

 **Procedure**

# Requests for Voluntary Financial Contributions

## Audience

All state schools

**Implementation Date:** 22/02/2019  
**Version:** 3.0

## Purpose

This procedure outlines processes for state school principals for requesting parents to make Voluntary Financial Contributions (VFCs).

## Overview

Section 56 of the [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 \(Qld\)](#) (EGPA) allows principals to request a VFC from parents to supplement government funding for instruction, administration and facilities.

VFCs are separate to the [Student Resource Scheme](#) (SRS). While both are voluntary, once a parent agrees to participate in the SRS, they are invoiced and any outstanding debts are recoverable. Requests for VFCs, on the other hand, are not fees and cannot be invoiced or recovered as outstanding debts.

VFCs may be administered by either the school or the Parents and Citizens Association (P&C), but not by a third party. The requirements of this procedure apply equally whether requests for VFCs are administered by the school or the P&C.

## Responsibilities

### Principal

- Consult with staff and the P&C/School Council before the beginning of each new school year on proposed requests for VFCs.
- Account for, and report to the P&C/School Council annually on, VFCs.
- Disburse any funds received as VFCs as agreed with the P&C and advised to parents.
- Do not keep records of parents who have made or not made VFCs.

### Parents and Citizens (P&C) Association/School Council

- Represent parents' interests in decisions about proposed requests for VFCs.

- If administering requests for VFCs on behalf of the school, ensure compliance with the provisions of this procedure and the [Fundraising](#) policy. P&C-administered requests for VFCs are a form of fundraising.

## Process

1. State school principals consult with school staff and the P&C/School Council about the need for VFCs before sending any requests to parents.
2. The P&C/School Council president must notify all parents at least one meeting in advance of the details of a P&C/School Council meeting at which VFCs are to be discussed to provide them with the opportunity to participate in the discussion.
3. The P&C/School Council Secretary includes in the minutes of meetings at which requests for VFCs are discussed:
  - a. decisions to support or not support requests for VFCs
  - b. amounts of VFC requests
  - c. how contributions will be used.
4. State school principals or delegates acting on their behalf prepare and distribute requests for VFCs.
  - a. Requests MUST:
    - i. explain how the funds will be used
    - ii. include the department's standard [Voluntary Financial Contribution information sheet](#) (unaltered and in full) with the request (note that this requirement does not apply to VFCs schemes administered by the P&C), and
    - iii. be clearly separate from any school fees and charges, including the [Student Resource Scheme](#), although parents may make both payments at the same time if they choose to participate in the SRS and make a VFC.
  - b. requests MUST NOT:
    - i. be presented as a fee. Requests for VFCs must be clearly separate from any school fees and charges. Parents must not be invoiced and no debt recovery action can be taken for non-payment, regardless of any commitment given by a parent to make a contribution or any amount previously contributed.
    - ii. deter a student from enrolling at the school. A parent's decision not to make a VFCs must not disadvantage the student's education.
    - iii. be managed by a party other than the school or P&C.
  - c. requests MAY, at the Principal's discretion, and with endorsement of the P&C/ School Council:
    - i. be in addition to a [Student Resource Scheme](#).
    - ii. be in the form of a payment or an 'in-kind' contribution, such as:
      1. reproduced (e.g. scanned, printed, photocopied, etc.) references other than classroom materials and workbooks
      2. art and craft supplies not already included in the SRS
      3. cooking materials not already included in the SRS
      4. photocopy paper

5. tissues
6. whiteboard markers
- iii. be requested to (for example):
  1. supplement the school's IT fleet
  2. fund teacher professional development (PD) where the school can demonstrate that students will benefit directly from the PD outcomes
  3. subsidise the cost of buses for life skills activities in a Special School

The [School fees matrix](#) provides more information about the types of activities for which schools may or may not request VFCs.

- iv. indicate a suggested amount for VFCs, however, parents are under no obligation to pay all or part of the suggested amount.
5. Follow [receipting](#) (DoE employees only) processes for any contributions received as payments. Schools may act as a collection agent for the P&C, however, it is preferable for P&Cs to collect the funds themselves.
  - a. If schools are collecting VFCs on behalf of the P&C, use the 'collections for other agencies' code.
  - b. It is not necessary for the P&C to invoice the school to transfer the collected funds from the school to the P&C.
  - c. The P&C may establish its own BPay facilities, but must not use the school's.
6. Report annually to the school community (via the P&C/ School Council) on the use of the VFCs.

## Definitions

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| In-kind | Contribution made in goods rather than money  |
| Parent  | <p>Under the <a href="#">Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld)</a> (EGPA), s.10 parent is defined as –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the child's mother</li> <li>b) the child's father</li> <li>c) a person who exercises parental responsibility for the child.</li> </ol> <p>For the purposes of this procedure a parent also means carer, guardian and independent student.</p> <p>Section 10 of the EGPA provides further information regarding the definition of a parent.</p> |

## Legislation

- [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 \(Qld\)](#) section 56

## Delegations/Authorisations

- Nil

## Related policies

- [Fundraising](#)

## Related procedures

- [Donations and bequests](#)
- [Parents and Citizens Associations](#)
- [User charging](#)
- [Student Resource Scheme](#)
- [Textbook and Resource Allowance](#)

## Guidelines

- Nil

## Supporting information/websites

- [Voluntary Financial Contribution information sheet](#)

## Contact

For further information, please contact Finance Branch through the [Services Catalogue Online](#) (DoE employees only). Customers and users external to the department should email [financialpolicy.finance@qed.qld.gov.au](mailto:financialpolicy.finance@qed.qld.gov.au)

## Review date

22/02/2022

## Superseded versions

*Previous seven years shown. Minor version updates not included.*

2.0 Voluntary financial contributions

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