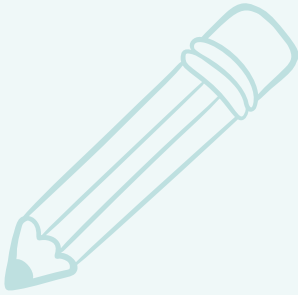


How to talk about SCHOOL LEVIES

A practical guide for School Association Committees



Step 1: Be Prepared - Know the Current Policy

- Make sure everyone has a copy of the school's current School Levies and Charges Policy.
- Take a look at what it says about:
 - What levies are for
 - How they are worked out
 - Any concessions, exemptions, or support options
- It's also useful to be aware of the Secretary's Instruction No 9 for School Levies and Charges

Step 2: Understand What Levies Actually Cover

- Ask the Principal and staff to explain what levies are used for (eg learning materials, excursions, ICT, subject costs).
- Be clear on what levies don't pay for (eg teaching salaries, new buildings, or major works).
- Think about how you'd explain this to families - levies are about helping the school provide extras that support learning.



Step 3: Ask Good Questions

When you review levies for the year ahead, use questions like:

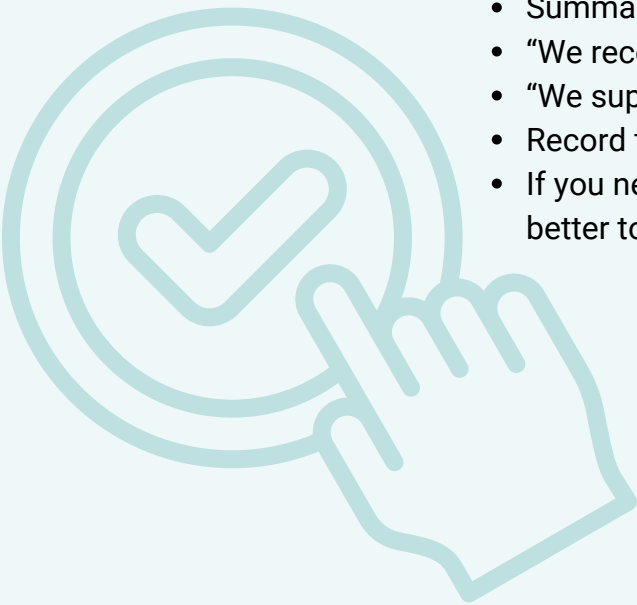
- Is this amount realistic for our families?
- Would most people find it affordable?
- Have we thought about local cost-of-living pressures?
- How does it compare with:
 - Other schools like ours
 - Last year at our school
 - The state-wide information available [here](#)
- Should levies go up, stay the same, or come down?
- Could this decision unintentionally stop some students from taking part?
- Are there any other risks?

Step 4: Work Together

- Put the discussion on the agenda for a School Association Committee meeting
- You can review as one big group or in smaller groups focusing on different areas
- Make sure the feedback is written into the minutes
- Keep the tone respectful, constructive, and focused on what's best for students.

**Step 5: Agree on a Position**

- Summarise what the committee thinks, for example:
- “We recommend levies remain at \$X due to affordability concerns.”
- “We support a small increase of \$X to cover [specific costs].”
- Record the final recommendation in the minutes.
- If you need more time, there's no harm in scheduling a follow-up - better to get it right than to rush.

**Step 6: Share Outcomes with Families**

Once the levy decision is final:

- Publish it on the school website so all families can see it.
- The committee can help by:
- Writing a simple explanation of what the levy covers
- Explaining any changes and why they were made
- Preparing answers for common parent questions

