

Draft Executive Limitation for PSSC Budget Expenses

- 1.0 In keeping with the PSSC mandate as outlined in the *Education Act*, the superintendent shall not fail to ensure funds provided to the Parent School Support Committees are used exclusively to facilitate the establishment of the PSSC and their work of advising the principal.
 - 1.1 The superintendent shall not allow the school principals to be uninformed of the purpose and appropriate use of PSSC funds.
 - 1.2 The superintendent shall not allow any expenditure of PSSC funds that are not approved at a meeting of the PSSC at which there is a quorum present as required by s.20 (2) of *Governance Structure Regulation 2001-48* and recorded in the PSSC minutes.
 - 1.3 The superintendent shall not allow any expenditure of PSSC funds that does not fall into the following categories:
 - a) Expenses related to the election of PSSC members
 - b) Expenses related to the holding PSSC meetings
 - c) Expenses related to professional development or training for PSSC members
 - d) Expenses related to PSSC communications
 - e) Expenses related to parent or community engagement conducted by the PSSC.
 - f) Other expenses pre-approved by the superintendent or a designate directly related to the work of the PSSC in advising the principal.

Note on Monitoring: Regular monitoring of this policy does not have to be onerous and should certainly not require a full audit of all PSSC expenses. The superintendent may simply demonstrate that a policy had been implemented and that principals are regularly reminded that they must not approve PSSC expenses and potentially a statement from staff indicating the number of rejected expenses – if any.

Of course, if at some point the DEC has serious concerns about widespread inappropriate use of PSSC expenses they may demand more detailed monitoring.

I believe the issues we have seen in the past are the result of a lack of awareness of the use of PSSC funds. A policy such as this, with an Expense Checklist like the sample below, should clarify what is allowed and give principals a source to point to if they are required to refuse a PSSC request to spend money.

Parent School Support Committee Budget Guidelines

The money allocated to Parent School Support Committees is government money provided by taxpayers. For accountability and transparency, care must be taken to ensure budget decisions are properly made at official meetings and recorded in the PSSC minutes.

The PSSC decides how they will spend their budget. The principal may make suggestions on how to use PSSC funds, but only the PSSC can decide how they will use the money to help with their work of advising the principal.

While the PSSC makes the decisions, it is the principal who authorizes purchases and payments from the PSSC account. The principal cannot authorize payment for any expense that does not fall within the role of the PSSC. To provide clarification, specific categories have been established by the District Education Council.

PSSC Expense Checklist:

1. Was the expense approved by a vote at an official meeting of the PSSC?
 - Did the meeting have more than 50% of PSSC member present as required and are the names of the people in attendance recorded in the minutes?
 - Did PSSC members at the meeting have the opportunity to discuss and debate the expense before the vote was taken?
 - Was the meeting open to the public?
 - Is the motion to approve the expense recorded in the official PSSC minutes?

2. Is the expense directly related to the work of the PSSC?
 - Expenses related to the election of PSSC members. This may include expenses such as:
 - posters and promotional materials
 - candidate information meetings
 - notices sent home

 - Expenses related to the holding PSSC meetings. This may include expenses such as:
 - Office supplies
 - Meals
 - Nutrition breaks
 - Equipment rentals

 - Expenses related to professional development or training for PSSC members. This may include expenses such as:
 - Training resources such as books and training videos
 - Orientation sessions for new members
 - Registration fees and approved travel expenses for PSSC members in accordance with travel policies.

- Expenses related to PSSC communications. This may include expenses such as:
 - School Connects or a similar service
 - Voice mail service
 - Postage and courier
 - Brochure and pamphlets
 - Office supplies and printer cartridges as they relate to PSSC business
 - Promotional materials
 - Expenses related to parent or community engagement conducted by the PSSC to inform their work. This may include expenses such as:
 - Costs related to hosting parent meetings
 - Costs related to surveys or other feedback specific to the work of the PSSC.
 - Other expenses directly related to the work of the PSSC. Expenses outside these categories must be pre-approved. A request can be made to the Superintendent or designate and must clearly indicate how the expense will contribute to the advisory duties of the PSSC as set out in s. 33(1) of the Education Act.
3. The following expenses are deemed not appropriate uses for PSSC funds.
- Gifts (gift cards, gift certificates)
 - Flowers
 - Alcoholic beverages
 - Instructional materials
 - Hiring of casual staff
 - Payment of travel expenses as they relate to attendance at PSSC meetings
 - Allocating funds to sports team or other extracurricular activities
 - Donating funds to outside organizations
 - Purchase of equipment or technology not directly related to PSSC meetings.