

# Frequently Asked Questions regarding Parent Fundraising for Schools Edmonds School District No. 15

April, 2011

Parent groups, booster clubs, and other not-for-profit community groups are essential and valuable partners of Edmonds School District. Because they are separate organizations, the school district does not directly control or govern their fundraising activities, unless those activities occur during the school day, on school district property, or during a school-sponsored event. The following questions and answers are intended to provide guidance to parents and other community groups who wish to raise funds in support of schools. For additional information, please contact the Business Office at 425.431.7052.

## **QUESTIONS REGARDING SPECIFIC TYPES OF FUNDRAISERS:**

- 1) Is it possible for a parent group to sponsor a jog-a-thon to raise funds for a school?  
YES! The event needs to be scheduled outside of the normal school day (after school, on weekends, during winter/spring/summer break or other non-school days, or on school holidays). Funds that are collected are deposited into the parent group's treasury. Students and staff may participate on a voluntary basis, but they should not handle money.
- 2) Are there restrictions if a parent group sponsors a jog-a-thon/walk-a-thon on an early release day?  
First, if the event is going to be held at the school it needs to be approved by the principal or district community use coordinator (see next question). Second, staff cannot volunteer to help with a parent fundraiser on an early release day, since they are still on paid time and involved in professional activities at the school.
- 3) Can the parent group use school grounds for a jog-a-thon outside of the school day?  
As long as the use is approved at least one month in advance and scheduled through the school principal or the district's community use coordinator (425.431.3844). The parent group will be asked to complete a reservation form and follow the district's procedures for community use of schools. The form and procedures are found on the district's website under the heading "Community Use of District Facilities" on the Community tab.
- 4) a) Can students participate in a jog-a-thon or walk-a-thon during the school day?  
Jog/walk-a-thons, by definition, imply that a portion of fundraising occurs by means of participants being sponsored on a per lap basis. As such, schools can hold jog/walk-a-thons for students during the day as a fun and healthy activity, sponsored and supervised by school staff. Monies raised from such an event would benefit an Associated Student Body (ASB\*) activity or a school's educational program, and would be deposited into the school's account at the District. With approval by the principal, parents are welcome to volunteer to help and enjoy the activity along with the students. Please note, at this time students cannot participate in a parent group sponsored jog/walk-a-thon held during the school day. However, it is legal for the students to contract with the parent group to

provide some of the logistical support required to run an ASB event, but all funds collected must be deposited into the ASB fund, the contract needs to be approved in advance and paid after the event through the normal ASB bill-paying process. (The students cannot just hand over cash to the parent group on the day of the event.) Also, the event must clearly be for the benefit of the ASB activity, with the bulk of the funds kept by the ASB for student activities.

\* ASBs are limited by state law to funding only optional, extra-curricular CARS (Cultural, Athletic, Recreational or Social) activities. Examples of CARS include raising funds for:

- Cultural: visits to places of interest like museums or special events
- Athletic: sports team activities or supplies
- Recreational: non-competitive group activities (bowling, roller skating, etc.)
- Social: gatherings just for fun (pizza parties, talent shows, etc.)

b) In these times of declining state funding, can ASB funds be used for purchasing paper and photocopies for our school?

No. According to State code, ASBs are limited to funding only CARS (Cultural, Athletic, Recreational or Social) activities.

c) Can a school choose to hold a running or walking event (no fundraising implied) during the school day, timed to coincide with the beginning or ending of a parent group fundraiser?

Yes, as long as:

- students are not running/walking to raise funds for the parent group; and
- the parent group has adult volunteers present at the event to collect any monies raised for the parent organization.

5) Can students sell wrapping paper, cookie dough, magazine subscriptions and other goods and services to raise funds for a parent group?

Yes, on a voluntary basis outside of the regular school day. Students are under the supervision of their parents outside of the school day (unless they are participating in a school-sponsored event, in which case the school has supervisory responsibility and school rules apply). Information provided by the parent group can be sent home with students from school, and the goods sold outside of school hours. Money can be brought back by the students and collected by a parent volunteer at the school when the fundraiser is over.

6) Can parent groups sell food or other items on campus during the school day to raise funds for the parent group?

Yes, with the approval of the principal and within the requirements of board policy 8600 regarding the sale of food on campus. The parent group must purchase the items, provide adult volunteers to provide the necessary labor and oversight of the activity, and handle the money that is raised.

7) Are parent groups able to sponsor evening events like a school carnival, and have the funds deposited in the parent group's treasury?

Yes – with the approval of the principal and reservation of the facility (see question number 3).

8) Can the school website post a hyperlink to a company that contracts for acceptance of used car donations for proceeds to go to the parent group?

No, school board policy 3210 prohibits the placement of active hyperlinks on school and district websites for commercial advertising purposes. If the parent group hosts its own website, it can choose to have such a link.

#### **GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT FUNDRAISING:**

9) If a parent group donates funds to a school, does any of the money get taken away from the school to be used by the district?

No. Funds donated to a school stay within that school's building budget. If the funds are donated for a designated purpose, they are identified with a special account code to keep track of spending. The principal or office manager at the school can provide reports and answer questions about the use of donations at any time.

10) Does the district or the county charge a fee for processing funds raised by students for charitable purposes?

No. State law permits a fee to be charged, but at this time neither the district nor the county charges such a fee.

11) If funds are donated by parents to the school, is there any restriction from the school or district on how the funds are spent?

If funds are donated for a specific purpose, the school and district have the responsibility to review and approve the acceptance of the funds for that particular purpose. Once accepted, the money can only be spent for that purpose unless the parents change the designated use. A proposed use may not be acceptable due to a restriction in state law, a judgment call on the part of staff that the proposed use would be dangerous or disruptive to students, or some other reasonable or legal concern that can be explained to the donors.

12) Is it okay for students to help raise funds for a parent group?

Yes, as long as it is done on a voluntary basis outside of the regular school day.

13) Are parent groups allowed to give out awards during the school day for students who raise the most money for the parent group?

Yes, but only with principal approval. Giving out awards can be fun and exciting for the students that win, but the assembly should also include other activities that are beneficial for all students. The principal must also approve the scheduling and duration of time

needed, if any, to explain the fundraising activity to students prior to launching the campaign.

- 14) Are students allowed to raise funds through ASB, by organizing and sponsoring the event, and then donate the funds they raise to the parent group?

No, our legal counsel has reviewed this specific question and determined that it is not allowed under state law.

- 15) If students are members of the parent group, does that change the answer to the last question?

No. Although students may be members of the parent group, student fundraising activities during the school day are governed by state law.

- 16) Do students have to officially be members of the parent group in order to help with fundraising for that group?

No. If they are members it makes it clearer that they are participating as part of the group rather than as students of the school that will benefit, but parents and students are free to decide what activities students participate in outside of school and school-sponsored activities.

- 17) Does the principal need to be involved in approving parent fundraisers?

If the event is going to impact school in any way, the principal must review and approve the event. Usually principals are extremely supportive of the parent group, but for any given fundraising idea they may have information about timing and coordination with other events that will help the activity be more successful.

- 18) If parents donate to the school's building budget, are the funds separate from ASB and the district's General Fund?

Technically the school's building budget is a part of the district's General Fund, but it is accounted for separately and the decisions over use of the funds rest with the school principal and staff.

- 19) Are there limitations on the use of the school's building budget?

The school's building budget is subject to the same general limitations on use of public funds as the General Fund. For example, it may not be used to buy gifts for individuals, or given out as scholarships or individual student aid. (There are, however, other funds available for scholarships and support for needy students.) Staff supplies and assemblies may be paid from the building budget, as well as most other typical school expenditures.

- 20) Are parents or other community groups able to donate funds to pay for supplemental staff positions or pay?

Yes, with restrictions. Due to bargained contracts with unions and other employee associations, all positions and pay must be approved in advance by the Human Resources

department. In addition, the total funds required for the year must be donated in full to the school prior to posting the position.

If you have other questions, please do not hesitate to contact Business Services at 425.431.7052. Thank you for your interest in supporting our students and schools!