



Parent and Citizen

Term 4, 2015 Vol 67 No 4





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Parent and Citizen Journal

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T: 1300 885 982
 F: 1800 655 866
 E: journal@pandc.org.au
 W: www.pandc.org.au

Contributors and feedback to:
journal@pandc.org.au

Advertising

The Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations of New South Wales

E: journal@pandc.org.au
 T: 1300 885 982

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83 Derby Street,
 Silverwater, NSW 2128
 T: 02 9748 0020
 E: webstar@bluestargroup.com.au



Suite 107, 20 Dale Street,
 Brookvale, NSW 2100
 T: 02 9938 5100
 E: info@kyso.com.au

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The new management of the Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations of New South Wales (P&C Federation) took office on 23 January 2015.

The new board, comprising 16 councillors voted for the appointment of a 7 person executive, with the roles of President, Vice President and Secretary being filled from within that group.

May I state at the outset my thanks to all of our councillors. We have all been surprised by the level of work that has been required, but have all stepped up to the extent we can, to try and make a difference for the students of public education in NSW.

P&C Federation has been acting in the interests of public education for 90 years. While the troubles of recent times have been well documented, it is important to note that we are starting from a position developed over many years by many committed people. The policies we follow represent the wisdom of many years and our aim as a group should be to build on the good things that P&C Federation has achieved, and move forward from the division of the recent past.

A lot of things have been achieved since January. Key amongst these has been the reestablishment of relationships with the key stakeholders of education in NSW. P&C Federation has been welcomed back by all of these groups. The Department of Education has been very keen to build strong working relationships, and I would like to thank Secretary Michelle Bruniges, Deputy Secretary Greg Prior, and our liaison Debbie Hockings (Director, Public Schools NSW, Operations) in particular for their support. We have now met with many of the senior staff of the department, and re-established P&C Federation presence on many of the key advisory and management committees.

Strong relationships are being developed with the Teachers Federation, Primary Principals Association and the Secondary Principals Council.

Our Education Minister, Adrian Piccoli, has been very supportive. He is as keen as we all are to see the parent's voice reintroduced at the heart of education.

There is much to be done at P&C Federation. Your board is very aware of many of the issues, but is more than willing to work on other issues as they arise.

The P&C Federation AGM was held on the 22nd August 2015 with some great discussion happening between Councillors and Delegates. The following issues were raised with motions being put forward and resolved; Gonski, SRE/Ethics and non-scripture options, Funding support for rural/country students who travel to represent their schools, school facilities, and support for small schools. P&C Federation looks forward to getting to work on representing parents for the benefit of Public Schools on these topics and issues.

A number of forums have now been held, with more to come. Unfortunately attendance numbers have been fairly low, reflecting the low base that P&C Federation needs to build on.

We have also been able to assist a number of schools directly, be it on site or by phone. The P&C Federation is here to assist members, and I encourage members to contact our office at first instant.

As the state peak body for P&C Associations, P&C Federation is able and willing to run state-wide campaigns on behalf of public education and our P&C membership, our current Gonski campaigning being an example of re-establishing P&C Federation's role in this area. P&C Federation is also now re-establishing itself as a contributor to government policy formulation and parliamentary enquiries, recent examples being our submissions regarding Vocational Education and Training in New South Wales and Closure of Public Schools in New South Wales and a review into Special Religious Education (SRE) and Ethics provision at NSW public schools.

P&C Federation is still important and relevant. The Board was very pleased to assist schools in our Eastern suburbs fight against a proposal to substantially increase access fees that were to be charged for access to Centennial Park. A guarantee was received from Centennial Parklands

that future increase in field hire fee payable by Sydney Coastal Primary School Sports Association will be equal to or less than the annual state CPI.

We have been actively involved in assisting a number of schools with internal and external issues.

We look forward to assisting many more P&C Associations and continuing our advocacy for Public Education over a wide range of issues and topics. It is important for us to be relevant and informed wherever there is a need for a parent voice in public education.

There is much to be done to get P&C Federation to where I hope we all want it to be. I would like to thank all councillors for their efforts. I believe we have made a great start on P&C Federation 2.0.

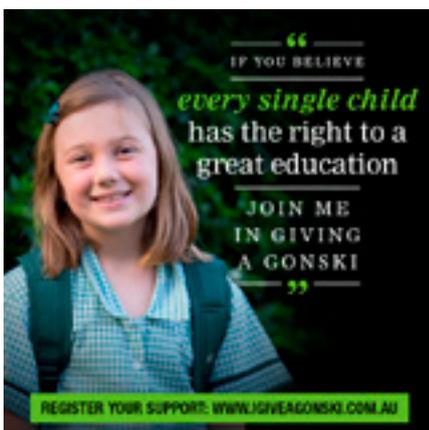
JASON VIALS
President



Why is Gonski Funding Worth Fighting For?



Jesse Rowan reflects on the anomaly of the Coalition's decision to abandon Gonski funding after 2017, while recent research shows that the gap between disadvantaged students and their well-off peers is getting wider.



In their analysis of the My School website data, ex Principals Chris Bonner and Bernie Shepherd of *Need to Succeed* found that, even in the years of delay until Gonski funding actually became available to schools, the equity situation has worsened.

The researchers grouped schools according to their Index of Community

Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA), and separately tracked the performances of schools in high, medium and low ICSEA ranges. Using My School data, schools' average NAPLAN scores were plotted against their ICSEA values to produce a gradient.

The data showed that Australia's socio-educational gradient has progressively steepened from 32 per cent in 2010 to 37 per cent in 2013. 'Socio-educational advantage has had an increasing impact on student achievement in just three years', say the researchers.

Disadvantaged students are performing tragically below their high Socio-economic status (SES) peers. NSW Year 9 students from Low SES backgrounds are over four years behind in reading, writing and numeracy. Indigenous and remote area students are almost six years behind.

As David Gonski has said, **'Differences in educational outcomes must not be the result of differences in wealth, income, power or possessions.'**

The Gonski Report highlighted that there were many schools which don't meet the minimum resource standard, particularly public schools who attract 80% of disadvantaged students. That's a huge amount of 'heavy lifting' which requires extra funding.

Bonnor and Shepherd also noted in their analysis of My School data that there are still many schools with more disadvantaged students who receive less government funding per student than nearby non-government schools with more well-off students. 'This is more than an anomaly – it is an absurdity,' they pointed out.

OECD data puts Australia in a mediocre position compared to many other OECD countries who invest more in equity and use education to improve the outcomes and lives of disadvantaged children.

In the following graph, nations have been ranked on *quality* (the comparative level of PISA performance) on one axis, and equity (the correlation between students' socio-

economic background and performance) on the other. Note Australia is around the middle for quality and equity, along with the US and UK, whose policies many of Australia's decisions emulate.

funding. Abandoning under-resourced schools and allowing disadvantaged children to continue without assistance will mean negative economic and social results for our future society: poorer health outcomes,

deserve a better future.

- Research on equity in education as a way out of poverty
- Employment is changing and a more educated workforce is needed to compete on the world market.
- Education of our future mothers will impact on the next generation's school readiness.
- What difference would adequate disability funding make?
- What is the research on education funding saying and what are the myths?

If you would like to know more, we have collected and curated research and media articles on all these topics and more at:

<http://www.scoop.it/t/p-c-s-for-gonski>

Does Your P&C Give a Gonski?

P&Cs need to join the national conversation. Let's talk louder. It only takes one person to lead small action that ripples outwards. Community pressure as well as intelligent policy is needed to change attitudes - parents, teachers, principals and the community need to let politicians know that we want fair and adequate funding of schools to be a budget priority.

Proper funding support for a strong, free and secular public education system is the only way to ensure all children have equal opportunity, and needs-based funding is the only fair, sensible and efficient way to lift Australian education standards.

P&Cs need to show politicians of all political persuasions that we support the long-term investment in ALL of Australia's children that will build an asset for Australia: a workforce equipped to tackle climate change and profit from advancing technology, making a better society for all, rich and poor.

Jesse Rowan is the Chairperson of Broulee Public School P&C's Gonski Sub-Committee

- Bernie Shepherd and Chris Bonnor, 'School equity since Gonski: how bad became worse', p. 6, <http://needtosucceed.org/school-equity-since-gonski-how-bad-became-worse/>
- Trevor Cobbold, 'Reducing Inequity in Education is Vital in NSW,' March 2015, <http://www.saveourschools.com.au/equity-in-education/reducing-inequity-in-education-is-vital-in-nsw>
- <http://www.appa.asn.au/content/gonski-report/Review-of-Funding-for-Schooling-Final-Report-Dec-2011.pdf>
- Pasi Sahlberg <http://pasisahlberg.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Canberra-Talk-2014.pdf>
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From Pasi Sahlberg's Talk at Parliament House, Canberra, June 2014

According to Pasi Sahlberg "If you look at the Australian performance in PISA, it has been downhill since the beginning, but I often argue it is not that the quality of teachers or quality of school is worse, but because the equity in schools has become worse."

The OECD Education Policy Outlook Snapshot for Australia states that 'School funding has lacked transparency and coherence, and outcomes of numerous studies have shown the difficulty in determining how individual schools are funded. Expenditure on educational institutions as a percentage of GDP (for all educational levels combined) is below the OECD average, with a higher share from private sources than the OECD average.'

In its recent Budget, the Federal Coalition government confirmed that Gonski funding will be abandoned entirely after 2017 and only one-third of the promised Gonski funding will be delivered over the next two years. Australian children from disadvantaged families will be ignored and sidelined again.

Schools were counting on increased funds to extend literacy and numeracy programs to support children who need extra assistance. Instead, they will be forced to cut these programs, struggle with parent fund-raising (poorer areas affected even more!) or divert funding from other areas.

The state governments (including NSW) who signed up to the Gonski funding agreement will have to fight hard for the previously-promised federal support. The NSW state Coalition government under the leadership of Education Minister Adrian Piccoli has keenly supported the Gonski Report's recommendations.

Australia cannot afford to cut Gonski

higher unemployment, mental health problems, domestic violence and crime.

The Federal Coalition's recent budget robs the future for this generation of children from disadvantaged backgrounds, and Australia will be less than it could be.

How do we get the message out?

The Broulee Public School P&C Gonski Sub-committee is presenting a series of short articles for the school's online newsletter. The aim is to try to make the need for Gonski funding more understandable for the average person. We want parents and community members to be aware of how important it is (especially for regional areas) for governments to support disadvantaged children to rise above their background through education and take their rightful place in society.

The short articles will be mounted on our Gonski Sub-Committee blog too. You can access and use/adapt them for your school newsletter here:

<http://bpspcgonsonki.weebly.com/news-blog>

Some of the topics include:

- Where are we at with Gonski funding?
- Public schools are performing as well as private schools when student SES is considered, but what does this say about funding disadvantage?
- Recent research on family background and education level as predictors of children's educational success.
- Children are our most valuable future resource. It makes economic sense to help disadvantaged students achieve success.
- Social Justice: Disadvantaged children



Vale Roslin Brennan Kemmis AM



Roslin Brennan Kemmis served as the President of the Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations for five years – from 1994 to 1998 – during which time she consistently exercised a leadership of vision, energy, intelligence and humanity.

She elevated the profile of the Federation to new heights. Routinely stepping on the toes of vested interests, she refused to allow her voice to be silenced or moderated. In an age without social media, she gave upwards of two dozen media interviews daily: assertively placing the concerns and aspirations of public school parents squarely in the public arena.

Within the Federation's policy framework she forcefully asserted that a properly resourced public education system was key to building and maintaining a fair and civil society: the best way to ensure that every

child has the opportunity to reach their full potential for the benefit of all.

This put her at odds with the continuing government commitment to economic rationalism and privatisation. She criticised a raft of policies that saw accountability shifted from the centre in the name of devolution and the ramping up of a centralist agenda for measuring student, school and system performance through a regime of computer-marked standardised tests.

She deplored the rapidly growing rates of student suspensions and expulsions, driven by the increasingly commonplace view that some students were "unteachable": their exclusion required for the benefit of the majority of students who wanted to learn.

"The day that we relegate any child to the too hard basket is the day we should all pack up and go home," she observed. Rather than packing her bags for Coolamon, however, she initiated and convened a *Summit on Youth*.

The summit brought together approximately 20 youth-focused organisations and individuals of eminence – Barbara Holborow and Professor Marie Bashir among them – to Federation's Crown Street office for a series of meetings to formulate advice to government. Eventually this advice prompted the Legislative Council's Social Issues Committee to hold its *Inquiry into Children's Advocacy* in 1996 and subsequently influenced the thinking behind the establishment of the Office of the Commission for Children and Young People.

The summit revealed much about Ros's personal energy, resourcefulness and motivation: all of which sprung from deeply held values rather than received ideology.

It exemplified her deep regard for partnerships and collaboration. While not

oblivious to her own considerable strengths, she knew that significant, sustainable change comes from working with others for common goals. Goals inevitably progressed through exchanges based on trust, respect, enthusiasm and evidence.

These values shone in all her work: leading committees, chairing meetings, negotiating with successive Premiers and Ministers and in her representational roles at the Australian Teaching Council, the Board of Studies and literally hundreds of forums at the local, state and national levels.

She valued friendship and was the most loyal and generous person with whom I have ever worked: always ready to applaud others for their contribution to our common work.

My own professional life has been and continues to be inestimably enriched by her example.

She took joy in her family, music, Guinness, and a wardrobe of lurid virtuosity. She wasn't an easy person to miss! At her farewell function as President I described her as the "only person on the planet who made Carmen Miranda look underdressed from the shoulders up."

In 1997 Ros was awarded an AM for her services to public education and to the Federation.

Ros, who had such zeal for life and a knack for doing it well, passed away after a long illness in July of this year.

I extend my deepest condolences to her husband, Stephen Kemmis, and her children – Julian, Tom, Alice and Eliot – and their families.

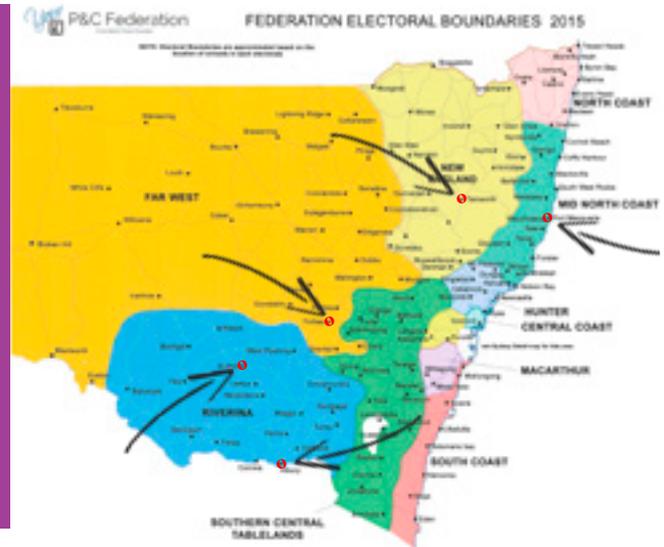
She has given us all such cause for celebration and pride.

WARREN JOHNSON

Federation's Executive Officer 1986-2001

Parent and Community Engagement Forums

The end of July and the beginning of August has seen a further 5 Parent and Community Engagement Forums being held in P&C Federation electoral areas, 2 in the Riverina electorate, 1 in the Far West electorate, 1 in the New England electorate and 1 in the Mid North Coast electorate.



NEW ENGLAND – TAMWORTH

Hillvue Public School played host to our first New England forum, students assisted by guiding those arriving and escorting them to the school hall.

Angela Martin P&C Federation councillor for New England started proceedings for the day welcoming attendees and guest speakers.

The first guest speaker for the day, Frank Potter Executive Director for Education, touched base on the new initiatives the Department of Education is implementing in order to engage and increase parent and community engagement as well as support and resource teachers better, quoting “Quality teaching , Inspired Learning.”

Frank Potter was also accompanied by 4 Directors, Ruythe Duffy, Robyn O’Neill, Sue Brown and Mark Young all of whom work within the New England electorate. Topics presented were an overview of Public Education, Community consultation, School planning and the School Excellence Framework.

Pam Levingston, P-2 Initiatives Officer spoke about the importance of preschoolers being prepared for Primary school so the transition to kindergarten is a smooth one for both the child and parents as this can be an anxious time for both, there is then a further transition stage that happens from Primary school to High School with the aim that there is a continual more seamless pathway through the school years.

Alan Booth gave a presentation regarding “Bring Your Own Device” (BYOD); Alan spoke about the options given to parents when looking at which device to purchase. He also spoke about responsibilities around the use of mobile devices at school.

The Department of Education is responsible for surveillance and monitoring of computer systems ensuring ongoing confidentiality, integrity and availability of service, while Principals are responsible for developing and implementing the school’s BYOD policy and students are responsible for abiding by the school’s policy and the departments online communication – Acceptable usage for schools students (this pops up prior to student commencing work on mobile device which they must accept to continue.)

At the end of each presentation those who attended were given the opportunity to ask questions regarding the topic.

The last session for the day held by P&C Federation Vice President – Alan Gardiner, Secretary – Susie Boyd and Councillor for New England Angela Martin, was an overview of what has been happening at P&C Federation and the services available to its members. The session also briefly touched base on opportunities for funding grants for P&C Associations.

The floor was then opened for question time and the one question that seems to pop up in all areas was again discussed,

how do we increase numbers in our P&C Association?

An important part of these forums is for P&C Federation to gather feedback, good, bad or otherwise. Most of the feedback has been extremely positive with only a small amount being negative; all feedback is very useful and will be taken into account when looking at improving future forums.

P&C Federation is continuing to work tirelessly to reach as many P&C Associations as possible but to do this we also need your help.

To make sure we have the most recent contact details for your P&C Association, please ensure you have completed the online “Member Register Update” on our website. Make sure this is added to your calendar each year after your AGM so your P&C Association doesn’t miss any information that is sent out regarding, surveys, forums, consultation and updates.

P&C Federation look forward to hosting more parent engagement forums and hearing more from our members about what is important to them.



RIVERINA – ALBURY

Riverina's first forum was held on 23rd July at James Fallon High School Albury, Principal Mrs Jenny Parret assisted P&C Federation with the evening setting up the library and organising a lovely supper to be provided by the school canteen.

Christine Cameron – P&C Federation Councillor opened the evening delivering an update on the changes and expectations of P&C Federation since the new board was elected and how the new structure now looks.

Christine spoke about the reason for the forums and encouraged everyone to share the information they had learnt and take it back to their P&C Association, so future forums may have increased numbers.

Peter Smith – Director NSW Department of Education sat with parents giving them a relaxed and engaging presentation regarding the varied initiatives being implemented in Public Education. Peter was happy to answer any questions asked clarifying any information, issues or concerns that were raised.

Dr John Irvine – child psychologist, engaged attendees with his presentation on the subject of “Managing difficult behaviours” something most parents deal with at one time or another. While a subject that can be very stressful and sensitive Dr Irvine presented it in a way that at times was quite comical and many

could relate to. He gave examples of how certain situations may be managed and when further assistance may need to be sought. Dr Irvine opened up question time and had on hand a number of resources that could be purchased for those interested.

Group discussions took place where healthy conversations were had around concerns, issues and frustrations associated with being part of a P&C Association, the most common topic was how to increase members and participants in their P&C Association.

Overall the forum was well received and some great discussions were had.



RIVERINA – GRIFFITH

On the evening of Monday 10th Aug Riverina electorate held the 2nd of its Parent and community engagement forums at Griffith High School. We were spoilt by the amazing supper provided by the hospitality unit, a special thank you to hospitality teacher Patrick Lane, Jyotika Maharaj and the Year 11 and 12 Hospitality students on a job well done.

Christine Cameron – P&C Federation Councillor was not able to attend the forum so P&C Federation General Manager Steve Carpenter took the reins for the evening. Steve shared information about P&C Federation and the purpose of these forums.

The evening gave those who attended the chance to hear guest speakers, Brad

Russell – Director NSW Department of Education (DoE) and Dr John Irvine – Renown child psychologist, unfortunately Griffith's Local MP Adrian Piccoli was not able to attend due to his busy schedule but a letter was provided by him for us to include in the information pack that was given out to those who attended.

Brad Russell gave a very detailed presentation explaining to parents the planning and work that is happening to continually improve structures and framework of Public Education and the importance of consultation with parents in the school community.

Dr Irvine spoke about “Managing Difficult Behaviours” for both primary and secondary

students and parents were interest in a number of techniques , such as training behaviour not taming behaviour and consequences not punishment. Dr John Irvine went off track for a while speaking to parents about the positives that evolve for children when parents are involved and work together as a tribe raising and supporting children.

Question time saw a number of questions asked of Steve, Brad and Dr Irvine, answers to which attendees were eager to share with their P&C communities. There was general feedback that more forums should be held as they are seen as a positive tool for P&C Associations to gain valuable information.



FAR WEST – FORBES

Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations of NSW is reaching out to members in their 16 electorates and on Friday 31st July Forbes High School was host to P&C Federation's 1st forum for the year in the Far West electorate.

The forum began with the High School Captains giving a short introduction to the school followed by 2 Aboriginal students delivering "Welcome to Country" and the hospitality unit doing a brilliant job, catering for the event.

Natalie Walker – P&C Federation Councillor, welcomed guests and guest speakers and gave an overview of where P&C Federation is heading and the purpose of these forums, which is to increase parent and community engagement and listen to what members have to say. A positive day was had by those who attended, enjoying presentations by Glen Stewart – Director of NSW Department of Education, Sue French – Secondary Principals Council on Gonski, Diane Darcy – AECG, Andrew Rawthorne –

Forbes council on funding grants and Special Guest speaker Dr John Irvine- renowned child psychologist.

Dr Irvine entertained the audience with his quirky way of delivering his presentation on "Managing difficult behaviours", engaging them with stories and strategies to build skills for both primary and secondary students.

Guests participated in question time with the speakers as well as group discussions that enable ideas, experiences and concerns to be shared. Feedback from those who attended was positive saying they had an enjoyable and worthwhile day and look forward to more forums in the future.



MID NORTH COAST – PORT MACQUARIE

On Saturday 8th August Port Macquarie turned on beautiful weather, giving everyone who attended the community and parent engagement forum glorious views from Rydges near the water.

The forum kicked off with the very talented Stage band from Hastings Secondary College – Port Macquarie Campus, entertaining us with a wonderful performance during the registration period, playing a number of songs with some wonderful vocals.

A big thank you to Stewart Heddles – music teacher for organising and giving up his Saturday morning so these students could perform for us, well done to Brianna Abel, Layla Forbes and Elenoa Wilson – Vocals, Darby Powell – Vocals: Bass Guitar, Ryan Johnson and Oliver Blythe – Guitarists, Lachlan Fardy – Keyboard, Elijah Hargraves

– Alto Saxophone, Liam Eastwell – Tenor Saxophone, Christian Familiar and Aran Dennis – Drummers. Lastly a terrific job was done by Bianca Reynolds and Xanthe Boreham – Entertainment Students (sound) and Jaxon Pollard – Roadie as without them the show couldn't go on.

P&C Federation Councillor Roslyn Deal gave an update about where P&C Federation is at, and where it is heading in the future. P&C Federation Secretary Susie Boyd gave a presentation on opportunities for funding grants and forging partnerships with organisations to assist P&C Associations to raise funds.

Mrs. Leslie Williams local MP for Port Macquarie and assistant Minister for Education, spoke about her experiences as a student, teacher, parent and Local MP and the importance of Public Education and our

children as well as the need for parents and community to work together to achieve great outcomes for our young people. Mrs Williams also spoke about the funding opportunities that can be applied for through your local MP area across NSW.

Frank Potter, Executive Director Department of Education (DoE) presented quite a detailed picture of the work that is going on both in the Department of Education and in the schools themselves. Accompanying him to assist in answering questions from attendees was Mark Youngblutt and Glenn Pleasance, Local Directors of DoE.

The day finished with group discussions between members networking, sharing their stories, experiences and concerns and many stayed following the forum to chat further.



Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations of NSW 2015 Annual General Meeting

The first AGM for P&C Federation since coming out of administration was held on Saturday 22nd August 2015 at Fort Street High School, Petersham. Present on the day were Councillors and delegates representing all 16 electorates across NSW.

The day's proceedings began with an induction for delegates delivered by Tim Spencer – Councillor for the North West Sydney electorate, followed by President and Councillor for Southern Central Tablelands Jason Vials giving his opening address.

Vice President and Councillor for North Sydney electorate Alan Gardiner presented the audit report to the AGM, the remainder of the day was spent in healthy discussions regarding the proposed motions with time out in the middle for some lunch and a chance to catch up for a chat.

The AGM ran smoothly and closed at 3pm, giving those who wished to, an opportunity to break into specific groups to discuss topics of interest or projects being worked on.



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FIGHTING FOR OUR KIDS' RIGHTS TO PLAY SPORT

Towards the start of term 1 there was talk in the school playground amongst the parents that the fee to use the playing fields at Centennial Parklands for PSSA sport had increased by a significant amount, to the point that it may be unaffordable.

When no one was able to answer any questions or gain clarification of exact amount of increase, one parent contacted The Wentworth Courier, via email, to ask if they could please investigate and establish if there was any truth to this talk.

We were then contacted by a reporter from The Courier who informed us that they had received calls and emails from other people asking the same question.

The Courier interviewed the parent, did some research and found that there was a story to tell. The parent arranged for a group of kids to attend a photo shoot organised by the journalist and he wrote a story for the next edition. The reporter dug up some facts and found that field hire costs when the competition started in Centennial Park in 2002 was \$75. In 2014/5 it had risen to \$22,715, with most of the increase happening in the last two years.

In the meantime the parent set up a petition on **Change.org** and the movement gained momentum and, with the release of the figures, a working group of 4 was formed.

We wanted our message to be clear so called ourselves *Save PSSA in Centennial Park*, with a mission of ensuring affordable access to Centennial Parklands for PSSA and public school sports now and into the future. The NSW state election was looming

and we wanted to leverage the election to gain support on this issue that crossed many LGAs and portfolios and affected so many kids.

We set up our Facebook page with a link to the online petition. We phoned and wrote letters and emails to parents, politicians, P&Cs, the NSW P&C Federation and councils. We wrote media releases and asked for support from our school community. We had many breakfast meetings to discuss our plan of attack and delegate tasks.

Throughout the whole process we always made sure that our original aim did not change. We stuck to our guns, even though every question we asked seemed to create another question!

We were a group of passionate parents working against a well loved organisation that had a very strong media presence and a very good message of their value within the community. They steamrolled us with their facts and figures at every opportunity they could, painting themselves as the good guys, and they were - they manage a beautiful public space that is heavily utilised - but they were charging us too much money to use this space that we considered to be public space - and that wasn't fair in our opinion.

We gained a lot of political support leading up to the election in March 2015,

with a highlight of our campaign being a front page story and photo in the Sydney Morning Herald on election day!

We attended council meetings, moved motions and met with Ministers. We made sure the PSSA was informed of our work and asked to be kept informed of any developments in their negotiations.

We don't know what was the final tipping point on winning our fight, but on 11th August 2015 - just six months after we started making noise, our region of the PSSA received a letter from the Executive Director of Centennial Park guaranteeing us that there would never be fee increase greater than CPI for PSSA and public schools to use the park fields.

For some, this wasn't enough of a win as they believed we should have free access to the playing, as do students from other regions, but for us, we had achieved what we set out to do. We had secured the rights for our children and their children to use these fields at affordable rates.

It was a great victory for us and really showed that if there's something that's just not right, you need to make a noise.

JUSTINE BENNETT

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WHY SHOULD OUR

P&C

ASSOCIATION BE INCORPORATED??

Incorporation is the creation of a legal entity which has rights and liabilities separate from its members. P&C Associations are able to become incorporated under the Parents and Citizens Associations Incorporation Act 1976.

WHY BECOME INCORPORATED?

Becoming incorporated gives a P&C Association a 'legal personality'. Incorporated entities can enter into legal agreements such as grants, own assets and borrow money from financial institutions. If an Association is incorporated, any debt or liability will be held against the Association itself, rather than individual members. Also action typically cannot be taken against individual members of an incorporated entity unless they have been personally negligent.

DOES P&C FEDERATION RECOMMEND INCORPORATION FOR SCHOOL PARENT BODIES?

Yes. Incorporation is essential for P&C Associations that wish to apply for funding grants, operate an OOSH, Before and After School activities, Vacation Care, employ staff or enter into legal agreements.

The decision to incorporate should be made by majority vote at a general or special meeting.

DO I HAVE TO REGISTER WITH NSW FAIR TRADING?

No. Once you are incorporated with P&C Federation you are required to send to P&C Federation a copy of your audited annual financial statements within one month of the annual general meeting. You are not required to send any material to NSW Fair Trading.

CAN WE CHANGE THE CONSTITUTION?

No. In applying to become incorporated you agree to adopt the Prescribed Incorporated Constitution. This constitution has been endorsed by the Minister for Education and cannot be amended.

DO WE STILL HAVE BY-LAWS?

Yes. By-laws are a set of rules that assist your P&C Association in conducting their business. By-laws cannot contradict the constitution.

WILL WE GET AN INCORPORATION REGISTRATION NUMBER?

No. As you are incorporated under statute (an Act of Parliament) you will not receive a registration number. You will receive a copy of the Government Gazette as well as a Certificate of Incorporation from P&C Federation.

WILL OUR P&C ASSOCIATION NAME CHANGE?

No. You are not required to change your name, the title of your P&C Association will be the name of the school followed by P&C Association.

DO WE NEED TO HAVE OUR BOOKS AUDITED IF WE ARE INCORPORATED?

Yes. Your books must be audited annually however incorporated P&C Associations do not have to retain a qualified Chartered Accountant.

DO WE NEED AN AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS NUMBER (ABN)?

Yes. Whether incorporated or not, all associations require an ABN. Without one they will not be regarded as an income tax exempt, not for profit charity and may be liable for income tax on all profits.

WHAT DO WE DO TO BECOME INCORPORATED?

You should download and complete the materials located on our website under the "Publications" tab and send them to P&C Federation, our friendly staff will handle the rest.

IS BECOMING INCORPORATED EXPENSIVE?

No, not if your P&C Association chooses to become incorporated under the Parents and

Citizens Associations Incorporation Act 1976. A one off administration fee of \$100.00 is all that you have to pay.

WHAT DO WE RECEIVE WHEN WE BECOME INCORPORATED?

When you become incorporated you will receive a Certificate of Incorporation, a copy of the Prescribed Constitution and the relevant legislation.

IF WE BECOME INCORPORATED DO WE HAVE TO REMAIN MEMBERS OF P&C FEDERATION?

Yes. It is stated in the Parents and Citizens Associations Incorporation Act 1976 that P&C Associations remain members of P&C Federation.

WHAT HAPPENS IF WE DO NOT RENEW OUR MEMBERSHIP WITH P&C FEDERATION AND WE ARE INCORPORATED?

If an association ceases to be a member with P&C Federation the minister may cancel the association's incorporation.

DO WE HAVE TO FILL OUT A WHOLE HEAP OF COMPLIANCE FORMS EACH YEAR?

No. You are required to send a copy of your audited annual financial statements to P&C Federation within one month of your annual general meeting. This information will be kept on your P&C Association record for five years. If you require further information or clarification contact P&C Federation's Member Services Team mail@pandc.org.au or 1300 885 982

WE ARE INCORPORATED BUT CANNOT FIND OUR CERTIFICATE?

No problem, contact P&C Federation's office and request a copy of your Incorporation Certificate to be sent to you. If you require a hard copy of the certificate there is a \$30 replacement fee.

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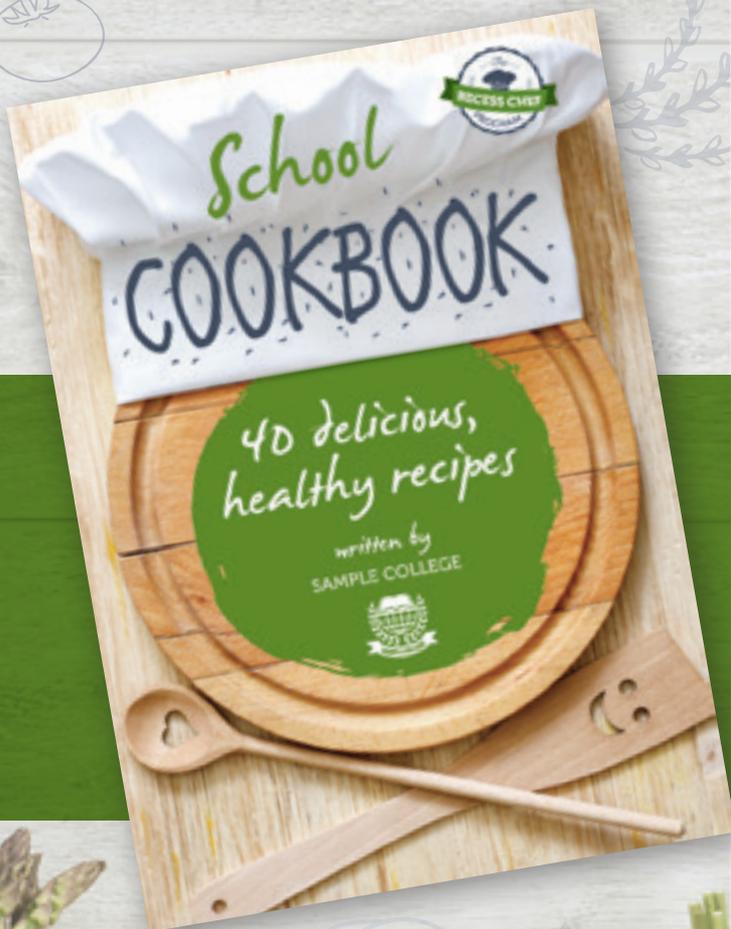
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IT'S BEEN ANOTHER GREAT YEAR FOR THE LEADERS IN ARTS EDUCATION IN NSW



The Department of Education's Arts Unit facilitates programs in dance, drama, music, visual arts, public speaking, reading, spelling and special events to more than 470,000 students across the state annually.

2015 has been another bumper year for several of its key programs.

The annual **Operation Art** initiative, now in its 21st exciting year, has delivered in excess of 1,000 colourful works to adorn the halls, wards and surgeries of The Children's Hospital at Westmead over the years. Additional works are on display at organisations such as ANSTO (Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation) and some – for the first time – have even been donated to the Park Clinic Hospital in Kolkata (Calcutta) in India. The 2015 exhibition runs until 25 October at Sydney Olympic Park's Armory Gallery.



A number of debating and public speaking events have been through local, regional and state finals stages. In September, the State Final of the **Premier's Debating Challenge for Years 11 and 12** was held at the Great Hall at the University of Sydney. In a tight contest, North Sydney Boys High School's team of Raymond Shi, Lewis Redner, Shayan Omid and Patrick Przybylski triumphed over 21-time winners Sydney Boys High School's team – North Sydney Boys' 17th win.



The **State Dance Festival** was also held in September. 'Moments of Resonance' showcased the work of over 1,500 students from Kindergarten through to Year 12 in a week-long series of performances at

Sydney's Seymour Centre. Exploring a range of styles which form part of the study of dance in public schools, the Festival highlighted the technical training, stamina, creativity, confidence, cooperation and respect for one another which is fostered by the students' dedicated and talented teachers.





The Premier's Reading Challenge (PRC) closed in late August after another highly-successful year. Students in NSW have read more than 60 million books for the Challenge since it began in 2001. A rich collection of children's literature, representing a range of fiction, non-fiction, picture books, poetry and drama features on the PRC booklist.

and 6) feature students from public schools across the State, who have made their way through school and then regional finals, to secure their spots in this hugely-popular event. During the final half hour of the Senior Division Final, which is broadcast live on ABC Radio 702, students can be expected to be asked to spell some pretty impressive words, if samples from last year's State Final (*macchiato, ecclesiastic, rhododendron, exacerbate*) are any indication!

And then there is the **Schools Spectacular**, always a hit with parents and wider audiences. 2015's theme, *'This Is Our World'*, will capture the dreams and hopes of young people, expressed through the medium of music and dance. As the leaders of tomorrow, students will explore their place in the world, experience diverse cultures and excite audiences with outstanding performances. The 2015 *Schools Spectacular* (27 and 28 Nov) is set to be one of the last events to be held at the Qantas Credit Union Arena before its demolition, which will make it a part of history. Of course, the *Spectacular* is always history-making, with its alumni including international artists Human Nature, 'The Voice' 2014 winner Anja Nissen, ARIA winners Paulini and Angus and Julia Stone, musical theatre stars Trevor Ashley and Lucy Maunder and a host of others. Tickets may still be available via <http://premier.ticketek.com.au/shows/show.aspx?sh=SCHOOLSS15>



Another highlight of The Arts Unit's year is the annual **Premier's Spelling Bee**, the final of which will be held at the ABC Centre in Ultimo on 11 November. The Junior Division (Years 3 and 4) and Senior Division (Years 5



COMMUNICATIONS FROM P&C FEDERATION

E-BULLETIN

Part of your membership with P&C Federation includes access to publications and updates. Our e-bulletin is an electronic newsletter that is sent out to subscribers with news, updates, tips and relevant information for P&C Associations, parents and school communities. To make sure you don't miss out subscribe to the e-bulletin mailing list.

If you would like to subscribe to the e-bulletin please send an email with subscribe in the subject bar to e-bulletin@pandcaffiliate.org.au.

MEMBER REGISTER UPDATE

P&C Federation send out information to your P&C through multiple channels. In order to make sure the right people are receiving the information we send you, your P&C Association should keep the member register updated with P&C Federation.

The member register should be updated whenever there is a change in the office bearers of your P&C Association. This usually occurs around AGM time but can happen at any time of the year. If P&C Federation does not have up to date details, communications may be sent to retired office bearers of your P&C Association.

You can find the member register update under the member tab at www.pandc.org.au

FAQ'S AND MEMBER SERVICES

P&C Federation website provides a wide range of information regarding running P&C Associations. Many frequently asked questions are addressed in the Quick Member Info documents on the website. If you can't find what you are looking for on the website contact P&C Federation office and a member service officer will be able to assist. You can contact the office through the website contact us, email mail@pandc.org.au or phone 1300 885 982.

YOUR P&C ASSOCIATION EMAIL – NOW MOBILE WEB AND IMAP

All affiliates are provided with free access to a webmail system which gives your P&C Association a school@pandcaffiliate.org.au email account. This can be used by members of each individual P&C Association as decided by your membership. One great benefit of this P&C Association allocated email address is the easy transfer of your P&C Association correspondences if your Office-bearers change at the Annual General Meeting. This account also allows P&C Federation to easily send electronic information to each P&C Association to keep them updated on current information and events.

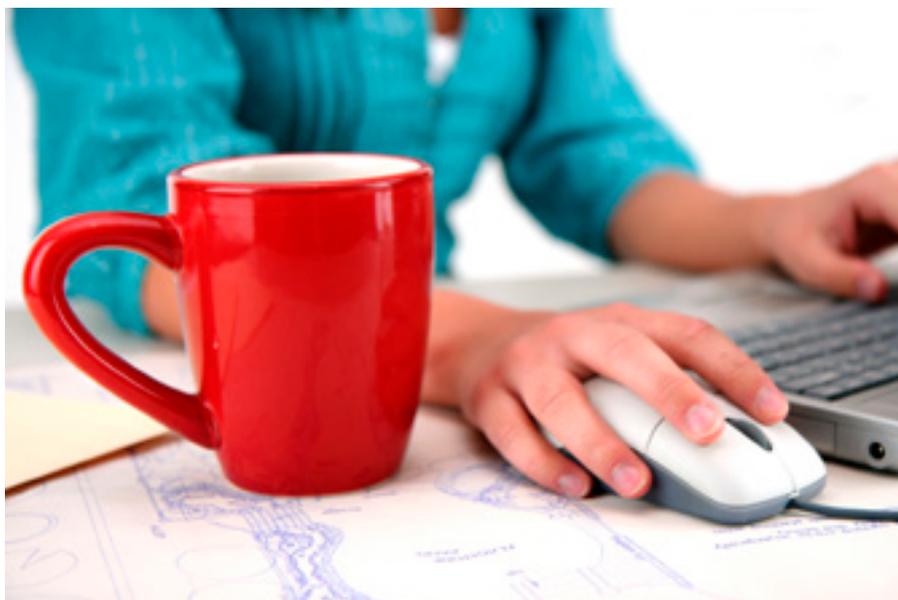
The webmail system is free and can be accessed at

<http://webmail.pandcaffiliate.org.au>

There is also a new mobile version at <http://webmail.pandcaffiliate.org.au/mobile>

More recently the system has been updated to include connection via IMAP. This means you can add the Affiliate email account to your iPhone, iPad, Android Device or even to Outlook on your PC. Just select IMAP as the server type when setting the account up and use mail.pandcaffiliate.org.au as the server name and the username and password the same you have for webmail.

If you have not yet logged in or have forgotten your school details please send an email to it@pandc.org.au with your contact name, school name and your position on your P&C Association. Alternatively, if you cannot contact the helpdesk via email, please call or SMS 0413732300 and David will be able to get your details to you.



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Primary School STEM Enrichment Days



Students from Sandy Beach, Woolgoolga, Mullaway and Corindi public schools have participated in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths) enrichment days at Woolgoolga High School recently.

The project was proposed by the local primary principals and funded through the Department's *Rural and Remote* equity initiative. The two events, one for Year 6 and one for Year 5 students were very efficiently organised by Mr John Elliott and his high school Science colleagues.

On Wednesday 19th August Year 6 students from the 4 schools participated with the Year 5 cohort having the opportunity the following week.

The primary teachers who observed the lessons gained great insights into the teaching of the new Science syllabus and the students involved gave the experience two thumbs up.

The students were strongly engaged on both days in six hands-on activities through which they rotated during the day. The activities explored the areas of Light & Spectra, Colourful Chemistry, Measurement, Electrostatics and Microscopy & Microorganisms and Magnetism.

The high school science staff running the activities were very impressed with the primary student's participation in the activities. They are looking forward to working with a great many budding scientists over the next few years.

The boys and girls involved can't wait to do more when they get to high school!

Ray Rincheval, principal of Sandy Beach Public School, was delighted with the outcome.

"This was a great way for our students to look forward to the exciting opportunities awaiting them at high school and it was a terrific opportunity for our primary teachers to learn from science specialists."

"It means our students and teachers get exposure to top quality science content delivered by top quality teachers."

Thanks go to all involved in the organisation and delivery of this very successful and enjoyable project.

PHIL DALTON

HT Science Woolgoolga High School

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Nutrition Belongs IN NSW PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Department of Education and Communities Policy Nutrition in Schools Policy

All schools should promote and model healthy eating and good nutrition in school programs and activities relating to or involving food and drink. School canteens are required to implement Fresh Tastes @ School.

Objectives – Policy Statement

- Any activities and programs within the school setting relating to or involving food and drink should promote healthy eating and good nutrition to students.
- Implementation of Fresh Tastes @ School is mandatory for all canteens in NSW government schools.
- All sugar sweetened drinks that exceed the nutritional criteria for 'occasional' foods are not permitted for sale in school canteens and school vending machines at all times.
- The teaching of nutrition education is part of the Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) key learning area and is mandatory for all students from Kindergarten to Year 10. Teaching and learning and all class activities in all other key learning areas should reinforce healthy eating and good nutrition wherever possible.
- All school activities that involve the provision of food and drink to students should be consistent with Fresh Tastes @ School.
- Off site school activities that involve the provision of food and drink to students, including excursions, camps and school functions should be consistent with Fresh Tastes @ School.
- Where school activities involve the provision of food and drink to the wider school community consideration should be given to modelling and promoting healthy eating.
- All canteen operators are required to notify the NSW Food Authority of their food activity details. All canteens will provide a safe and hygienic food service and comply with National Food Law, Food Safety Standards (2002), Food Act 2003 (NSW) and Food Regulation 2010 (NSW).
- Schools with preschools are required to follow the protocols of the Children's Services Regulation 2004 (clause 68) ensuring that students are exposed to healthy eating practices.

- School activities that involve the provision of food will address the requirements of the Anaphylaxis Procedures for Schools.

Audience and applicability

All NSW government schools and preschools, parents/caregivers; the wider school community.

Context

The health and wellbeing of students is relevant to their learning and is important to schools. The present and future health of students can be enhanced by quality learning and positive experiences at school.

The NSW Government State Plan Priority S3 Healthy Communities (Obesity): Improved health through reduced obesity, illicit drug use and risk drinking, identified 'Healthier Schools' as a key priority in preventing childhood obesity in NSW.

The Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents are designed to help young people and their families choose food and drink for a healthy life.

Legislation

- National Food Law, Food Safety Standards (2002).
- Food Act 2003 (NSW) and Food Regulation 2010 (NSW).
- Children's Services Regulation 2004.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Student Health in NSW Public Schools: A summary and consolidation of policy
- Infection Control Policy and Guidelines (intranet only)
- Sponsorship Policy and Guidelines
- Curriculum Policy Standards
- Student Welfare Policy

Responsibilities and delegations

Principals are responsible for ensuring the requirements of departmental policy, guidelines and relevant legislation are met. Principals are responsible for ensuring that school policies and practices are consistent with the nutrition in schools policy and are responsive to local needs, including cultural diversity.

Contact

Department of Education and Communities Leader, health and wellbeing, student engagement and interagency partnerships (02) 9266 8258.



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Encouraging Association

Increasing participation of parents, community members and volunteers in P&C Associations has long been a somewhat difficult task. Some people think if you are involved in a P&C Association then you mustn't work, but on the contrary all members of a P&C Association engage in some sort of work even if it is not paid employment.

Some are paid, some are not, some are shift workers, some are carers, grandparents, guardians, relatives and some are keen community members but all are likeminded people wanting to support Public Education and most of all our children. Being a P&C Association member is all about giving whatever time, skills or resources you can offer, every contribution big or small helps.

GIVE PEOPLE A REASON TO JOIN YOUR P&C ASSOCIATION

Other than doing it for their kids, some people need another reason to join. Find things that parents want to hear about, are passionate about or affect them and include them as topics to discuss at your meetings. Ensure your P&C Association advertises widely so that the whole school community are aware of what is happening.

Feedback from people that are not members of a P&C Association is often that they feel members have formed a 'clique' and are often closed to new ideas or ways of looking at things. They prefer to stick to their own ways and do the same things that they have always done and aren't open to new members suggesting ideas or changes.

Some great strategies for changing that way of thinking include, making new members or parents feel welcome and included in the conversation, making sure members don't ignore or isolate new members or parents. Try at least one new activity each year and listen to all ideas, don't dismiss anyone's input. Something that didn't work in previous years may work well this year, every year is different.

YOUR P&C ASSOCIATION CAN TRY SOME OF THE FOLLOWING WAYS TO WELCOME NEW PARENTS TO THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY AND INCREASE MEMBERSHIP.

There are many different ways to try an engage parents and thinking outside the box can sometimes be very productive.

"I think parents attend and participate in things that they feel are relevant and important to them and their families. Properly advertising, sharing how it relates to or affects them, and offering various ways for parents to participate are all important. I think it helps when we start with finding out what it is our families want to know, before we try telling them what we feel they need to know."

CLASS PARENT REPRESENTATIVE PROGRAM

This is a great way to build a community of more active and willing volunteer parents. It also ensures that there is parent representation across all levels of the school.

In consultation with the Principle and staff, encourage parents to become a class representative; this may be for a term or the whole year. Each class may have a number of parent representatives, who take turns attending P&C Association meetings to share information regarding the class and its needs.

"A great way to engage the adults is to bring in the kids/students. Let them share/present/teach at the meetings and events. Parents love to see their children and what they've learned. We give our students a 15 min spotlight at each of our monthly meetings and photos of their work fills over 75% of our monthly newsletters."

ENGAGE NEW PARENTS AT KINDERGARTEN ORIENTATION

Make new Kindergarten parents feel welcome to the school community.

When the children go to their class with the teacher P&C Association members can spend time with the parents, have a cup of tea or coffee and a chat or organise an information morning tea where you can highlight the roles of parents in school and

what the benefits are for the students when there is strong parent engagement.

If children see their parents involved in the school it becomes normal to them that the whole family is part of the school community.

CREATE A SKILLS REGISTER FOR YOUR MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS

Keep a register with a list of skills that your members and volunteers are happy to contribute to the P&C Association. You can use this list to call on people with particular skill sets if needed for an event. Keep a list of the events for the year and ask for members and volunteers to be involved in at least one of the events and if possible more than one. All the help they can offer is great, even if it is wrapping gifts, helping on a stall or baking it all contributes to the event in some way.

PROMOTE YOUR P&C ASSOCIATION AND THE GREAT WORK IT IS DOING IN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Hold an event that the whole school community can be involved in where P&C Association members can mingle and speak with parents, promote the P&C Association by displaying pictures of the P&C Association's achievements or projects for the school, parents and students to see.

Have a P&C Association noticeboard that is updated with the great things the P&C Association is doing for the school. Talk to your principal about having a section in the school newsletter and on the website with information about the P&C Association events, meetings and opportunities to volunteer or contribute.

These are just a few suggestions but there are other ways of engaging parents such as hosting events that bring together the school community; Harmony Day celebrations, discos, bring a friend to a P&C meeting, craft groups, guest speakers, fun exercise group, kindergarten or year 7 welcome BBQ, supper with the principal, teacher- topic presentations etc.

New P&C Members

COMMUNICATION IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT TO RAISING AWARENESS OF THE P&C ASSOCIATION IN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY.

Be informative; let parents and community members know when things are happening, how they can contribute and what it means for the school and their children. Give reminders, make it obvious and communicate through multiple channels such as Website, Social networks (Facebook), P&C Association or School Newsletters, noticeboards, flyers etc.

Personalise communications with pictures of leadership teams and members, so that parents and community members can identify with your P&C Association. Make sure the leadership team are contactable and approachable, this helps build relationships within the school community.

Showcase the work the P&C Association are doing.

Share photos taken during an event, people like to check them out. Share what the P&C Association has donated or paid for, people like to know what they are giving or raising money for.

Make the P&C Association wish list public and promote what you are saving towards and why, if people are better informed it can encourage more donations.

Always be open and willing to accept new members and volunteers. New ideas can make a big difference to the success of a P&C Association. Be welcoming and engage the school community, after all, parents are all passionate about their children and the opportunities they are afforded.

Keep your focus on what is most important and what you are all there for, our children.

Susie Boyd
Secretary P&C Federation



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COOGEE SCHOOL TEACHES KIDS TO CARE



As the festive season approaches, finding ways to motivate and inspire students can be a challenge. Parents, teachers and students alike are busy with thoughts of parties, holidays and letters to Santa. Coogee Public School brings the thoughts and actions of their school community back to the true meaning of Christmas through its involvement in the Barnardos Gifts for Kids Program, which helps provide gifts for disadvantaged children and families.

Coogee Public School, situated in Sydney's eastern suburbs, has a long and proud history of providing quality public education since 1976. The school boasts an enrolment of 620 students, making it one of the largest primary schools in the area and

enjoys a strong community reputation for its holistic approach to education. The school has been involved with Barnardos Gifts for Kids program for the past 6 years.

"We've always believed in the importance of students learning about helping those in need. Every Christmas we encourage students and the community to participate in the Barnardos Gifts for Kids program and donate a gift. We hope students understand that giving and helping others in need is a powerful way to make a difference in the lives of others. The program also serves to raise awareness amongst our students and their families about social justice issues and especially child protection." explains Diane Bambridge, Deputy Principal at Coogee Public School.

One month before the school holds their end of year Christmas event, a Barnardos representative visits the school assembly to speak about the work Barnardos does to stop child abuse by working with children and families in crisis. During the following month the Student Representative Council (SRC) gives reminders at assemblies, in class meetings and they make posters encouraging

students to bring in a gifts for a child less fortunate. The school also promotes Barnardos Gifts for Kids program in their parent's newsletter.

"The response of students, staff and parents to the program has been very positive. Our community is extremely generous. Parents say this program teaches their children the value of helping others less fortunate from an early age. Students also tell us that making another child happy by simply giving a present is a great feeling. One student said that the program made him conscious of how lucky he was and that every child deserves to experience the feeling of receiving a gift at Christmas time." Diane said.

Barnardos Gifts for Kids program invites schools to donate gifts for children and young people in their programs who not otherwise experience the joy of Christmas. This year the program is most in need of gifts for children aged 0 -2 years and donations of gift cards for teens.

To sign your school up for this year's Barnardos Gift for Kids Program – go to: www.barnardos.org.au/GiftsForKids

QUICK REFERENCE CONTACT DETAILS FOR YOUR P&C ASSOCIATION



OFFICE OF THE CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

Phone: 02 8219 3600
Website: www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au



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Teach kids the art and skill of giving and share in the true meaning of Christmas.

Christmas is a fun and festive time for most of us.

But spare a thought for the thousands of children affected by abuse, neglect, homelessness and poverty in Australia. For these children, Christmas can be a sad, lonely and heart-breaking time.

Show your support and help bring joy to desperate children in need this Christmas by taking part in Barnardos Gifts for Kids – our annual toy drive.

We are seeking donations of unwrapped, new toys for children and young people aged 0-18 years. We can also arrange teaching aids and collection of gifts.

Step 1: Visit barnardos.org.au/giftsforkids to register your school and order your starter pack.

Step 2: Start collecting donated gifts from students and staff.

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