

Governance support resources

Community relationships

The relationship between the board and parent groups

There are no official guidelines concerning the relationship between a board of trustees and any parent group in the school, often called a PTA or Home and School, or Friends of the School, but there are a few simple principles to keep in mind. For simplicity they will be referred to as PTA in this section and this list is indicative rather than exhaustive.

- The board of trustees and parent groups are separate organisations and are autonomous although there may be personnel overlaps.
- Boards run schools, but PTAs are often useful mechanisms for such undertakings as community forums.
- The main purpose of PTAs usually seems to be fund-raising, but if the relationship is positive much can be achieved in other areas.
- All money raised by a PTA belongs to the PTA, is held in its own bank account, and is not controlled by the board of trustees.
- No money raised and held by the PTA is subject to audit along with board of trustees' money.
- Any funds raised by the PTA become board of trustees' money only when it is given to the board of trustees.
- Any money should be as an unconditional gift to avoid GST implications.
- Negotiations should take place about what the money will be spent on before any money is "unconditionally gifted" to the board of trustees.
- PTA personnel have no rights other than members of the public when they attend board of trustee meetings.
- Most board of trustee members have the same rights as anyone else when attending PTA meetings if they are either parents or staff.
- PTAs have no right to spend their funds on, say, an adventure playground, when the board of trustees wishes to commit all available money to improving the library resources.
- PTAs must obtain the permission of the board of trustees to use school buildings and/or grounds for their activities.
- PTAs must obtain the permission of the board of trustees to use the school name in any event they organise, be it a fundraising event or not.

Boards of trustees and PTAs should always try to live in harmony for the good of the education of the children.



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Where do I get advice?

For further advice please contact the governance Advisory and Support Centre 0800 782 435 (option 1) or govadvice@nzsta.org.nz

