

PAC Chat #4

Your fiduciary duty

Along with the duties of being a part of the PAC team as an executive, representative or committee member, goes the responsibility to act in the interest of the membership. The onus on the people representing the group is to make sure that your decisions are based on your purposes (which are found in your constitution) & that you are acting as good stewards of the time, relationships, funds & roles that you hold.

What does fiduciary mean? What is a fiduciary duty and how does it apply to the PAC team?

Fiduciary (adjective) essentially means held or given in trust. A fiduciary (noun) is a person or organization that acts on behalf of someone else. Really it just boils down to maintaining the trust. Your fiduciary duty is to act solely on behalf of the group. You (individually) represent the PAC leadership team, & you all (collectively...leaders and anyone who attends the meetings to make decisions) represent the entire membership. In Canada, fiduciary obligation is looking after the best interests of the people you represent, which in this case is the parents and families at your school. This is where you come in!!

The fiduciary duties include the duty of: **Care, Confidentiality, Loyalty, Obedience** and **Accounting**

Here are some ways that your fiduciary duty comes into play with the PAC team...

- Creating an inclusive, comfortable environment so that everyone feels welcome.
- Behaving in a way that supports teamwork, and discourages division, circling back, always, to the purposes in your constitution.
- Keeping information that you receive as a PAC representative private (look back to PAC Chat #1 for specifics), and, where it permits, only passing along reliable information.
- Keeping complaints about your teammates, school staff, students or community partners to yourself, or address them directly rather than instigating division by sharing them with others.
- Recognizing that your first priority is the team (its actions, reputation, relationships and duties) not yourself. Sometimes you may need to support a decision, because it's in the interest of the membership, even if you or your family would have preferred a different outcome.
- Following the directives of the group, even if you disagree.
- Staying within the parameters of the school guidelines as you participate in school functions or operate within the building, and bolstering a strong relationship with the school staff and admin.
- Being transparent with all of the fund allocations, supplying all the information to the membership so they are completely in the loop before asking them to vote on disbursements, and ensuring accuracy in your documentation/reporting. Report everything, clearly and accurately.
- Following all of the guidelines surrounding the Gaming monies allocation, so that you don't risk losing the grant for the team in a future year.

You might not think it's a big deal to exclude someone you don't get along with, share a gossipy tidbit or complaint, withhold info before a vote, or spend money in a way it wasn't intended, but everything you do reflects on your PAC. You are stewards of the roles, funds and reputation that belong to the Council, for a limited time, and are charged with the responsibility of representing it well.

Being a part of a team comprised of other strong, involved people, with thoughts and opinions, is a blessing, even though it might come along with challenges. If everyone keeps their eyes on why your group exists (to support the kids, staff and families at your school!) then it should be easy to refocus if you start to go off track. Follow Winston Churchill, who said that we make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.

Thank you for giving your best to the students and families!