
Purpose/Background

School Societies are often created to assist schools with fundraising and to develop relationships within the community. A Society is by definition an incorporated group of five or more people who share a common recreational, cultural, scientific, or charitable interest. Societies are bound by rules and regulations identified in the Societies Act and as such are separate in operation and reporting requirements from Rocky View Schools (RVS). This administrative procedure outlines the relationship of these two independent entities for the benefit of RVS students while providing direction to school administration to clarify the interactions and operational requirements.

Procedures

1. Formation of a School Society

- 1.1. Formation of the Society must follow all regulations laid out in the Societies Act.
- 1.2. Naming of the School Society must be approved by the School Principal if the name contains the School Name (example: Friends of Coopers Crossing School would require written Principal approval).
- 1.3. If a Society plans to complete fundraising endeavors that require a gaming license from the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission (AGLC) such as bingos, casinos or raffles the School Society must notify the Principal and receive authorization from the Associate Superintendent of Business and Operations in writing in order to proceed.

2. Governance

- 2.1. As the School Society is a separate incorporated group, the school Principal and RVS Executives or Directors are, in order to avoid conflict of interest and liability issues, NOT permitted to be a member, officer or director of the School Society.
- 2.2. To maintain operational separation of the two entities (whether actual or perceived), RVS staff should refrain from accepting an officer or director position with a School Society.
- 2.3. In preparation for the school year, the School Principal or designate, appropriate teacher(s), and the chair or designate of each School Society, will meet to review and agree upon fundraising goals and events, and agree on donation of supplies, services and society expenses. A school council executive member is expected to attend this meeting. The documented consultation should take into account the needs and limitations of the School Societies imposed on them by law or by the scope of the fundraising activities (e.g. gaming regulations and licenses). The School Society is to work collaboratively with the School Principal and School Division to ensure students are the focus of all fundraising efforts.
 - 2.3.1. All School Society activities are considered “independent activities”. “Independent activities” are defined as activities the School Principal supports but is not actively involved in the planning, organizing and supervision.

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- 2.4. If appropriate and mutually acceptable goals cannot be reached, in the opinion of the Principal, the Principal has the ability to decide that the school will not participate in the fundraising process, vetoing fundraising activities, or refusing proceeds or donations from the Fundraising Society.
 - 2.5. All members of the Society are expected to follow Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) guidelines as outlined in the act.
 - 2.5.1. If minutes are posted publicly on a school website they should exclude personal identification information such as an individuals' name, address or telephone number. In place of full names initials may be used.

3. Insurance/liability requirements and obligations of Societies

- 3.1. RVS' insurance does not extend to School Societies or Parent Groups (PG). The School Divisions insurance policies will not respond to any claims for independently operated activities; therefore, it is essential that PGs/School Societies obtain their own insurance to protect themselves from potential claims or lawsuits.
- 3.2. All School Society events will require additional liability insurance to be purchased by the School Society in order for the School Society to be adequately protected.
 - 3.2.1. School Society Food Preparation Activities in RVS Facilities, or in conjunction with RVS activities, must be authorized by the School Principal and include a Food Service Agreement between RVS and the Fundraising School Society that indemnifies RVS of any associated risks.

4. Fiscal Responsibilities & Fundraising Requirements

- 4.1. All School Society financial reporting and transactions (including bank accounts, signing authorities, and accounting records) must be separate from RVS'. For example, financial transactions related to a Fundraising School Society's event are not be processed through the school's ecommerce system.
- 4.2. Fundraising must follow the Societies Act.
- 4.3. The School Division recognizes that fundraising may be used to generate additional revenue to provide learning opportunities which can enhance educational services for students. The following guidelines should be followed with regard to fundraising activities:
 - 4.3.1. Funds raised should be used to benefit students, enhance the quality and relevance of education for learners and contribute to the development of responsible citizens.
 - 4.3.2. Funds raised will not replace public funding for instructional purposes. Fundraising will not be used for instructional purposes or basic education items. Fundraising activities are only for enhancements or extras (beyond what is required for a student to successfully complete school).
 - 4.3.3. Decisions on fundraising activities and the expenditure of fundraised dollars should be made in consultation with school principals, staff, students, school councils and parents and documented through meeting minutes. The School Principal has the power to veto fundraising activities in the School and items purchased for the School.

- 4.4. Funds raised, services and materials supplied by school/parent societies:
 - 4.4.1. will be raised for the school and donated in accordance with 2.3;
 - 4.4.2. once donated to the school, fall under the legislative authority and accountability of the School Principal;
 - 4.4.3. will become the property of RVS; and
 - 4.4.4. the School Principal (or designate) is expected to acknowledge all donations in accordance with AP5114.
- 4.5. Funds raised belong to the School Society until they are disbursed.
- 4.6. RVS is a registered charity with Canada Revenue Agency and as such is able to issue official receipts for income tax purposes for gifts received by the district, which includes its schools. Charitable donation receipts will be provided upon request for donations that have been received by RVS and deposited into an RVS account. Those donations received and deposited into a School Society bank account prior to being given to RVS are ineligible for a charitable receipt to the individual as the cheque deposited would be from the Society.
- 4.7. The purchase of any agreed upon expenditures using fundraised dollars must be in accordance with RVS Supply Management Administrative Procedures.
- 4.8. Only authorized RVS staff can initiate and authorize RVS purchases. Fundraising School Societies cannot enter into any purchase or other contractual agreements on behalf of RVS.
- 4.9. The Fundraising School Society should contribute the funds to RVS as soon as possible. If the money is not in an RVS bank account a purchase order cannot be issued.
- 4.10. Every attempt will be made to use donations for their intended purpose; however, if due to extenuating circumstances the funds or supplies cannot be used as intended, consultation will occur between School Administration and the School Society, with the School Principal having the final say as to how the donation will best meet the needs of the students.
- 4.11. The decision to remove assets from the school to which they were donated must be made in accordance with AP5216 'Disposal of Surplus Furniture and Equipment'.
- 4.12. Participation in School Society fundraising activities by school staff and parents that are not School Society members is to be voluntary.

Reference:

- Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) Fundraising Associations Resources <https://www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca/school-councils/fundraising-associations>
- Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) School Council Resources <https://www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca/resources/school-councils>
- Alberta Education <http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/>
- School Act <https://education.alberta.ca/legislation-and-regulations/>

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- FOIP Legislation <http://www.servicealberta.ca/foip/>
 - Charitable Fundraising Act <http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/C09.pdf>
 - Societies Act <http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/S14.pdf>
 - [Marsh Insurance Information for School Societies and Parent Groups \(with PG definition\)](#)
 - AP110 School Councils
 - AP5201 Limits of Authority
 - AP5119 - School Generated Funds
 - AP5114 - Donations
 - AP5116 - Donations Fundraising for Facilities
 - AP5212 - Fixed Assets
 - AP5225 - Purchases Exceeding \$5000
 - AP5216 - Disposal of Surplus Furniture and Equipment
 - AP5313 – Construction of Playgrounds
 - School Act S-3 – School Council Regulation 113/2007
 - PIPA P-6.5