

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

April 25, 2006

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Schmidt, Acting Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Fundraising Survey Results

ORIGINATOR: B. Tams, Acting Executive Director

RESOURCE

STAFF: Lisa Austin, Alva Shewchuk, Cory Sinclair

INFORMATION

Parent groups were invited to participate in a fundraising survey during the month of January. The purpose of the survey was to gather information about the nature and extent of fundraising activities being undertaken by parent groups on behalf of schools. Each school's administrative assistant received a copy of a covering letter and paper survey to distribute to parent group chairpersons. In addition, an online survey was made available to parent groups through the *Keynotes* newsletter and *Partners In Education* website.

Parent group chairpersons were asked to provide feedback on behalf of their groups and submit the information to the Communications department. A copy of the fundraising survey is provided as Appendix I and the feedback collected through the survey process is outlined in Appendix II.

A copy of the fundraising survey feedback will be shared with parents through the administrative assistants at each school. In addition, a link to an electronic copy of the feedback will be included on the *Partners in Education* website and in the June issue of the *Keynotes* newsletter.

ES:ams

APPENDIX I	Fundraising survey
APPENDIX II	Fundraising survey results



EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Superb Results *from all students*

Fundraising Survey

Fundraising Survey

Your parent group's feedback in this survey process is very important to our district. This information will help us keep abreast of the fundraising activities that are being undertaken on behalf of our schools.

Please indicate the parent group you represent. If you are responding on behalf of two groups, please submit the survey twice. **The deadline to submit feedback is January 27.**

☐ School Council ☐ Registered Parent Association ☐ Other Parent Group

1. Does your parent group participate in fundraising activities?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please continue with Question 2. If no, please fax the survey to Communications at 429-8288.

2. Your parent group believes the level of fundraising they do on behalf of the school is appropriate.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

Comments _____

3. Your parent group believes the expectations to raise funds on behalf of the school are appropriate.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

Comments _____

4. What kind of fundraising activities have been organized by your parent group?
 Check all that apply:

☐ Gaming (casinos, bingos and raffles)
☐ Product Sales (chocolate bars, entertainment books, SUTP books, etc.)
☐ Special Events (auctions, bake sales, "thons," etc.)
☐ Other _____

5. How are the funds raised by your parent group spent? Check all that apply:

☐ Lunch and Nutrition Programs ☐ Playground Equipment
☐ Professional Development (students/staff/parents) ☐ Scholarship/Award Programs
☐ Technology Equipment (computers, printers, laminators, etc.)
☐ Other _____

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Thank you for your participation.
 Please fax the completed survey to Communications at 429-8288.

Fundraising Survey Results

During the month of January 2006, parent groups were invited to participate in a fundraising survey. The purpose of the survey was to gather information about the nature and extent of fundraising activities being undertaken by parent groups on behalf of schools. Each parent group chairperson was invited to provide feedback on behalf of their group and submit the information to the Communications department.

In total, 154 parent groups responded to the fundraising survey. However, based on the confidentiality of the survey process, this may not mean that parent groups responded on behalf of 154 schools because more than one parent group may have responded on behalf of their individual school.

The following is a summary of the feedback received regarding the specific fundraising survey questions.

Question 1: *Does your parent group participate in fundraising activities?*

Based on the input received, 90 per cent of parent groups indicated that they had participated in fundraising activities.

Questions 2 and 3 asked parent groups to provide a response by identifying whether they strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree.

Question 2: *Your parent group believes the level of fundraising they do on behalf of the school is appropriate.*

Of the parent groups responding to the survey, 27 per cent indicated that they strongly agree the level of fundraising they do on behalf of their schools is appropriate and another 44 per cent indicated that they agree. Of the remaining parent group responses, 11 per cent disagree and 18 per cent strongly disagree that the level of fundraising is appropriate.

Common themes shared by the respondents are as follows:

- The level of fundraising is subjective because it is different for each school, depending on the school's needs and the parents' capacity to engage in fundraising activities.
- Some parent fundraising groups are satisfied with the level of fundraising and believe that fundraising offers opportunities to provide extras that enhance the public education experience for students.
- Other parent fundraising groups are unhappy with the level of fundraising and believe it is "frustrating" that a province with such a surplus of money expects parents to engage in fundraising activities.
- The definition of "basic" and "extras" may not be commonly agreed upon. Parents are fundraising for items that are considered extras, but could possibly be basic school needs (i.e., computers, learning resources associated with curriculum changes mandated by Alberta Education).
- The level of fundraising has increased over the years, as has the level of school needs.
- Overall concern that school buildings and equipment are aging and the fundraising expectations will progressively increase.
- In some schools, casino fundraising is accepted and in other schools it isn't. However, it is hard to walk away from a payout of \$80,000.00 for two days work.

Question 3: *Your parent group believes that the expectations to raise funds on behalf of the school are appropriate.*

Based on the input received, 18 per cent of parent groups identified that they strongly agree and 40 per cent indicated they agree that the expectations to raise funds on behalf of a school are appropriate. The other 42 per cent of parent groups identified that fundraising expectations were not appropriate (18 per cent disagree and 24 per cent strongly disagree).

Common themes shared by the respondents are as follows:

- Fundraising is an option and schools do not ask or expect parents to raise funds.
- Some groups indicated that based on the support provided by the provincial government, the fundraising expectations from schools are appropriate.
- Parents believe that the government is taking advantage of parent fundraising groups and that expectations to raise funds will continue to increase.

It is important to note that for Question 4 and 5 below, the total number of responses received was not equivalent to the number of parent fundraising groups that responded because parent group chairpersons could respond to more than one choice.

Question 4: *What kind of fundraising activities have been organized by your parent group?*

Of the parent groups that responded to the survey, 78 per cent of parent groups indicated that they participated in gaming activities such as casinos, bingos and raffles. Product sales of items such as chocolate bars, entertainment books and SUTP (Student Union Ticket Pak) books were identified by 65 per cent of parent groups, while 63 per cent identified special events as their source of fundraising. Another 34 per cent of parent groups indicated that they raise funds through activities such as grant applications; corporate sponsorship; recycling programs (i.e., bottle and inkjet cartridges); and parent and individual donations.

Common themes shared by the respondents are as follows:

- There is too much fundraising for public education.
- Fundraising has sadly become the focus of school councils and/or parent groups.

Question 5: *How are the funds raised by your parent groups spent?*

Of the parent groups that responded to the survey, 73 per cent indicated that the money raised through their fundraising activities is allocated to technology equipment; 45 per cent identified professional development for students, staff and parents; 44 per cent identified playground equipment; 24 per cent identified scholarship and award programs; and 18 per cent identified lunch and nutrition programs.

In response to the choice "other," parent groups identified resources such as library books; school signage; professional development for students; physical education, theatre and music equipment; playground equipment; field trips; uniforms; yearbooks; furniture and equipment; technology, including equipment, licenses and software programs; contract services (e.g., Artists in Residence); transportation; special education and enrichment program support; international student exchanges; and donations made by students/schools to non-profit organizations.

Common themes shared by the respondents are as follows:

- More money should be allocated to public education, with a focus on the classroom, teachers and technology.
- This survey should not in any way be utilized to stop school fundraising.
- Currently, fundraising can be used to subsidize the basics. The frustrating thing is schools are struggling to provide the basics – adequate staff, supplies, building maintenance, etc.