




ROANOKE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Department of Finance
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To: All Volunteers of our Parent Organizations
From: Mrs. Susan Peterson, MA, CPA, SFO, Director of Finance 
Date: January 23, 2024
Subject: Relationships between Roanoke County Public Schools and Parent Organizations

Roanoke County Public Schools appreciates the support of our wonderful Parent Organizations. A lot of great programs would not exist without it. Our Parent Organizations are independent entities that control their funds and how they support our schools. To ensure this independence, the School Board Policy does not allow a school employee to volunteer in a monetary capacity within our Parent Organizations. Specifically, they can't be the treasurer or a check signor.



We recently discovered some Parent Organizations are helping in a way that is shifting the operations of school programs from a school to a Parent Organization. This shift does not follow best practices. It prevents the school and the division from being able to track and report on the complete finances of our student activities. Without these financial records, the division cannot budget for needed program increases. In addition, it creates more work for the Parent Organization.

There are two ways we have realized this shift of operations occurs. Some Parent Organizations are selecting and paying vendors for uniforms, equipment, or other operating needs for sports. Other schools give vendor invoices to their Parent Organization to pay, such as copier rental fees. We want to step back, reevaluate our roles, and move forward following best practices.

It is best practice for the Parent Organization to manage their operations and donate funds to the school for a designated purpose that complies with division policies. Then, the school spends the funds for the designated purpose. We recently requested our Schools and Athletic Directors to begin ensuring the procurement of goods and services occurs through the school's books and that they receive a donation from the Parent Organization to fund them.

We found a training resource that explains this idea and other facets of running a Parent Organization. We encourage every officer and board member to go through the training program. You can find the training on our webpage: <https://www.rcps.us/Page/3398>.

Best practice is for school fundraising groups to focus their energy on volunteer support and raising money. Booster funds should then be granted to the school or program and let the school staff manage programs. For example, the band boosters may raise money and make a grant to the school for new uniforms. Leave the school procurement department to handle contracting, ordering, and writing the check for the uniforms.

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