

PARENT COMMITTEE **BUDGET**

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WELCOME MESSAGE

The **English Parents' Committee Association**, the EPCA, is a coalition of parents' committees of Quebec's English school boards; it represents nearly 100,000 students in the young anglophone sector. EPCA is a non-profit association funded by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEES).

The EPCA advocates for public education in English in Quebec and lobbies for questions that concern members of our parent committee.

We hope that you find this guide useful. Do not hesitate to reach out to us with any questions you might have.

Section 197 of the Education Act (E.A.) establishes the Parents Committee's budget.

“The parents’ committee and the advisory committee on services for handicapped students and students with social maladjustments or learning disabilities shall adopt their annual operating budget, see to its administration and give an account thereof to the school service centre.

The budget shall maintain a balance between the expenditures of each committee on the one hand and the financial resources allocated to each committee by the school service centre and each committee’s own other revenues, on the other.”

The amount of money allocated to the Parents' Committee varies between school boards due to factors such as the size of the school board, the number of representatives, the territory, and the level of support provided by the school board.





Budget Management

The budget is prepared at the beginning of the year and is used to support activities planned for the coming year. The Parents' Committee must maintain a balanced budget, meaning that its expenses must equal its income. The committee manages its budget, but certain aspects, such as bookkeeping or issuing payments, may be entrusted to the administrative services of the school board. In all cases, it is the Parents' Committee that decides how it uses the financial resources at its disposal.

A parent could be appointed as treasurer to prepare the annual budget, ensure members' requests are compliant, present a regular report to the Parents' Committee, and prepare the financial statement at the end of the year.

School Board Support

It is important to note that Section 194 of the EDUCATION ACT specifies the various types of support that the school board must provide at no cost to the parents' committee:

“The committees may hold their meetings on the premises of the school service center. The committees may also use, free of charge the administrative support services and the facilities of the school service center in accordance with the terms and conditions established by the director general.”

LOCATION

The practice of holding Parents' Committee meetings in school board-provided rooms is well established in the community. Depending on the needs of the Parents' Committee, the school boards make available rooms at their head office, one of their schools, or any other building with adequate space.



Parent Support and participation

The budget of the Parents' Committee can be used to reimburse travel and babysitting expenses for members to attend committee meetings at no cost.

Administrative support

Administrative support encompasses a wide range of activities, such as taking notes and keeping minutes, resolution handling, document printing or reproduction, e-mailing documents, and recordkeeping. The school board provides staff members to complete these tasks, or the Parents' Committee hires its own staff. Each Parent Committee works with their school board to find the best formula.

Equipment

The school board should provide free equipment such as laptops, Internet access, software, audiovisual equipment, and technical support for in-person or remote meetings.

Parent Committee Expenses

Section 197 of the Education Act states that the annual budget of the Parents' Committee must be used to support and encourage the participation of members, and to ensure that parent volunteers have the information and training they need to play their role effectively.

TIPS

- Parents' Committees could calculate travel to meetings based on the address of their school, and provide a minimal travel allowance for those who live in the immediate vicinity.
- The financial resources allocated to the Parents' Committee come from public funds and must be used to ensure its proper functioning, support its mission and sustain the participation of its members.
- Inappropriate use of these funds or the accumulation of excessive surpluses could raise serious questions about the sound budgetary management of the Parents' Committee.

Other possible expenses

Additional expenses could be charged to the Parent Committee's budget, such as refreshments, acknowledgement, courtesies, gifts for Secretaries' Week, and recognition for members whose involvement as a parent is coming to an end.

The internal rules should indicate:

The terms and conditions for reimbursement of expenses must be clearly described in the committee's internal rules, such as the amount offered for each mile traveled, the manner in which the distance travelled is calculated, the conditions under which reimbursement is granted, and the procedure for requesting reimbursement.

To avoid any misunderstanding, the terms and conditions for reimbursement of these expenses must be clearly described in the committee's internal rules.

Training

The Parents' Committee is responsible for informing the school board of the training requirements of parents. To meet these needs, the school board may organize free parent training activities or provide a budget.

EPCA can be used as a training resource.





BUDGET

Budget Surplus

If the Parents' Committee has a budget surplus at the end of the year, and the school board is in charge of deciding what to do with it. In most cases, the school board recovers the surplus, but some Parents' Committees work with their school board to set aside money for next year's activities or carry it forward to the budget balance.

Budget shortfall

When a Parents' Committee has a budget deficit, it is possible to request an increase in the school boards budget. To do this, the committee should conduct a thorough assessment of their requirements, including the amounts required to cover costs incurred by members for their participation, administrative support and equipment, activities or events to increase member mobilization, and training sessions to improve knowledge and ensure full participation. This assessment will help the committee engage in a discussion with the school board and demonstrate the justification for the amounts required.



FAQ

Can a Parents' Committee can have its own bank account that is separate from the School Board?

A Parents' Committee can have its own bank account that is separate from the School Board. This arrangement requires additional work on the part of Parents' Committee members in terms of accountability and changes in signing authorities, as well as increased risk of misappropriation.

Can alcohol be purchased?

Tread carefully! Most public organizations now prohibit the purchase or reimbursement of alcoholic beverages to avoid criticism and controversy.

Where does the budget for the Parents Committee come from?

[Section 197 of the Education Act \(E.A.\)](#)



English Parents'
Committee Association



LET'S WORK TOGETHER

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