can work in the canteen on a voluntary basis. It is not required that the volunteer be a P&C member. The School Education Act Section 29 (2) does not allow compulsory school age students to work for the purpose of gain by a person even if the student is not paid for the work done.

Question: Does the insurance provided through affiliation with WACSSO cover the volunteers working in the canteen or at a fete?

Answer: Yes, WACSSO insurance does provide Volunteer Accident Insurance covering any volunteer assisting in a P&C event or P&C business regardless of whether they are a P&C member. The Public Liability Insurance provided covers those patrons attending a P&C event. There is no insurance with affiliation covering claims which involving damages and third party property this is a P&C responsibility to undertake extra insurance if required. The Department of Education has a voluntary workers insurance policy that covers voluntary workers who are actively engaged in a school activity.

Question: Can the P&C run the canteen on a voluntary basis?

Answer: Yes. It should be noted that voluntary workers should be treated with the same courtesy in regard to duties and industrial relations issues as would a paid employee. It is important that an “in charge” person be identified from the volunteers for each day the canteen is open. The P&C or canteen sub-committee should establish job descriptions for all voluntary positions similar to those of any paid canteen employees. Where the canteen is run on a voluntary basis, the volunteers would be covered by the Volunteer Personal Accident Insurance if the P&C is affiliated with WACSSO. It could be required if the canteen or uniform shop is operated by volunteers that a Working With Children’s Check could apply.

Question: Do you have to be a financial member of the P&C to work as a volunteer in the canteen?

Answer: No, any person who is not a student of compulsory school age can work in the canteen on a voluntary basis. The School Education Act Section 29 (2) does not allow compulsory school age students to work for the purpose of gain by a person even if the student is not paid for the work done. The Volunteer Personal Accident Insurance covers anyone volunteering on behalf of the P&C Association affiliated with WACSSO. A volunteer could be required to hold a Working With Children’s Check depending on the hours they work.

Question: Can we pay honorariums and have paid bookkeepers for the canteen?

Answer: The term honorarium is no longer used these days. With changes to the Income Tax Act and now GST all money earned must be registered. An employee or someone contracted to do a one of job must be given a group certificate even a contractor (self-employed) with an ABN.

If the P&C resolves that it wants to pay a person to do the canteen books then that person must be paid either as a permanent employee of the P&C at the going rate of pay for that particular job or as a self-employed contractor. The person can be a financial member of the P&C, but to avoid potential conflicts of interest it is not recommended that they be an elected member of the canteen sub-committee or the Executive.

Where the paid bookkeeper is a P&C employee then the P&C is required to deduct the appropriate amount of tax and pay superannuation and workers compensation. It is important that the P&C or the canteen sub-committee develop a job description for this position. The job description or duty statement should outline the hours of work required each day and nominated times and include when they would be able to come into the canteen to collect the necessary documentation to do the job. The P&C should adopt the job description and as in most cases, the person would be doing the books from home.

The P&C still has to provide workers compensation whilst that person is on site. Even though this person may be a financial member of the P&C, the Volunteer Personal Accident Insurance (if the P&C is an affiliate with WACSSO) does not cover them whilst carrying out paid employment on behalf of the P&C.

Regardless of whether a volunteer does the canteen books, the P&C should still establish a job description for this role and include times when the volunteer would be able to come into the canteen similar to that of a paid employee carrying out the same task.

Question: Do canteen workers require a Working with Children Check (WWC)?

Answer: Yes, the WWCC does apply to paid and voluntary canteen workers. The only exemption for this is if they are a **parent** to a child at the school in which they are working. This includes stepparents, legal guardians and 'de-facto' parents. However, the P&C can request all workers in the canteen or uniform shop obtain a WWCC as part of a P&C policy requirement.

Employees

Question: Can an Office Bearer of the P&C be a paid canteen employee?

Answer: Yes, however WACSSO does not recommend this. WACSSO office receives calls from concerned P&C members regarding the unworkable situation where a P&C Office Bearer is the paid canteen manager, eg: "who's the boss". If this is happening at your canteen then the P&C needs to make it quite clear to the persons concerned that in relation to the management of the canteen they are employees and not Office Bearers. They must carry out any instructions given to them by the canteen managing body, eg: canteen sub-committee or the Executive Committee of the P&C. At no time should they be participating in debate or voting on issues regarding pay and conditions of canteen employees. If the person is a signatory on P&C accounts then they should not be signing their own pay cheques. It also would not be prudent for this person to hold a position on the canteen sub-committee. This information would also apply where the canteen employee becomes an Office Bearer of the P&C.

Question: Who is allowed to be in the canteen?

Answer: It is not appropriate for P&C members and school staff to be in the canteen to pick up documentation or sign cheques whilst the canteen staff is preparing food and/or serving students. The only people who should be in the canteen whilst food is being prepared and if students are being served are the paid employees and those volunteers rostered to work in the canteen for the day. P&C Executive Committee members and members of the canteen sub-committee including the canteen convenor should not make a habit of "dropping in" to the canteen during working hours. If any instructions or information needs to be given to the canteen staff then this should be done prior to the opening of the canteen and/or after the canteen is closed. It is best to make an appointment with the canteen staff for a suitable time to discuss relevant issues.

Question: Who should a canteen employee speak to if they have a problem?

Answer: In the first instance the employee should speak to the canteen committee convenor. The P&C or the Canteen Committee should develop a complaints management process plus a "Liaison Person" be appointed to liaise with the paid canteen staff and the canteen sub-committee. A job description should be established for this position and be adopted by the P&C in the Terms of Reference.

If the P&C has elected a canteen sub-committee to carry out the management of the canteen, the P&C President is seen as the "principal employer" and any paid or voluntary canteen staff may approach the

President with any work related issues. The P&C President is an ex-officio member of all committees of the P&C and must be notified of time and dates of all sub-committee meetings. It is important that the P&C President be kept up to date on the activities of all P&C committees.

All committees of the P&C must report to all General or Executive Committee Meetings of the P&C in the manner determined by the P&C.

Question: Are canteen workers entitled to long service leave?

Answer: Yes, under the Long Service Leave Act canteen all employees are entitled to long service leave after 15 years continuous service. Queries and a formula to calculate long service leave for canteen workers is available from Department of Consumer & Employment Protection (DOCEP).

Question: Is it necessary for the school Principal to be a member of an interview panel formed for the purpose of selecting a paid P&C employee?

Answer: No, the P&C or the sub-committee responsible for operating the relevant facility at the school should determine the composition of any panel. The school Principal as a member of the P&C and the Executive Committee may be invited to be a member of the panel.

Question: How much do we pay our canteen employee?

Answer: WACSSO are not legally permitted to give specific employment information. Contact the Department of Commerce on 9222 7700 or www.docep.wa.gov.au for a copy of the State Government School Canteen Workers award. Alternatively FairWork Ombudsman can be contacted on 13 1394 or www.fairwork.gov.au for guidelines on the federal wage structure. P&C as employers need to make sure they pay their employees the correct wage allowance. This will depend on the trading capacity of the P&C as a business as to whether they pay their employees a state or federal award.

Question: What are the conditions of employment a P&C should consider?

Answer: This is a complex question and does require expert advice. The WACSSO P&C Employment Guide online at www.wacssso.wa.edu.au is available for P&Cs to download a wide variety of employment information and templates. Many Department of Commerce documents and templates are available for P&Cs to utilise and adjust according to their individual business needs. Contacting the Department of Commerce on their Wageline 1300 655 266 offers expert advice and up to date information, especially on workplace relations. Importantly P&Cs should seek professional advice before acting especially in when in doubt. Time, money and good business relationships could be in jeopardy if not acted on correctly.

Miscellaneous

Question: Who can attend P&C Training programs?

Answer: Any member of the P&C and anyone else in the school community who has an interest in the P&C may attend. Training presents a great opportunity especially when more than one member attends a training session and they take back information to their P&C. WACSSO welcome as many as possible to attend, and encourage at the very least the Office Bearers to attend P&C training. The school community benefits from an informed and knowledgeable P&C that is aware of its constitutional and legal responsibilities.

Question: Is it okay for a P&C member to be responsible for students during school hours when they are off school premises?

Answer: When students are taking part in any activity either on or off school premises, a teacher must be present. Teachers are the only people who have duty of care for the students during school hours and that duty of care is not transferable.

Question: Can the P&C send out mail to parents independently from the school?

Answer: The P&C to communicate directly and independently with parents would require the school to provide parents names and addresses and this breaches the Privacy Act and goes against the Departments guidelines. The school needs to welcome and approve a P&C initiative such as this. The school could encourage the P&C to survey parents independently and could send mail to parents on behalf of the P&C. This would be away of not breaching the Departments guidelines and the privacy of parents.

Question: Can the P&C have their newsletter sponsored?

Answer: Your P&C is an incorporated body, so you are autonomous in your decision-making and can decide as a body what is in your newsletter and which organisations you support so long as the newsletter is distributed by email or some other means off the school grounds. If, however, it is distributed on school grounds (and therefore available for the children to read) the school council would need to approve it and the Principal, as the site manager, would have the final say. If the P&C decide to use the school logo on your publication, the Principal could decide to attach conditions to its use.

We recommend writing an advertising and sponsorship policy for the P&C (and of course having the policy ratified by the P&C at a general meeting) and then putting it forward at School Council for approval. If it is not approved and your P&C still decided to retain the policy, your P&C advertising and sponsorship policy would only apply to publications, functions or activities not happening on school grounds or using the school logo. In any case, if and when you do decide to advertise in a newsletter in which the school logo is used, we suggest a disclaimer which makes it clear that the school does not endorse any of the products or services advertised.

Question: What is the compulsory school leaving age?

Answer: The legal leaving age is now 16 to 17 years of age as from 2008.

The following is a booklet produced by the Department of Education and Training designed to assist parents and schools in dealing with changes to the legislation:

http://www.det.wa.edu.au/schoolleavingage/detcms/cms-service/stream/asset/?asset_id=339797

School Council Questions

Question: What happens if we cannot get any community members on our School Council?

Answer: If you have exhausted every avenue in trying to recruit community members, then the positions must be allocated to parents. Remember that parents and community members combined must make up the majority of members on the School Council.

Question: Can we have students under the age of 15 on the School Council?

Answer: Students must be 15 years of age or reach 15 during the year to be eligible to be a voting member of an unincorporated School Council. If the Council is incorporated then the students must be 18 years of age. However, it is advisable to co-opt members of your student council when School Council is addressing issues that directly concern them.

Question: Our Principal has suggested we have eleven (11) members on the School Council including himself, is this correct?

Answer: If your school is an unincorporated School Council must have at least 5 members and not more than 15 members. For an incorporated Council the minimum number is 10. It is up to the School Council to determine the number that suitability reflects the school community at your school.

Question: Can the school registrar be a member of the School Council?

Answer: Yes, the registrar may represent the staff at the school. The Principal must call for nominations from all staff for the staff positions on the School Council. This is not limited to teaching staff. If there are more nominations than positions available then the Principal must organise an election.

Question: I have children attending the school and am also a teacher at the school. Can I be a parent representative on the School Council?

Answer: No, unfortunately Section 127(3) of the Education Act 1999 states that a person who is the Principal of, or on the staff of, a school and who also fits the category of parent or community member "can only be a member of the Council in his or her capacity as the Principal or staff member".

Question: What is the quorum for a School Council Meeting?

Answer: There is no quorum for a School Council Meeting as all motions need to be carried with an absolute majority of the full membership regardless of how many attend a meeting.

Question: How many representatives can the P&C have on a School Council?

Answer: The P&C may have a representative on the School Council but the school council may decide to have only parent and community representatives and include the P&C representative in the community section of the council. It is up to the school council to decide if more than one position is made available for the P&C to be represented.

Question: What does the P&C need to do if the principal decides not to comply with the correct School Council composition?

Answer: The P&C will elect parent representative from its membership as it has done in the past. The Principal is responsible to hold School Council elections for those members unrepresented so the composition remains correct. The Education Department policy section can be contacted if parents have any concerns over the School Council composition as it is clearly defined according to legislation.

Question: How are the parent representatives chosen for a School Council or board?

Answer: The principal must call for nominations from all the parents who have students enrolled at the school.

Question: What happens if there are more nominations than there are positions available?

Answer: If the number of nominations exceed the number of positions available then the principal must organise an election. All the parents of students enrolled in the school are eligible to vote.

Question: If I am a P&C member, but not the elected P&C representative, can I still nominate for one of the parent positions on the School Council?

Answer: Yes, a parent representative must represent the views of all of the parents of students enrolled at the school they should not have a set agenda. As a P&C representative, you represent the view of the P&C Association. Essentially, these two views would be the same, as the P&C is the autonomous parent group in the school.

Question: Should the P&C's School Council representative report to the P&C on matters discussed at School Council Meetings?

Answer: A representative is a person who has been delegated to speak and act for a group of people. To adequately fulfil that role the person will need to discuss issues with the group they represent, and then present the view of the group to the School Council. The P&C members are entitled to expect to hear the feedback from the School Council Meeting. On rare occasions, School Council could necessitate the closing of the meeting to the public to discuss issues that are of a confidential nature. In these instances, it may be that the duly elected P&C representative is not able to report on his issue to the P&C.

Question: I am the P&C representative on the School Council and the P&C has asked that I bring up the subject of homework in relation to a P&C member's complaint about a particular teacher. Is it okay to do this?

Answer: Any complaint against a teacher must be directed to the principal by the individual making the complaint. Neither the P&C nor the School Council should be discussing individual teachers. As a result of questions to the principal, the School Council may be directed to review the school's homework policy.

Question: I am not a member of the School Council but would like to go to the meetings. Is this allowed?

Answer: Yes. Council meetings must generally be open to the public. However, the Council may decide to close part or all of a meeting to members of the public. Grounds for closure of a meeting are listed in Regulation 116 of the School Education Regulations 2000.

Question: How many times a year does the School Council meet?

Answer: The Council will determine the number of times it will meet. However, it must hold at least one meeting that is open to the public and in which a report is presented on the performance of the Council's functions. A special meeting of the Council may be called for by parents of students, or by students themselves if over 18 years of age.

Question: Can the School Council run the canteen?

Answer: Yes, but only if it is an incorporated Council. Only the Minister can approve the incorporation of a Council and they must be convinced that such a move will be beneficial to the students or improve the management of the facilities. If the P&C operate the canteen there would have to be a very good reason for the School Council to take over the management.

Question: How will the parent representatives be chosen for a School Council?

Answer: The Principal must call for nominations from all the parents who have students enrolled at the school.

Question: Can I just call for a special meeting because I have a particular issue I wish to see discussed?

Answer: No, there is a process that must be followed before a special meeting can take place:

- (i) The Chairperson must be advised in writing of the purposes of the proposed meeting.
- (ii) The meeting must be requested by at least 20 families of students at the school or at least half the number of families of students at the school; whichever is the lesser number.
- (iii) Only matters set out in the notice to the Chairperson may be discussed at the meeting.
- (iv) The purposes of the proposed meeting must be relevant to the Council's functions.

Question: For how long will I be a School Councillor?

Answer: The Council will determine the length of office, but it may not exceed 3 years.

Question: Can I re-nominate at the end of my term as a School Councillor?

Answer: Yes, as long as you are eligible to continue to hold the position. The Council may wish to advertise for nominations for the position to the wider community to demonstrate an unbiased reinstatement of the position.

Question: What happens if a position becomes vacant before the term of office ceases?

Answer: The Principal must call for nominations from suitably qualified people to fill the position on a casual basis. "Suitably qualified" means people who fit the category of vacancy for example parent, staff or community. "Casual basis" means for the residual period of the predecessor's term of office, if the person who leaves has one year left of a three-year term, then the new person serves one year. They can choose to re-stand after this period.

Question: Can a person's membership be terminated if they miss a meeting?

Answer: No, membership can only be terminated if a Councillor has been absent, without leave or reasonable excuse, from three (3) consecutive meetings.

Question: Can the principal terminate a Councillor's membership?

Answer: No, the decision to remove a member must be made by a resolution of at least 2/3 of the members of the School Council, not by an individual.

Question: What happens if there are more nominations for the parent positions than there are positions available?

Answer: If the number of nominations exceeds the number of positions available then the Principal must organise an election. All the parents of students enrolled in the school are eligible to vote.

Question: For how long will I be a School Councillor?

Answer: The Council will determine the length of office, but it may not exceed 3 years and you are able to re-stand for the position.

Question: What happens if a position becomes vacant before the term of office ceases?

Answer: The Principal must call for nominations from suitably qualified people to fill the position on a casual basis. "Suitably qualified" means people who fit the category of vacancy either parent, staff or community. "Casual basis" means for the residual period of the predecessor's term of office, ie: if the person who leaves has one year left of a three year term, then the new person serves one year.

Question: How does the Council reach a decision?

Answer: The Council reaches a decision by voting on a motion put to it. A decision of a Council does not have effect unless it has been made by an absolute majority.

Question: Who can vote on the School Council?

Answer: Each Council member (including the Chairperson) is entitled to one vote.

Question: What is an absolute majority?

Answer: The School Council 'absolute majority' is more than 50% of *all members* of the Council, not just of those present at a particular meeting as is the case at P&C meetings. This is easier to explain using an example. If your Council has 10 members who are all present and voting, then the absolute majority is 6. If you hold a meeting and 7 members turn up and a motion is voted on with 5 in favour and 2 against, then the motion would be lost. This is a simple majority not an absolute majority which would require 6 in favour.

Question: If I am a paid employee of the Education Department at the school my children attend can I be elected to the School council as a parent?

Answer: No. The Education Act is very specific about the composition of the School Council (see Section 127). The wording in section 127(3)(a) states: a person who is the principal of, or on the staff of, a school... can only be a member of the Council in his or her capacity as the principal or a staff member. Anyone who is employed by the Department of Education is classed as being on the staff of the school (see section 235 for categories of staff). This includes the registrar, gardener, teacher assistants any staff member.

Question: Can the School Council run the canteen?

Answer: Yes, but only if it is an incorporated Council. Only the Minister can approve the incorporation of a Council and must be convinced that such a move will be beneficial to the students or improve the management of the facilities. If the P&C decides they no longer wish to operate the canteen it would be a very good reason for the School Council to take over the management.

Question: Our school has a limited student population and a small number of parents to call on to fill vacancies on committees and councils. Do we have other options for our School Council?

Answer: The Minister may give approval for 2 or more schools to have a joint council, and will determine the number of members to be on the joint council. Discuss this option with your Principal.

Question: Is the P&C able to canvass parent opinion regarding school policy?

Answer: The P&C is able to discuss school policies at its meetings and with its membership, however anything distributed to the school community such as surveys or letters by the P&C on school grounds has to be approved by the School Administration.

Question: Is the P&C able to canvass parent opinion regarding school policy without a mandate from the School Council?

Answer: The P&C is able to discuss school policies at its meetings and with its membership. However, the P&C should not canvass the opinion of the whole school community unless it has been directed to do so by the Principal or the School Council. If the P&C takes it upon itself to do this it could be seen to be interfering in the day-to-day management of the school.

Question: Can someone employed as relief teacher assistant, relief library officer or relief school officer is eligible to take a position on school council as a parent representative?

Answer: The Education is very clear about the roles of Education Department employees on School Councils. This has been a difficult issue for a number of schools and WACSSO has sought advice and clarification from the Department and the Minister. The Minister's response is as follows:

The School Education Act 1999 affirms the necessity for close cooperation between the school and its parents and community. To ensure that parents and the wider school community have a genuine voice and capacity to contribute to decision making in relation to the functions of the Council, the Act is unequivocal in indicating that there must be a majority of parent and community members on the Council. Hence, the dividing line between staff and parent/community members needs to be clear.

The situation where a person seeks to be on the Council in their capacity as a parent, while still undertaking relief work at the school, jeopardies the integrity of the legislative intent that there be no conflict of interest between the various categories of Council members. The Act is explicit in providing that a person who is on the staff of a school (and that includes any time as a relief teacher), can only be a member of the Council in their capacity as a staff member.

It is acknowledged that this particular provision has caused some concern in a number of small, especially rural, school communities. However, it should be noted that the Act allows for a member of the local community to be coopted to the Council, to enable that person's particular skills, experience or qualifications to be used to contribute to the Council's functions.

Question: Our school has a limited student population and a small number of parents to call on to fill vacancies on committees and councils. Do we have other options for our School Council?

Answer: The Minister may give approval for 2 or more schools to have a joint council. He will also determine the number of members to be on the joint council. Discuss this option with your principal.

Question: Is WACSSO able to offer training to School Council members, particularly those from the P&C?

Answer: Unfortunately, WACSSO no longer has the contractual rights to be able to offer training to School Councils. P&C Associations make up WACSSO's core business and at present, our training targets the management of P&Cs. School Councils and school boards are under the management of the Department of Education and they do offer training opportunities if requested from a school. WACSSO state council is of the opinion that parent participation at this level would be best served if our organisation were part of the School Council training in partnership with the Department of Education.

WACSSO acknowledges the need for training of parents, and in some cases the principals and staff. WACSSO has pursued dialogue with the Minister for Education and the Director General of Education on this matter, but with little success to date. Continual feedback from disgruntled School Council members has provided us with information that will strengthen our arguments and we will keep our affiliates informed as to progress on this issue.

School Council Meetings

Question: I am not a member of the School Council but would like to go to the meetings. Is this allowed?

Answer: Yes. Council Meetings must generally be open to the public. However, the Council may decide to close part or all of a meeting to members of the public. Grounds for closure of a meeting are listed in Regulation 116 of the School Education Regulations 2000.

Question: How many times a year does the School Council meet?

Answer: The Council will determine the number of times it will meet. However, it must hold at least one meeting per year that is open to the public and in which a report is presented on the performance of the Council's functions. A special meeting of the Council may be called for by parents of students, or by students themselves if over 18 years of age.

Question: Can I call for a special meeting because I have a particular issue I wish to see discussed?

Answer: No, there is a process that must be followed before a special meeting can take place:

- (i) The Chairperson must be advised in writing of the purposes of the proposed meeting.
- (ii) The meeting must be requested by at least 20 families of students at the school or at least half the number of families of students at the school; whichever is the lesser number.
- (iii) Only matters set out in the notice to the Chairperson may be discussed at the meeting.
- (iv) The purposes of the proposed meeting must be relevant to the Council's functions.

Question: Is proxy voting allowed at School Council meetings?

Answer: No, a member to be able to vote must attend the meeting in some format, physically or electronically for example either by teleconference or videoconference and it must be noted in the minutes taken. There is no proxy, email or postal voting in either School Council meetings or P&C meetings.

WACSSO

The relationship between WACSSO and its affiliates is one of service. Each affiliate pays an annual fee based on a scale related to the number of students at the school, and for that fee receives a range of services and access to certain resources.

Affiliate services are:

- Provision of a Public Liability Insurance scheme for up to \$20million for any one incident
- Provision of Volunteer Personal Accident Insurance
- Excess insurance for canteens, uniform shops at competitive rates through CentreWest Insurance Brokers
- WACSSO office staffed to provide advice and information to affiliates
- Free P&C training program and other learning opportunities
- Quality publications such as
P&C Voice a newsletter emailed on request and posted to P&Cs 8 times a year
WACSSO eNews, a newsletter emailed on request fortnightly during school terms
- Authority to form a District Council of affiliated P&Cs to act as the local forum for P&Cs.
- Annual Conference, the decision-making body of WACSSO. This forum determines policy and deals with education issues of state or national interest. Each affiliate is entitled to send two (2) delegates and any number of observers to Conference. One (1) affiliated delegate attends at no at charge through Conference Levy within the affiliation fee
- Each District can elect one State Councillor to represent affiliated P&Cs at WACSSO State Council. State Councillors are available to attend P&C or district meetings to assist and advise where required.
- WACSSO representation on behalf of affiliates to the Department of Education, State and Federal Members of Parliament
- Representation on numerous Department of Education and other government and non government committees
- Regular information on what is happening in education in Western Australia and throughout Australia.
- WACSSO website at www.wacssso.wa.edu.au and social networking through Facebook, Twitter and the WACSSO Blog

In addition, members of the State Council (and staff) examine materials and curricula for use in schools, conduct research on many issues and make written and verbal submissions on all aspects of education to a vast array of committees and commissions at State and National level.

Public Liability Insurance / Volunteer Personal Accident Insurance

WACSSO affiliation fee includes Public Liability Insurance of \$20 million & Volunteer Personal Accident Insurance. Public Liability Insurance covers legal liability for third party bodily injury and/or property damage arising out of your activities. The Volunteer Personal Accident Insurance is provided to anyone volunteering on behalf of the P&C Association. For further information, please contact CentreWest Insurance Brokers on 9340 7900 or email: joe@centrewest.com.au

Other Insurance

As a P&C affiliate with WACSSO, CentreWest can offer insurance for canteens and uniform shops to cover fire, spoilage, burglary, money, uniforms, stock, or WorkCover (Workers' Compensation). P&Cs determine how much excess cover they need for these insurances and are offered a very competitive rate by our insurance broker. Again, P&Cs are free to source these insurances themselves if they so choose. For further information please contact CentreWest Insurance Brokers on 9340 7900 or email: joe@centrewest.com.au

Training

WACSSO offers free training programs for P&C Associations. WACSSO is committed to offering training in other areas also on "How to chair a meeting" "Conflict resolution" and "Retaining and Attracting New Members". Many other topics with guest speakers are at In House Training sessions within the Department of Education building close to the WACSSO offices.

WACSSO State Councillor

The role of the State Councillor is to assist P&Cs in resolving issues at a local level and in canvassing P&C opinion on educational topics so that WACSSO can then represent affiliates at a state and national level.

Department of Education

WACSSO part of a large number of external committees, either State Councillors or staff members, and our organisation has significant input into Department of Education policies. Our role with the Department extends to lobbying and arbitration on behalf of our affiliates.

WACSSO Conference

The WACSSO Annual Conference held each year is the forum where affiliates propose positive recommendations in areas that interest or affect them. P&C recommendations debated by the delegates at Conference and are acted on by the WACSSO State Council and their staff. This then becomes WACSSO policy which is referred to when WACSSO is quoted in the newspapers as having an opinion on a particular issue. P&Cs that are affiliated with WACSSO are entitled to send one (1) delegate to the Annual Conference at no extra cost as this constitutes part of their affiliation fee.

Advice and information

WACSSO operates an efficient staffed office that is open from 8.00am to 4pm Monday to Friday. The staff can provide informed advice or will refer the P&C enquiry to the relevant authority. The WACSSO office handles a variety of P&C issues on a daily basis. An easily accessible website provides resources, event details, media information and organisational history that is obtainable 24 hours a day. Our organisation maintains a rich source of interactive social media, an electronic newsletter, and the widely read P&C Voice where P&Cs are encouraged to contribute. See www.wacssso.wa.edu.au to source any of our resources or contact our office on (08) 9264 4000 to speak to one of our staff members.

Index

Absolute Majority	38	special meeting.....	41
Affiliation	42	voting.....	2, 4, 7, 8
AGM.....	9, 18	Membership.....	18
Auditor.....	13	financial	19
Banking	12	School Council.....	35
Bookkeeping	31	Minutes	1
Canteen		Newsletter	6, 17
School Council	39	Nominations	3
volunteers.....	30	Observers	See School Council
Community members.....	See School Council	Office Bearers	17, 23, 32
Composition	See School Council	canteen.....	32
School Council	35	employees	32
Conference	See WACSSO	President	24
Constitution	24	Principal.....	25
Correspondence		President	16, 17, 24
President.....	16, 17	Principal.....	3, 6, 17, 25, 33, 37
Secretary.....	17	management.....	9
sub-committees.....	17	meeting.....	4
Debt collection	14	Proxy	See Voting
District Council	See WACSSO	Proxy voting.....	4
Donation.....	9, 10	Public Liability Insurance	21, 42
Elections	See School Council	Quorum	1, 3, 24
Employees		Receipts	10
interview	33	Records	19
long service leave	33	Registrar.....	See School Council
Principal	33	Reports.....	3
social functions.....	14, 15	sub-committees	29
ex officio.....	1, 2, 8, 24, 25	Rules of Debate.....	4
Executive Committee.....	23	School Council	34
office bearers	23	absolute majority	38
responsibilities.....	24	canteen.....	39
role	24	closed meetings.....	36
Fundraising	18	community members	35
Honorarium	31	composition	35
Insurance	12, 21, 43	elections	37
Levy	9	incorporation.....	35
Long Service Leave.....	33	joint council.....	39
Management		meeting frequency	41
Principal	9	meetings.....	36, 41
Meetings	1, 4, 7	membership.....	36
canteen	9	observers.....	41
control	4	P&C representative	35
frequency	41	parent representatives.....	36
minutes.....	1	Registrar	35
nominations.....	3	special meeting.....	41
principal.....	4	staff.....	35
principal/staff.....	3	students	35
quorum.....	1, 3	term of office.....	38
reports.....	3	vacancy	38
restrictions.....	7	voting.....	38
Rules of Debate	4	Schools	
School Council	41	newsletter	6, 17
Special General Meeting.....	5	Secretary.....	17

Signatories	32	Volunteers	30
Social functions	14, 15	bookkeeping	31
Special General Meeting	5	insurance	31
Staff	3	Voting	2, 7, 8, 38
reimbursing	27	proxy	2, 4, 8
State Councillor	See WACSSO	WACSSO	41
Sub-committees	9, 17, 18, 19, 24, 29	affiliation	42
canteen	29	conference	43
reports	29	Conference	42
Subscriptions	10	District Council	42
Surplus funds	13	State Councillor	42, 43
Training	33, 43	training	43
Treasurer	10, 12, 13	Workcover	21
banking	12	Worker's Compensation	21
receipts	10	Working With Children Check (WCC)	32