

PARENT ORGANIZATIONS & LOCAL ACCOUNTS

AIKEN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT OCTOBER 13, 2026



BACKGROUND

The Administration:

- understands and appreciates parent organizations' vital role to our schools.
- seeks to support and work with parent organizations; however, our primary focus is ACPSD students and ACPSD schools.
- recently heard concerns about some fundraisers, particularly whether collected funds belong to the booster club or with a school.
- took the opportunity to reaffirm and clarify financial relations.

There is no intention to hinder parent organizations' effectiveness. We simply want to ensure appropriate handling, based on available guidelines and related sources, and address concerns and/or possible issues.

KEY POINTS

The Administration invited school officials and representatives from parent organizations to participate in a virtual meeting on September 10. Key points:

- Avoid commingling of funds.
- Student-derived, school-derived funds should be held in a school's account.
- Funds derived from parent organization or booster club activities should be deposited in the organization's account.
- Money typically flows from the parent organization to the school. Flows from the school to the parent organization should be infrequent/rare.
- Monies in schools' accounts are subject to District procurement, FOIA, and transparency, including monies received from the parent organization.
- Parent organizations do not have the same procurement/transparency requirements and will not have the same level of internal control.

STATE LAW

South Carolina Code § 59-17-170 covers booster clubs/parent organizations. It:

- defines booster clubs as “a parent-led organization, not directly controlled by a school or school district, that is formed with the primary purpose of raising funds for the school, school district programs, interscholastic athletics, or afterschool activities.”
- establishes annual registration with the District by August 1 includes names of officers.
- indicates that a booster club may be required by the District to submit an annual compilation or review while a more extensive external audit could be required for a “finding of special cause” determined majority Board vote.
- states that a booster club failing to register by August 1 is prohibited from distributing any funds for any purpose until registration is complete.
- states that the School Board can request a SLED check of the parent organization’s financial officer.

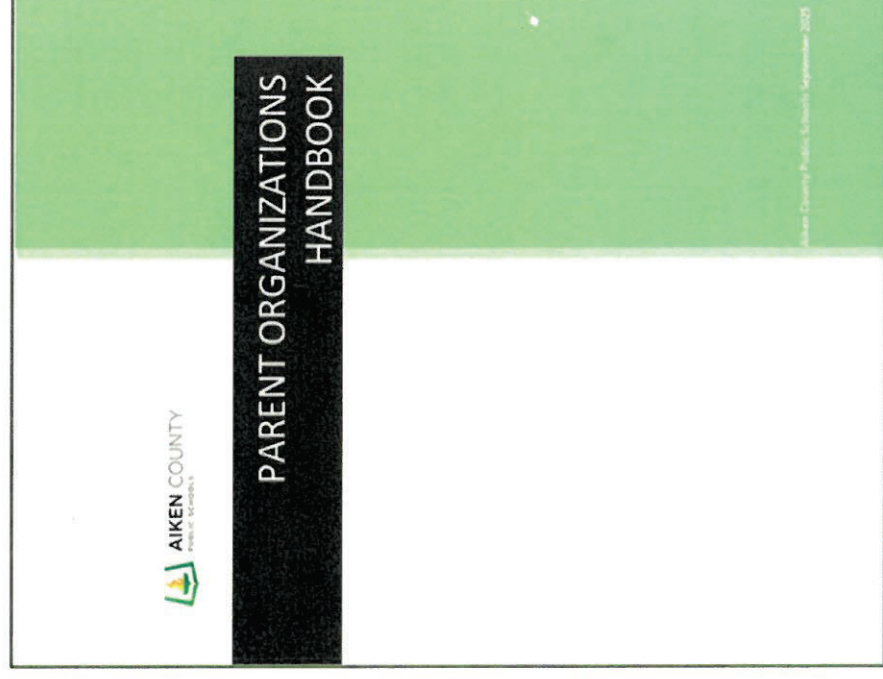
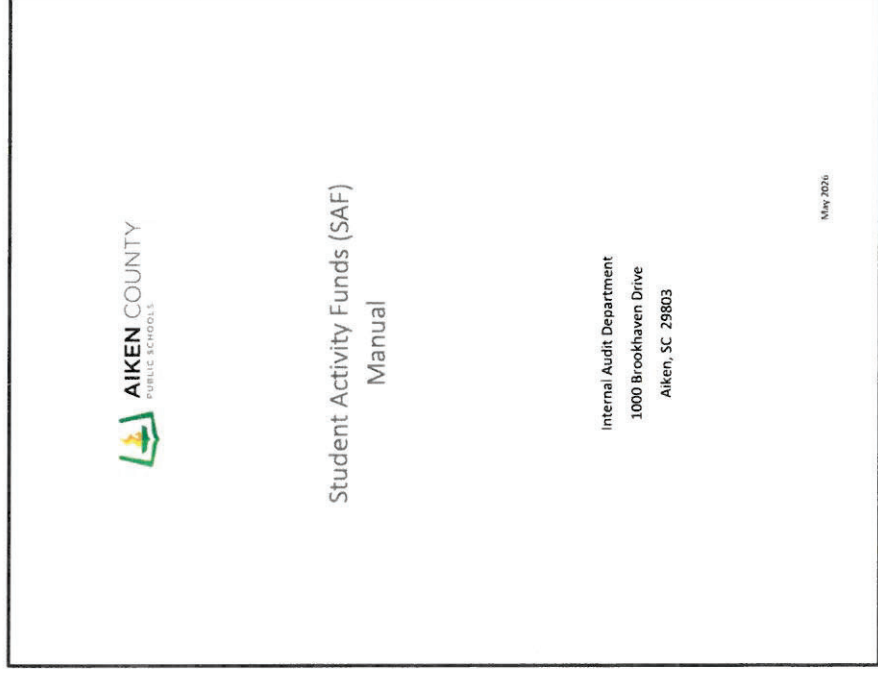
POLICY

The relationship between schools and parent organizations is addressed by School Board Policy KBE *Relations With Parent Organizations* which states that the Board:

- views school support groups as an integral part of the District that can help promote an effective education program,
- encourages participation of parent organizations,
- encourages the Administration, staff and employees to be supportive and accommodating of the activities of these groups, and
- supports the Administration's right to request that reasonable financial safeguards be used for those organizations involved in fundraising activities on behalf of District and student endeavors.

GUIDANCE

Guidance for schools and parent organizations is available on our website.



GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS

In addition to support offered by the District's auditor, local procedures and processes are covered by the **Student Activity Funds (SAF) Manual**.

Various topics are covered by the approximate 130-page document. Specific discussions on parent organizations are covered by procedure 12.5, including:

- Policy KBE
- procedures to be followed when asking for financial assistance of a parent organization,
- processes for fundraisers, mini-grants, handling of parent organizations' cash collections,
- a listing of parent organization expectations, best practices, and recommendations, and
- information on givebacks and SLED checks.

DEPOSIT OF RECEIPTS

Per the SAF Manual, certain receipts are to be deposited in schools' local accounts and "preclude any other treatment." These include:

- funds collected within the school,
- funds collected by a District employee acting in his/her capacity as an employee,
- funds collected by recognized student groups,
- funds generated in connection with extracurricular activities or extensions of school programs such as athletics, band, chorus that are trained and directed by school district employees as a part of their employee assignment. All business transactions related to these events such as programs and concessions are considered school activities if conducted by school district employees or students, and
- fund derived by school merchandising.

PURCHASES

- Schools follow the District's procurement thresholds.
- Key point: "competition" is required at \$2,500.
 - Exception: State contract
- A permission to purchase (PTP) form is utilized to ensure school-level approval prior to purchase.
- Handling school funds through school level accounts prevents circumvention of the District's procurement requirements. Alternate handling could allow or promote circumvention.

12.4 Miscellaneous: Information from Purchasing



PROCUREMENT COMPETITION AND APPROVAL GUIDELINES FOR GOODS AND SERVICES

Threshold	Action Required
\$1 - \$2,500.00	○ P-Card may be used OR ○ Check Request may be submitted to Accounts Payable OR ○ Purchase Order Requisition may be entered in Smart Fusion but it is not required. Any attachments should be uploaded to Smart Fusion.
\$2,500.01 - \$10,000.00	○ Purchase Order Requisition must be entered in Smart Fusion. ○ Minimum of 3 written quotes. Submitted with the Quote Comparison Form and any attachments should be uploaded to Smart Fusion.
\$10,000.01 - \$50,000.00	○ Requires an informal written solicitation package. ○ Requires advertisement. ○ Chief Financial Officer & Superintendent must approve all procurements above \$15,000. ○ Submit request to the Procurement Department with specifications and requirements.
\$50,000.01 & Above	○ Requires formal sealed competitive bid process. ○ Submit request to the Procurement Department with specifications and requirements.

- No purchase is to be artificially divided in order to avoid any threshold requirement. The Procurement Department will assist at any level upon request.
- The Procurement Department will handle all procurements beginning at \$10,000.01 upon receipt of request, specifications and requirements.

GUIDANCE FOR PARENT ORGANIZATIONS

Procedures, expectations, and best practices are described in the District's Parent Organizations Handbook. Highlights include:

- Policy KBE,
- school/parent org interactions,
- District and school level support,
- booster club/PTO operations,
- bylaws,
- annual reporting requirements,
- organization structure, and
- various related info.

SUMMARY OF FUNDING EXAMPLES

Proceeds go to School

- Student-related fees or payments
- Gate receipts
- Fundraisers sponsored by school or school club/group
- Concessions sponsored and run by school or a school group
- School merchandising efforts
- Donations through efforts of students
- Payments from District for matching funds and/or unused supplements

Proceeds go to Parent Organization

- Organization or club dues
- Fundraisers sponsored by parent organization
- Carnivals, cookouts, and other parent sponsored activities
- Concessions sponsored and run by parent organization
- Parent organization's merchandising efforts
- Donations through efforts of the parent organization

TRANSPARENCY

State 2026 – 2027 budget proviso 1.20 describes transparency requirements.

- School districts must maintain a transaction register that includes a complete record of all funds expended totaling \$100 or more.
- The register must be prominently posted on the district's website.
- The register must include for each expenditure transaction amount; the name of the payee; and a statement providing a detailed description of the expenditure.
- Each school district must also maintain on its website a copy of each monthly statement for all of the credit cards maintained by the entity, including credit cards issued to its officers or employees for official use.

Handling school-related funds through school level accounts helps ensure compliance with State transparency requirements. The District would lose the ability to track and report if funds moved to a parent organization's account.

ADDITIONAL SCHOOL GUIDANCE

Schools generate an activity report from our accounting software. That report shows beginning balances, activity inflows, activity outflows, transfers to other activities (if any), and ending balances.

Upon review of student activity accounts, the Administration noted that most high schools captured athletics inflows and outflows under “athletic operations.”

- This does not imply that schools failed to track or were improperly tracking athletics-related financial information.
- However, commingling can make it difficult to track dedicated funds.

Schools have been informed to track by sport for dedicated funds.

Schools received a memo on “student funding activities” dated 9/17/26.

- Describes school vs. parent organizations funds
- To be discussed with Assistant Superintendent for clarification, if needed.

RECAP

- The District recognizes the importances of parent organizations and seeks to protect our schools, our students, and the support organizations by sharing financial best practices.
- Board policy states that the Administration has rights to require reasonable financial safeguards.
- Student-derived or school-derived funds should be deposited in the school's account.
- Funds generated by the parent organization should be deposited in the parent organization's account.
- The Parent Organization Handbook and the Student Activity Funds Manual serve as reference materials.
- District procedures are intended to ensure compliance with procurement and transparency requirements.

