

Yeo Park Infants' School P&C President's Report

9th Nov 2016

U.S. Presidential Election

I'd firstly like to note that with several swing states still in play there is an outside chance for a Democratic victory in the unfolding U.S. Election. That being said, if as seems likely Mr Donald Trump is elected President of the United States of America the Yeo Park Infant's School Parents and Citizens Association will continue in its cordial relations to that august nation, and look forward to a co-operative and productive relationship with the new administration going forward.

Extra budget meeting

I'd also like to thank those who attended our extra-ordinary meeting in the middle of last month, to discuss the proposed P&C Budget for next year. It was a productive talk, and I have to especially thank Principal Wood for attending and being so helpful with providing information and answers to all of our questions.

I think this is a useful process, given that it is around the raising of funds that almost all of our yearly efforts are focussed, and so the question of budget dispersal is probably the most crucial one that we face each year. As it needs to happen toward the latter part of each year, taking an extra session to ensure all voices are heard from within our ranks, and all important considerations covered is a worthwhile use of our time, even if it takes an extra evening.

I would like to propose that we adopt this extra meeting as a regular annual event, during the month of October or November, whichever is most convenient for all concerned, so that the budget discussion does not get lost in our more relaxed December meeting.

MOTION: That an extraordinary P&C meeting be held in October or November annually for the sole purpose of reviewing the annual P&C Budget dispersal to the school.

Role of the P&C

As president I would just like to reiterate the purpose of our meeting here each month. In the NSW DET charter, it is our object to:

- (a) to promote the interests of the school by bringing parents, citizens, students and teaching staff into close co-operation; and
- (b) to assist in providing facilities and equipment for the school and in promoting the recreation and welfare of the students at the school.

I would also like to note a further section that explicitly relates to our relationship with the school, its administration and the practices here:

3. School Staff

The association shall not exercise any authority over the teaching staff or any matter relating to the control or management of the school. School staff may become members of the association. The Principal of the school, or the Principal's nominee, shall be a member, ex-officio, of the association and all its committees.

While this P&C enjoys a very high level of access to Principal Wood, and both can — and I believe should — present our community's positions on educational, ethical, cultural, and any number of other issues, this does not imply that the school is under any obligation to accept or even heed any advice, suggestions, or requests that we might make.

Please also note that any of those positions the P&C might adopt are arrived at democratically. Participation in P&C meetings is one excellent way to achieve that, but should any member not be able to attend, or feel uncomfortable bringing a topic to the group for discussion, then as President I am happy to take confidential receipt of any prepared position, and bring it to a meeting on that person's behalf. I will always endeavour to represent any such person's interest impartially, and argue well on their behalf.

That being made clear, if any individual chooses to take their views directly to Principal Wood, please understand that without the participation of the broader Association, you are not representing the views of our community, but your own as a private individual. All things considered, as Fiona is a teaching principal, doing so does make demands on her already stretched time. It could in fact be reasonably seen as detracting from the education of our children.

I strongly urge all members of our community to use the P&C as their first venue for discussion around such topics, to ensure that we do not make undue demands on the Principal's time.