

Treasurer Report Additional Comments - June 7, 2106

I've been an active member of Parent Council & Parent Society for 3 years. Two of them on the Executive, serving as the Treasurer. In that time I've seen many changes. Parent Council has traditionally been only a few members. For several years before I joined, the Family Dance was run by just 2 people. My first year there were only 6 active members on Council, and we did everything together. All meetings, all events, no subcommittees - just us. Last year we grew to about 10 regular members with even more willing to help for events. This year has had even more involvement. This is a great thing – the more parent representation the better, but that has created what I see as confusion about the bylaws, and a lack of basic understanding of how non profit corporate societies should function.

So, being that I'm a CPA and my name is the one that signs the corporate returns...I would like to review the key bylaws & parts of the Alberta Education Act, discuss some risks I see, and proposed changes to mitigate them. I would like to see these changes incorporated into the bylaws that are being discussed this summer. If they are adopted, I will consider running again for Treasurer in the fall. If not, I will have to respectfully let someone else put their name forward. I will however remain as an active supportive member of this Council & Society, as long as my kids attend Pine Street.

- Members/Officers of the Society have no right to remuneration for their volunteer service to the Society.
 - *This includes gifts, or items that were purchased by school donated/fundraised dollars. We must be extremely careful about this one. All items left over from an event belong to the Society and must be kept at the school for future events or donated outright to Pine Street Elementary. Any appearance of this not happening will bring distrust to our Society and could potentially cause an Audit by the CRA.*
- Members have the right to inspect the books of the Society at any Annual General Meeting or by prearrangement with the Treasurer or Chairperson.
 - Funds raised belong to the school community. Both school councils and fundraising societies hold a responsibility for public trust. This means the organization is accountable to the community for its success in carrying out its purpose and in meeting its ethical and legal obligations. The society is expected to report to its members on the amounts raised and how they were expended.
 - *As a non-profit society, all money fundraised must be spent very carefully. We are under extreme scrutiny to be frugal and look for every opportunity to cut expenses. Parents trust that we are fundraising for the school, and any dollars spent lower the total funds available.*
 - *After events, all funds must be given to the Treasurer immediately, or as soon as physically possible. The event leader must count the funds first, and the Treasurer confirms that amount. This avoids the appearance of misappropriation.*
 - *Expenses must be approved by the members of Parent Society before they are reimbursed or paid. If there is a need for a cheque that occurs between meetings, a communication to all Executive Members must occur to gain their approval. Every intent should be made to get the best price, use the funds efficiently and come in under budget for events.*

- The Officers will be elected for a one year term at the Annual General Meeting held in September (& May) of each year.
 - As per our current Bylaws, the member up for election 'Has been an active elected Officer of the Pine Street Parents Action Society for at least one year'. All officer positions (Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer & Secretary) of both Council and Society are up for re-election each year.
 - Members have the right to share information, voice their concerns, attend meetings, stand for election and exercise their voting privilege.
 - Business from the floor, not already approved and included on the agenda, can be brought forward and voted on at the meetings.
 - *Each member has one vote, whether they are part of the Executive or a general member. No one person has more authority than anyone else.*
 - *There are approximately 600 sets of parents that need to be represented, so the more opinions the better. The survey is a great start, this should be done more often and followed through on. We could consider having a representative from at least each grade, including ECS. Ideally, one from each class.*

- The Officers may convene a Special Meeting whenever they wish, or by written request of 10 parents of the school community. Notification of special meetings will be given by email or telephone.
 - *No decisions or planning sessions should occur outside of Council/Society meetings. This includes Sub Committees, who can meet to come up with ideas, but all major decisions must be approved by the Society. This may seem tedious to some, but it is how democratic non profit organizations operate. Collaboration is what is going to make our Council and Society successful. Everyone doesn't have to agree, but all parents should be included in the decision making process.*

- A bylaw does not come into force unless it is approved by a majority of parents of students enrolled in the school. The bylaws continue in force from year to year unless they are amended at a special meeting of the school council called for that purpose.
 - *Therefore, any proposed changes to Roles, Responsibilities or the Bylaws themselves must be presented and voted on at the AGM in the fall before any changes can be made. Changes are not allowed at any other time of the year.*