



Ghana Education  
Service (GES)

# **GUIDELINES**

## **FOR THE OPERATION OF PARENT ASSOCIATIONS**

**IN ALL**  
**PRE-TERTIARY SCHOOLS**  
**FOR**  
**GHANA EDUCATION SERVICE**

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## INTRODUCTION

“Article 25(1) of the 1992 Constitution provides that all persons shall have the right to equal educational opportunities and facilities and with a view to achieving the full realization of that right -

a) Basic education shall be free, compulsory and available to all;

b) Secondary education in its different forms, including technical and vocational education, shall be made generally available and accessible to all by every appropriate means, and in particular, by the progressive introduction of free education” (Ghana’s Constitution of 1992).

Consequently, the Ghana Education Service is fully implementing Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) and Free Senior High School (Free SHS) policies in

our pre-tertiary schools. The absorption of fees and levies, among other things, necessitated a review and adoption of the Parent Association Guidelines to be consistent with the government's goal of making quality, inclusive and equitable education accessible to all Ghanaian children.

Management of Ghana Education Service (GES) recognizes Parent Associations (PAs) as a useful platform for parents/guardians to collaborate with Management of the various educational institutions for the primary purpose of supporting enhanced education and growth of schools and/or for the comfort of students.

Management further acknowledges and appreciates the significant contributions of PAs over time in areas such as:

- Provision of infrastructure
- Supply of furniture
- Provision of teaching and learning materials
- Provision of water and sanitation systems
- Supply of vehicles
- Maintenance of school facilities
- Motivation for staff
- School beautification and environmental cleanliness, etc



## RECENT PAST DEVELOPMENTS

**T**he Heads and Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) had always collaborated in the past in the prioritization of projects and activities for execution in schools. It was however not until 2013 that school Heads were made signatories to PTA accounts following recommendations by the Auditor-General. In the latter's opinion, PTA funds remained public funds and needed to be subjected to audit.

Prior to this, PTAs operated their own accounting systems without reference to the school Head. This created serious financial challenges in some schools.

It is in light of this that Heads were directed by the Auditor-General and the Director-General of Ghana Education Service to get involved in the Management of the finances of PTAs to restore sanity.

In the recent past, there have been some developments within the operations of PTAs which thwarted government's efforts at ensuring universal access to education, specifically at the Senior High School level.

These have been related to imposition of levies which have led to the denial of some students access to academic work/school facilities and structures by virtue of some parents either refusing and/or unable to contribute to the activities of PTAs. Some PTAs instituted outrageous levies which sought to defeat the purpose for which the Free SHS policy was introduced. In the same vein, the PTA levies affected the Free Compulsory Basic Education (FCUBE) Policy at the basic school level. It made some children to drop out of school as a result of the inability of their parents to pay such levies.

In response to these developments, the Management of GES:

- a. suspended the imposition of levies in all schools;
- b. directed the reorganization of Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) to Parent Associations (PAs) - i.e., to limit the involvement of management and staff of the schools.

Management has therefore developed the PA Guidelines as follows;

# DETAILS OF THE GUIDELINES

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The GES Management in collaboration with relevant stakeholders present the following guidelines for the operation of PAs in all pre-tertiary schools in the country

## **1. MEMBERSHIP OF PA**

Membership of the PA shall be opened and limited to only parents/guardians of whose children/wards are in the school.

## **2. PAs SHALL BE SCHOOL-BASED**

Every PA shall be related to a specific school. The implication is that every PA must be made up of parents/guardians whose children/wards are in a specific school and the activities of that PA must be in relation to that specific school.

## **3. MEMBERSHIP OF THE PA SHALL NOT BE EX-OFFICIO**

A member of the PA shall cease to be a member when the

child/ward of that member ceases to be a student/pupil of that school. No member shall use the constitutional mandate (tenure of office) of an executive position to remain on the PA when the child/ward of that member ceases to be a student/pupil of the school. Executive Members without children or wards in their respective schools must be relieved of their positions.

#### **4. PAs SHALL BE AUTONOMOUS ASSOCIATIONS**

The PA shall elect its own executive officers independent of the school Management and shall operate purely as an Association opened to all parents/guardians whose wards are in the school without any interference from the school Management. The Association shall operate its own accounts as shall be determined by its members. The Association shall not use the facilities, structures, staff and students of the school in the collection of contributions from members. However, PAs shall be allowed to hold their meetings within the premises of the school at weekends but with permission from school Management. Such meetings shall not distract any official programme and or activities of the school.

#### **5. NO STUDENT SHALL BE A MEMBER OF THE PA**

No student shall be responsible for the actions and inactions of any member of the PA or the PA as a body. The implication is that no student shall be linked to the activities of the PA either through the school or his/her parent/guardian. By extension, no student/learner, in both basic and second cycle schools, shall be held



responsible for non-payment of any PA related dues and other contribution by students. They shall therefore not be prevented from attending or participating in any school based activities.

## **6. STAFF OF THE SCHOOL AND PAs**

The school shall not be responsible for the activities of any staff who, by virtue of being a parent, becomes a member of the Association or an executive member. Such a member or executive member shall not use his/her official relation with the school to engage in any activity on behalf of the PA. This, however, does not preclude the school authorities from providing any administrative support the Association might require in promoting the interest of the school.

## **7. EXTERNAL (OUT OF THE SCHOOL) RELATIONS OF THE PA**

A PA may have relationship with any group or individuals of its choice outside the school as shall be decided by its members. However, such third-party relations shall have no direct interest/jurisdiction over the school to which the PA is related.

## **8. PROJECTS OF PAs**

PAs could undertake projects to support the development and growth of the schools to which they are related. On handing over of such projects to the school, Management of the school shall have full authority over such projects without interference from PAs as to how those projects

should be managed and administered. The PA might undertake income generating projects, but not on the premises of the school.

### **9. NAMING OF PROJECTS UNDERTAKEN BY PAs**

PAs might recommend naming of projects after individuals or groups to the school Management and these recommendations shall be subjected to the procedures of GES in naming such school projects.

### **10. SUPPORT TO TEACHERS**

PAs may through the Management of the school, provide support to teachers/staff of the school to which it relates through provision of incentive packages and other welfare schemes. However, no child shall be discriminated against or given preferential treatment in the official duties of the teacher/staff to which that incentive or welfare package is related.

### **11. ACCESS TO PA PROJECTS**

No student/pupil of a school shall be denied access to any facility or structure donated to the school by the PA. Additionally, no student/pupil shall be denied access to any school activity or programme on the basis that it was funded by the PA.

### **12. FUNDRAISING**

PAs may consider all fund raising avenues to support the schools but shall not levy any student/pupil.

### **13. INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT TO SCHOOLS**

Aside contributions by the PA, individual parents/guardians may make donations or contributions to the school as that individual deems fit and such donation or contribution shall not confer any preference or privilege or disadvantage to any student/pupil in terms of access to and/or use of that facility or donation.

### **14. LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY OF PAs**

The school to which the PA relates shall not be responsible for any acts of commission and omission of the PA, more especially as it may relate to enforcement of a term of contract entered into by the PA in terms of default or liability of the PA and therefore the school cannot be held liable for the actions and/or inactions of the PA.

### **15. USE OF THE NAME OF THE SCHOOL**

PAs may use the name of the school as part of its name purely for identification purposes. However, the use of the name of the school as part of the name of the PA shall not imply any legal responsibility of the school for the actions and activities of the PA.

### **16. OFFICIAL RELATIONSHIP OF SCHOOLS TO PAs**

School Management, through its staff may relate to the PA in their official capacities and participate in their activities and programmes including updating PAs on issues relating to student performance, growth and development of school. Management of the School shall

however, not be held liable for such programmes and activities of the PA. PAs may also participate in the programmes and activities of the schools and such participation shall not impose any obligations or responsibilities on the PA.

## **17. ACCOUNTABILITY**

Every PA shall operate a bank account where all funds of the Association shall be lodged. All accounts of the PAs must be subjected to periodic audit. Regional Directors of Education are to ensure that a copy of the audit report for each school is submitted to the Director-General of GES for the necessary action.

Annual activities/plans of the PAs should be submitted to the management of the school for approval and shall submit quarterly report to school Management. Though audit must be disclosed, heads of schools shall not be signatory to accounts.



## CONCLUSION

It is the expectation of Management of GES that strict adherence to these Guidelines should produce an environment in which PAs can smoothly operate to support the schools to achieve their primary task of providing inclusive, quality and relevant education to all Ghanaian children.