

Mercy Catholic College Parents and Friends Association

Meeting Minutes 18th February 2015

Meeting opens: 7.05 pm

- 1. Welcome from President and School Principal**
- 2. Meeting opening prayer**
- 3. Apologies – Carmel D, Maree H**
- 4. Confirmation of Minutes of previous meeting minutes**
 - a. Proposed – Andrew W**
 - b. Seconded – Liz K**
- 5. Business arising –**
 - a. Minutes hyperlink – progressing, Liz K is having training session on 6th March. In future, P&F minutes will be circulated to meeting attendees within the month & feedback to Trish within 1 week turnaround. We are aiming for a maximum 5 week turnaround so that these can be posted onto the parent intranet site before the end of each term.
 - b. ICLT parent rep – Suzanne K has discussed this with the ICLT Committee. The committee meets during school time and Suzanne K will not be asking staff to attend another night meeting. Since the time this was raised as a suggestion at the P&F meeting there has been some changes to the way the Diocese funds ICLT support and the direction for ICLT support. The Diocese has now decided on chrome books being used across the cluster, and the limit of funding support that will be provided to the schools. At this stage, Suzanne advised there is not a lot of input that a parent rep can have as the ICLT direction is dictated by the diocese. The ICLT Committee has decided to introduce Chrome books for Years 7 and 10 in 2016. The financial package will include warrantee etc – Suzanne K will be writing to parents with the details of the purchasing and maintenance arrangements and the warrantee included in the financial package.

Lee S asked about support for repairs – this can be quite costly and leave students without access to school resources. Suzanne advised this would be cost to the parents but emphasised that MCC will not be replacing hard copy with IT – there will always be a blend of hard copy text and IT resources.

SK – reinforced that IT is one of many teaching tools. 100 of the MCC laptops need replacements this year and the school can't afford it. MCC will still have all the other teaching tools – hardcopy and IT combination – not all textbooks have gone to e-books. There will continue to be a blend – students still need to write, and be able to write for 3 hour exams in the HSC.

Parent suggestion: suggested another source of e-learning resources through “Learning fields” – all the major educational publishers are partners and is something to explore as an option to carrying books. Liz K will follow up.

Parent suggestion – has the school considered going to a major supplier for a bulk deal on laptops / chrome books? Suzanne explained that as we are part of the diocese system we can't go out independently. The diocese obtain a bulk purchase price on behalf of all the primary and secondary schools

c. Cost breakdown spread sheet for each P&F activity last year – Allene O tabled this for the meeting

d. PA name change to P&F – done.

6. Correspondence - nil

7. Treasurer's report

- a. Allene O tabled the financial report and explained the variations between years. Increased outgoings are due to an increase in attendance at parent functions – more investment is being made in open day, parent welcome functions and community building. The Committee agreed that this increased investment has been instrumental in the success of these events and positive feedback from the parent community. The change of format to the parent functions, in particular the welcome cocktail party, the fathers day breakfast and open days entailed a little more costs than previous years but received very positive feedback about their success in building the MCC P&F community.

8. Principal/ Vice Principal's report and discussion

a. Academic assembly this morning:

Suzanne highlighted the great results of last years HSC year students.

- i. 21% achieved an ATAR or 90 or above
- ii. 48% achieved an ATAR of 80 or above
- iii. The top ATAR was 96.5 achieved by Millie Roberts. Millie spoke to the girls this morning with helpful tips & humour
- iv. MCC's ranking is now 113 out of approximately 700 schools in the state which is a great achievement for a small school.
- v. 92% of students were offered a place at University – the state average is 39-40%.

Suzanne credits this to the hard work of the students, staff commitment & MCC's focus on the literacy program over the last few years.

Allene O – spoke from her parent experience and expressed appreciation of the support for the girls shown by the MCC staff team.

- b. **Students 2015** - 553 students are enrolled, 99 in Year 7. Suzanne expects the same next year. MCC has had on average 16% growth over the last 3 years, we are the

fastest growing school in the diocese, but will always be a boutique school. The increased numbers means we have more teaching staff, support staff (which we have this year), more resources.

- c. **Building update** – the library renovations are over time. The delay has been due to asbestos removal required – all done in accordance with legislative requirements. Hopefully these will be finished by the end of next week and the library will be up and running by end of the following week. The furniture will arrive over this coming month.
- d. **125 celebrations** – the gala dinner is on 13th June for ex students & staff. A MCC facebook page has been started and a “Dinner committee” has been established. The school had a lovely opening mass last week at which one of the nuns from the 1950s addressed the girls. This nun has connected SK with more students from this time and was very pleased to see how the school had grown. Suzanne is creating a wall of history and has collected archives. The Willoughby mayor has also invited Suzanne to search the council archives for relevant pieces. Parent suggestion: a short film be created. Simon C will speak with Suzanne out of session. She explained that a “verbatim theatre” is being produced with the elective drama students, using the words of past nuns, teachers and students – this could be a combined with a visual history on film

Suzanne ran through a few of the key events planned. More information will be communicated via the newsletters:

- Commemorative day – Mercy week will be a big focus. The Bishop will be saying mass, unveiling glass sculptures being made to go into the yard. Putting in 2 time capsules – not sure how the students will be involved yet – will be getting a range of ideas
- Birthday cake
- Picnic with the primary school in November. The primary school started our school so this will be a combined event.

Parent question: is there an ex students association?

Suzanne tried to get one running last year. There was a lot of support for the idea but no one was forthcoming to commit to running a committee. Suzanne has found that the social networks & Facebook keeps connections, however it would be good to have a committee and she has started a database with the ex-student details she has gathered for the 125 celebrations. There will be a good opportunity to seek interest again at the gala dinner.

- e. **P&F money** – Suzanne is seeking funding from the P&F to pay for some of the library furniture – lounge & single chairs. She will prepare request for the next meeting. The funds from school fees come through to the P&F funds at the end of Term 2 so there was a short discussion about ensuring there is enough money to cover the parent events for the first 2 terms

9. President's report and discussion

- a. Open day – 6th March – Parent helpers will be needed, compulsory for the girls to attend. Last years was a lot of fun and a good opportunity for parents to socialise.
- b. Planned events – cocktail party – Friday 13th March. This will be advertised this week and will continue to be advertised. \$55 per head through “Try booking”
Parent question about the year 7 BBQ? This was an event last year for the incoming year 7 students. The tradition started is that year 10 parent group take ownership given that the year 10 students mentor the new year 7 girls, this year group lead this activity. As for the yr 12 graduation, ownership for this event is with yr 11 year parent group.
- c. BBQ – Lee S proposed that we purchase a new BBQ. Chris & Michelle have a new industrial BBQ & 8 gas bottles that they would like to donate to MCC. Another parent has offered to pick this up this weekend or next.
- d. Class parent co-ordination – has started from an idea Lee started 2 years ago. Yr 10 now has quite a strong family connection. This year's Yr 8 have a good group. Lee is seeking a year 7 parent co-ordinator to build this connection. Changes were made to the enrolment forms so all of this year's Yr 7 parents who elected to share this information are now on a spreadsheet so it is ready for a parent or 2 to take on and co-ordinate. (Four parents have volunteered to work as a team to run this group Rosemary H, Claire R, Naina W, Helen B. Main point of contact: Naina W).

10. General business

- Q: The end of year final awards evening – awards are given to girls that excel in each year that achieve 1st place in each subject– is there anything for those who consistently achieve but don't come 1st
- A: The girls who come in the top 10% across all subjects are also given awards
- Q: Year 10 work experience?
- A: This is no longer offered due to insurance and child protection issues. Apparently due to WHS laws, organisations will not take students into their workplaces. The Social justice program is very difficult to maintain for the same reasons.
- Q: Does the P&F organise fundraising events?
 - No, the P&F levy covers the contribution by parents to school resources. The cocktail party and other events are not intended to be fundraisers but activities to build the parent community. Suzanne is aware of the costs to parents already so the focus of P&F events is on socialising and feeling welcome.
 - Allene O added that we are also restricted by the rules of the diocese about fundraising – if it is for a specific project eg a specific charity project that's ok, but otherwise, we are limited.

Meeting closed: 8:25pm

Next meeting: