

ACT Council of Parents and Citizens Associations

The parent voice on public education



Annual Report 2018

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Cover image: An entry from our Photo Competition — Miles Franklin Primary School Principal, Mr Jones, reading to a number of 2019 preschoolers at the preschool fun day.



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Acknowledgement of Country

The ACT Council of P&C Associations acknowledges the Ngunnawal people, the traditional owners of the lands on which our office is based.

We recognise and respect that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are first peoples and traditional owners of this country. We pay our respects to Elders both past and present and extend that response to all Indigenous peoples of this land. We acknowledge the rich and diverse cultures and the long history of Indigenous Australia. We understand the important role of maintaining these rich cultures and the ongoing relationship with the land.

President's report

I would like to acknowledge and say a heart-felt thank you for the hard work and effort that our executive team, members, delegates and office staff have invested in the ACT Council of P&C Associations over the last twelve months. Your passion, energy and drive to improve education in ACT public schools makes volunteering in this role inspiring and motivating.

I feel it's also important to recognise and thank all the people we work with in our education community: Minister Yvette Berry, our educators – from Natalie Howson and her executive team through to every principal, teacher, and school staff - learning support assistants, office and support staff. The Australian Education Union require special mention and we highly value our frank and fearless relationship with teachers and value the role that teachers play in our children's lives.

In August this year, we welcomed Preschools and Playschools into our organisation, when we merged with the Canberra Preschool Society. It's been wonderful to include early learning officially in our purview and we welcome our new members.

This year, the Council Executive elected to focus on four key themes for our advocacy efforts, and we are

pleased to see some substantial progress in these areas.

We engaged with Tuggeranong school P&Cs to understand if the media coverage about 'disadvantaged' schools in the valley was a perception or a reality. What our Tuggeranong parents reflected on was how much they valued and supported their local public schools, how their smaller sizes contributed to strong communities and how seriously their communities were impacted by external factors like vandalism and traffic issues. We have facilitated engagement with roads and traffic and are looking forward to exploring some community learning initiatives with Tuggeranong schools next year.

Violence in schools has been an ongoing issue, addressed in various initiatives over the years. Through our Parent Support Group on Violence in Schools, parents shared their stories with us over the past 12 months, and some themes emerged around this subject, particularly around parental engagement. Fundamentally, one of the key points where parents *disengage* with education and their school is around issues of violence and bullying, and anecdotally, many parents whose children experience violence at school subsequently move their child to another school. Schools are often so risk averse to

any negative publicity that we can observe a culture of denial around issues of violence arising. In a 'me too' world, violence is an issue in our society, and schools reflect society. Education is a critical point where students are still learning appropriate social behaviour. We feel it is time to change the conversation about violence and work constructively together on how parents and schools can manage this problem. The recent workplace health and safety breaches and subsequent enforceable undertaking have also highlighted the responsibilities and commitment to providing safe workplace and school environment. The Education Directorate are partnering with parents and teachers in this journey and we look forward to engaging on this important topic early next year.

Achieving consistency in experience for ACT residents across our schools has always been a challenging goal, but made more imperative by a refocus on school priority enrolment areas to address population growth – which will limit parental choice of public schools. This means every public school needs to be a great school. We know that some public schools just get it right, however others also do not. It's also common that these experiences can be from the same school. We have been focused on ways

we can improve parental engagement and the quality of teaching and resources, especially specialist teaching programs, languages and teacher-librarians. Much of this work will be evidenced in our advocacy, meetings, and attempts to address structural and procedural issues. Of note, Council has developed a policy on inclusion and accessibility for all students this year.

Building individual P&Cs' capability and long term sustainability is our fourth focus area. This year we have reviewed the role of P&Cs in schools, developed a paper on various business and governance models, and reflected on the role of the P&C in the broader community and particularly engaging 'citizen' members. We have engaged with the Principal's Association and talked to principals about their role in supporting their school's P&C. We have also focused on a literature and research review of parent engagement with P&C Committees and attitudes towards volunteering. We look forward to developing this knowledge further and working with our members and delegates to conceptualise and plan a bright future for ACT P&Cs.

Earlier this year, the Education Directorate invited three of our executive members to participate in Cultural Integrity training. The experience was enlightening

for our team. We have since formed a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) working group and have developed a draft RAP for Council to consider. We are at a very early stage in our RAP journey, and look forward to embarking on this learning journey towards making P&Cs a welcoming and engaging experience for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and students and building our community's understanding and awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.

In terms of our contributions to education this year, our members and delegates have been very active. Some of the notable efforts Council has been involved in are as follows, but do read on through this Annual Report for more on all we have be doing.

- Contributed to conversations on the development of the Future of Education strategy, conducted and facilitated consultations with members, developed a formal submission, and provided representation as a key stakeholder.
- Following members concerns regarding capacity planning, we provided feedback to Education and were successful in lobbying for 17 schools to have their capacity recalculated
- Council contributed to

community feedback after the redesign of Transport Canberra's bus network. Working with Education, Council provided logistical advice around Priority Enrolment Areas and succeeded in lobbying for changes to the proposed network to ensure bus routes would be available to all students in a PEA.

- Council provided a submission and evidence to the ACT Government Inquiry into school testing, focus on NAPLAN. We consulted with our members and provided advice on parental experience with NAPLAN.
- Maintained our important work building our members' capability - workshops, training, factsheets, insurance, and governance.

Looking forward to an exciting 2019!



Kirsty McGovern-Hooley

Executive Officer's report

Occasionally I am asked "What does P&C Council actually do for my P&C, parents or students?" This is usually from someone involved with their own school P&C but who has taken little interest in their association's peak body ie Council. They often only notice the invoice for their affiliation fees and/or the cost of their P&C insurance. For those of us in Council's office this question can be demoralising, as we expend a lot of time and effort, and every available means, to tell P&Cs and parents what we are doing on their behalf. They only need to read this annual report to know the astonishing amount of work that our handful of dedicated Executive and other members, plus our part time staff can achieve for them in a 12 month period.

So we sincerely hope that those of you who are now reading this report will suggest that other members of your school community read this document online and circulate to your members the hard copy version that all P&Cs receive.

Staff

In July our Executive Assistant/Bookkeeper, Rachel, who had served us extremely well for three years, left to pursue new opportunities. In replacing Rachel, we decided to split the job between an Executive/Administrative Assistant and a Bookkeeper.

Consequently, in August, Melissa Lee was employed as our new Executive Assistant and we contracted the Bookkeeper role to Lesley Porroj. Also, following the transfer of Canberra Preschool Society (CPS) members to Council in July and the establishment of our Early Learning Committee, we recruited Marina Spurgin as our Early Learning Officer.

These new employees join our existing team of Janelle Kennard – Communications Officer – and Veronica Elliott as Policy Officer, to form our hard working office team.

I should also like to recognise the great co-operation and assistance that we have received from the outgoing CPS President Nicole Haughie and Executive Officer Alex Abrahams. They have greatly assisted in the transition of CPS members to Council, the establishment of Council's Early Learning committee and the selection of the Early Learning Officer.

New auditor

Following consideration of our annual audit needs and a competitive tender process, we contracted a new auditor – Tailored Accounts – as our auditors for 2018 and beyond. This decision has saved Council around \$800 and delivered the audited annual financial accounts four weeks earlier than previously, without any loss in accountability or reporting.

Accounting changes

Following discussions with the new auditors, it was decided to change the way we account for annual affiliation fees. In the past we have counted the fees in the year they have been received regardless of whether they are for the following financial year (ie cash accounting basis). However, we will now account for fees received in the year they are meant for ie accrual basis. This has resulted in a small deficit for the last financial year, as we adjust to the new arrangement. Considering we have had small surpluses for the last seven years the Executive Committee is comfortable with this result.

IT issues in the office

The IT systems in the Council office have not changed much over the last five years, so we should not have been surprised when problems started to arise with internet access, email and file server accessibility. After a number of attempts to identify and fix the problems, we accepted an offer from QI Solutions to conduct a full IT audit and resolve the problems. Thanks to this, we finally solved most of the issues with an upgrade of the operating systems, replacing the modem and router, plus some pathway changes for the printer and use of the cloud. However, the file server remained a problem, until the outgoing CPS committee offered to purchase a new one for us, plus four new compatible

workstations. This offer was gratefully accepted and QI solutions again offered to install the new hardware. We sincerely thank QI Solutions for their generous support.

More Council workshops

Our range of workshops was extended this year with a *P&Cs as good employers* session held in August. This successful event was conducted for us by the Healthy Kids Association. The Effective P&C, Insurance/Treasurers and P&C Constitution workshops were successfully conducted with good attendance at all.

Increased workload

This report highlights the increased workload of Council in responding to growing demand from the government and bureaucracy for consultation with parents and parental engagement at all levels of schooling in the ACT. The ACT Government, through the Education Directorate (EDU) annual grant in aid, funds Council to facilitate this consultation and to support ACT public schools through effective parent and school communities. This growing demand has stretched both our office staff and volunteers to their limit, particularly in the areas of policy, communications and support services like workshops. Consequently, we are seeking an increase in our annual grant for future years above the usual CPI increases, so that we can

fund additional work hours for key staff members.

Wifi for school canteens

After two years of lobbying the Education and Shared Services Directorates, we finally succeeded this year in obtaining a resolution to the lack of wifi for P&C-run school canteens. P&Cs can now apply to the school business manager to be registered for wifi access. While primarily to assist P&C-managed school canteens, the P&C should be able to use this access for other P&C-run activities such as uniform shops, out of hours care programs, etc.

Insurance for preschools

We successfully arranged for our new preschool members to access our insurance package for P&Cs. Through this group purchasing arrangement, we have continued to receive very reasonable premiums for members with significant savings for most. Through the package, P&Cs and PPAs are able to access public liability, directors' and officers' cover, association liability, property, personal accident and workers' compensation insurance depending on their needs.

Healthy food in schools

We continue to work with ACT Health in promoting healthy food in schools. In an effort to encourage high school and college students to use their school canteens, we have sponsored the

Create a Café furniture project.

Representatives on external committees

A list of the various positions to which Council is invited to nominate a parent representative is shown on page 15. I encourage any parent interested in these areas to discuss them with me and, if willing, be nominated to a position. Commitments are generally not too burdensome and usually very interesting.

Terry Sanders



Policy Officer's report

As the policy officer for Council, I listen to and collate feedback from representatives of ACT public school parents & citizens associations (usually Council delegates) via Council meetings and direct contact with our Executive and office. I work alongside our members and Executive to prepare policy positions, potential strategies for advocacy and lobbying, in addition to assisting P&Cs with member services.

Listening sessions

This year Council launched the first of our member listening sessions holding one of our General Meetings in Tuggeranong to listen to the specific views of Tuggeranong members. Council will provide feedback on this listening session directly to the Education Directorate and has passed along specific requests for traffic and parking enforcement to the appropriate authorities. I look forward to hearing the views of our members at other upcoming listening sessions.

Policy Development

Council's policy document is vital in determining strategic activities including representing parent and carer views when meeting with and providing submissions to government. We update the policy

document annually at the policy conference to ensure it represents member views.

This year, members supported adopting new policies on inclusive and diverse education, and school capacity, specialist facilities and outdoor spaces.

Representing members

Council represented the views of parents and carers via meetings, letters, submissions and hearings across topics including:

- The *Future of Education* in the ACT
- Education of students with disabilities (school supported transport consultation; restrictive practices in schools; special needs transport; disability eligibility criteria and related issues)
- suspension, transfer and exclusion policy
- managing violence, bullying and victimisation in schools
- standardised testing
- changes to the bus network
- communication between schools and families
- Cultural Integrity in ACT public schools
- feedback on proposed amendments to the *Education Act*.

Additional member feedback allowed Council to pursue broader changes to the public education system including ensuring:

- every public school is a school that parents want to send their kids to

- public education is delivered in a more coordinated approach (eg providing consistent language pathways for all years of schooling)
- public schools are places of inclusion, respect, safety where diversity and the achievements of every student are celebrated.

We will continue to present these views to the Education Directorate and Minister, and ACT Government over the coming years.

Member services

With more experience this year I have contributed to a range of member services, including encouraging and supporting members to update and adopt a new constitution, delivering Council's constitution workshop and coordinating a roundtable for P&Cs operating a before and after school care service. It is a pleasure to answer P&C enquiries on meeting procedures, constitutions, school boards and employment of staff, amongst many others. In addition, I am closely following proposals for legislative amendments, and possible changes to the employment of casuals and will forward information along to P&Cs when received.

Veronica Elliot



Communication Officer's report

Council's communication activities fulfil two major aims: to communicate with our member P&Cs and provide them the information they need to make their role easier; and to voice the views of school parents in public and political arenas.

Communicating with members

This year we continued to carefully consider our publications to make them as useful to our members as possible. The distribution list for our fortnightly ebulletin 'Council Communicator' continues to grow – it is now well over 1000. The information on readership and interactions with the ebulletin that we receive as part of the distribution platform continue to be useful in knowing what information our members consider most valuable. We also gave the bulletin a light make-over to make it easier to pick out the most relevant information.

We are now aware of parts of the bulletin being well shared by our member P&Cs.

We also continue to tweak the content of our quarterly magazine *ParentACTion* to provide detailed and valuable information. One of the areas on which Council has been focusing this year is acknowledging volunteers and a new *Why I Volunteer* segment in our magazine has

been a very popular way of creating discussions about the value of our volunteers and the joys of volunteering.

We have continued to focus on interacting with members via Facebook. This has given us a better understanding of our members, and a growing and valuable network for sharing ideas, challenges and inspiration. The result has been that the number of our followers on Facebook has increased by nearly 50% since this time last year. We now also have over 400 high quality followers on Twitter, despite a slight decrease in focus on this medium.

Council's renewed focus on Early Learning has raised questions about new audiences and enhancing the way we communicate with younger parents. In particular, we will be reviewing our Social Media strategy next year to address this.

The merger with Canberra Preschool Society also led to changes to our website which we are still finalising. We have continued to add new resources and information to our website, from a newly created 'Thankyou' certificate template to details on how to publicise fetes. Our online resources for committees has grown so much over the years that finding content can sometimes be challenging!

We know that P&Cs really value the materials, but we may need to review how we make them available.

This year we also ran a P&C Photo Competition which generated a lot of interest and a sense of pride in what P&Cs achieve. The many entries showed the diverse, valuable, fun and colourful ways P&Cs contribute to their schools and communities. We now have a fabulous store of interesting and illustrative images to use for future publications.

The parent voice

Council also spends a lot of time responding to media enquiries and voicing parent concerns and points of view through the general media on many topics which relate to our schools – from buses and school crossing supervisors to CCTV and school banking! In the past 12 months we have been directly quoted nearly 40 times. We also issued half a dozen press releases.

Janelle Kennard



Early Learning Officer's report

Parents of preschool aged children face a range of unique challenges and can find a confusing array of advice and options available to them. Listening to parent experiences helps us understand how parents are responding to changing circumstances, and what works or doesn't work for them.

Establishing new Subcommittee

The Early Learning Subcommittee represents the preschool parent experience. Building on the Canberra Preschool Society's (CPS) 75 year history and the Preschool Parent Associations (PPA's) they've represented, the Subcommittee continues to support and advocate for preschool parents to improve the preschool experience and outcomes for all preschool-aged children.

This year the CPS wound up operations and transferred responsibility for its services and functions to Council's new Early Learning Subcommittee. This was the result of a long period of consultation and many meetings between the organisations and conversations with stakeholders and members as well as the formal consideration of a Business Options Paper in 2017.

The changes provide an opportunity for each organisation to leverage the other's resources and networks, while also making the most effective use of ACT Government funding to deliver all our objectives.

Web content was developed for the transitional period incorporating the CPS logo.

Nicole Haughie, former President of the CPS for four years, has been guiding us during this time. Nicole will continue to oversee the transition process of the Early Learning services and functions as transitional chair of the Subcommittee.

The Subcommittee held its inaugural meeting on 12 September, with the main focus being terms of reference and priorities. The minutes are available on the Council website.

Early Learning Officer

An Early Learning Officer position was created within the Council to promote interest and understanding of early years education and wellbeing. The role will engage with community, government and other organisations and persons on purposes related to early years learning. The position will also support the decisions of the Early Learning Subcommittee.

Preschools—welcoming new Council members

CPS members received communications from the CPS and Council explaining the transition process and impacts. Their membership fees have been waived for this year and they will not be invoiced until May 2019.

The fee structure is slightly different to CPS and it will be generally cheaper for a PPA to be a member of Council.

We invite members, parents and parent groups to contact us to collaborate or utilise our resources, networks and experience. We are developing new channels for communication and seek increased engagement with our members. We're looking forward to visiting ACT preschools and playschools and engaging with your experience and perspective.

Marina Spurgin



List of main activities

Council's major activities in 2018 are listed below.

Representing parents

- at regular meetings with the ACT Education Minister
- at regular meetings with senior staff at the ACT Education Directorate (EDU)
- on a broad range of government committees, roundtables and working groups (see pages 12-15).

Writing to government and Ministers about parent concerns

- wifi access for P&C-run canteens
- disability awareness training for bus drivers
- NDIS planning
- EDU's 'Sentral' administrative system
- concerns from Tuggeranong schools
- school ovals
- chromebooks
- the role of P&Cs and their recognition
- complaints handling by schools
- asbestos at schools
- calculations of school capacity.

Providing submissions and feedback on many topics

- ACT Budget
- ACT Future of Education
- ACSSO review to achieve Educational Excellence in Schools
- Transport Canberra 2019 network and school bus policy
- National Review of Teacher Registration Standards

- Auditor General—cultural engagement in schools
- amendments to the *Education Act*
- Disability Education Reference Group terms of reference
- standardised testing in schools
- management of violence, victimisation and bullying in schools
- CCTV in schools
- mobile phone use
- requests for traffic enforcement around schools
- school fences and ovals.

Providing input on EDU policies and resources

- Cultural Integrity resources
- 'Working with your school' resources
- Suspension, transfer and exclusion policy
- Report cards
- School Board Manual.

Assisting members

- responding to hundreds of phone and email queries and requests for assistance from P&C officer bearers
- running P&C Treasurers and Insurance Workshop in April, addressed by insurance brokers
- providing the Effective P&C Workshop
- P&C Constitution workshop
- P&Cs as employers workshop
- providing, expanding and improving extensive online resources, templates and information
- creating four issues of *ParentACTion* magazine for schools and stakeholders

- producing fortnightly ebulletins for the information of P&C office bearers
- exploring and researching the role of P&Cs and other possible business models
- working with ACT Health, Nutrition Australia and others to assist P&C-run school canteens.

Creating informative meetings for members

- special 'Listening to Tuggeranong'
- P&C business model forum

General meetings featuring guest speakers of interest, including:

- Rod Bray & Robert Gotts from EDU discussed new schools and planning
- Liz Bobos from the ACT Principals Association looked at principals and their P&C associations working together
- EDU's Sam Seton discussed ILPs
- ACT Minister for Education Yvette Berry spoke on the Future of Education
- Patrick Chapman discussed cultural integrity in schools.

Running internal committees on special interests (see page 10)

We also:

- ran a photo competition
- reviewed and amended Council's Policy Document
- issued six press releases and fielded dozens of questions from the media.

Council internal subcommittee reports

Before & After School Care Program Working Group

Convenor: Veronica Elliott

The group normally works by email and the sharing of common questions and concerns. However, this year a face to face roundtable meeting was arranged to specifically address the legislative and regulatory requirements for such programs managed by P&Cs. Other questions continuing to be raised by P&Cs included rent charges for their programs, contractual arrangements, record keeping requirements, employment of staff and maintenance of the school's facilities used by their programs.

Clothing & Uniform Shop Working Group

Convenor: Terry Sanders

This group also works by email to answer queries from P&Cs. P&Cs with questions email these to the Council office which circulates them to others in the Group and invites responses directly to the enquiring P&C. Matters addressed this year included the security and control of uniform shop cash, contract arrangements with suppliers and ways to enforce or withdraw from them.

Disability Working Group

Convenor: Kirsty McGovern-Hooley

Members of the Disability Working Group (DWG) have been actively participating in the Disability Education

Reference Group (DERG) and also contributing directly in a number of Councils policy areas.

Activities include:

- input to the Support for Children & Young People with Complex Needs and Behaviour policy of the Education Directorate, both through the Council's Policy Officer and the DERG
- advice and input to Council's policies on Inclusion and Suspension
- promoting the Positive Behaviour for Learning adoption in all schools
- liaison with Transport Canberra on disability awareness training for bus drivers
- developing a "passport" for use by disability students on public transport
- intervention on behalf of some parents finding problems with the NDIS
- support and advice for individual parents on a range of issues including access to special needs units and in-school support.

Gifted & Talented Students Working Group

Convenor: Terry Sanders

This group works closely with the ACT Gifted Families Support Group and is primarily concerned with ensuring that our public schools continue to cater for the gifted and talented students in their schools. The group has been concerned that schools have active Gifted and Talented Liaison Officers appointed and that these are clearly identified for

parents and carers to approach if they have concerns to discuss. The group normally works by email correspondence only. However, this year we had a face to face meeting which highlighted the continuing issues facing gifted and talented students and their parents. It also provided an opportunity to discuss matters directly with Elizabeth Singer from the Gifted Families Support Group and review their resources for parents.

Parent Support Group on Violence in Schools

The Parent Support Group (PSG) was established in May 2017 as a forum for parents to share experiences, discuss issues and advise the Council on issues surrounding violent behaviour by students in schools.

Since establishment of the PSG, we have undertaken the following:

- collected case studies with the intention of developing a useable resource for research and reference purposes. This is an ongoing activity
- produced a short list of resources and support services available on the web
- referred the Education Directorate (EDU) to schools that successfully manage violent students and suggested that they promote the strategies used by those schools to all Principals
- raised our concerns with the Minister at regular meetings in 2017 and 2018
- provided critical comment to EDU on their violence/

conduct resources for schools

- negotiated with EDU for the conduct of a major public forum/workshop on violence in schools to be held in early 2019
- formed a small working group to progress the workshop with EDU
- developed a comprehensive discussion paper on violence in schools
- conducted a face to face meeting of the PSG in August 2018.

The primary concerns for us now are to continue to build the case studies and the conduct of the major forum/workshop. Parents struggling with student violence incidents should contact the PSG via the P&C Council office to seek advice and support.

School Canteen Subcommittee

Convenor: Terry Sanders

There were no meetings of the subcommittee this year but a workshop on P&Cs as good employers was conducted. Other matters continuing to require the members' attention were the healthy food guidelines and the canteen management manual, which was finally delivered this year. Another P&C was assisted to purchase the Flexischools online ordering system even though the funding for the program has ended. The replacement of Flexischools hardware was raised as a looming problem with high costs being quoted.

Schools and Communities In Partnership (SCIP) Committee

Convenor: Terry Sanders

This committee exists to provide direct support to P&C associations in the form of physical visits to the P&C by both Council officers and staff when invited. During such visits the Council officers and staff can assist in resolving issues facing the P&C, provide briefs on policies and activities, address constitutional issues or any other matter that the P&C may like to raise. This year there were no visits made to schools but substantial time was provided in answering telephone and email questions from P&C volunteers.

Social media and communications committee

Convenor: Janelle Kennard

This committee approved ParentACTion content and Council media releases over the year.

External committee reports

ACT Schools' Animal Ethic Committee

Representative: Richard Lucas

This committee looks at the standard of care and welfare of all animals housed in or belonging to ACT schools. It conducts inspection visits and reviews against a set of basic standards for animals in ACT schools.

In the past 12 months the Committee has conducted inspections at eight schools: Ainslie Primary, St. Thomas the Apostle Primary, Curtin Primary, Yarralumla Primary, Canberra Girls Grammar, Isabella Plains Early Childhood Centre, Fadden Primary, Alfred Deakin High and St. Michael's Primary.

Another six out of session applications were put to the Committee from Hawker College, St. Clair of Assisi Primary, Charnwood-Dunlop School, Gold Creek Preschool, Gordon Primary and Arawang Preschool.

The Committee gives input to the formation, review, and revision of Education Directorate animal ethics policies and procedures.

Links with ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS)

Representative: Viv Pearce

Council has maintained a productive relationship with ACTCOSS over the past year. We have not provided as much input into ACTCOSS policies or attended as many

conferences as in previous years. With an election next year it is probably an area where increased networking is appropriate. Viv Pearce attended their AGM.

Australian Council of School State Organisations (ACSSO)

Representative: Andrew Bidwell

Council is a member of the Australian Council of State School Organisations (ACSSO), which represents the interests of the families and communities of more than two million children attending government schools in Australia.

ACSSO plays a significant role in influencing Federal Government's decisions on school funding and tries to counterbalance the strong and well-resourced lobbying from the Catholic and Independent school sectors. ACSSO uses 'Fair, Simple and Transparent' as its mantra in its approach to funding issues. It lobbies within the Federal bureaucracy and amongst the Minister's senior advisors for the adoption of such an approach. Unexpectedly, funding and ensuring that a needs-based approach is taken, was the main issue considered by ACSSO in 2018, as it had been in 2017. However, ACSSO also focused on a myriad of other schooling matters.

Regrettably the Northern Territory and more recently the NSW public school parent

bodies have chosen to withdraw from ACSSO. This has been due partly to disagreements over ACSSO's support for the general direction of the Government's funding package and would seem to involve some party political elements. ACSSO is hopeful these bodies will rejoin.

Andrew Bidwell is Council's representative member to ACSSO and John Haydon is a member of the ACSSO Board where his role is not to represent Council but to provide input that furthers the interest of ACSSO.

Board of Secondary School Studies (BSSS)

Representative: Adam Miller

The BSSS is a statutory authority responsible for the certification of senior secondary school studies in ACT schools. Twenty five colleges located in the ACT and seven schools located in Fiji, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and China deliver courses certificated by the Board. Students from the Australian Curriculum Centre, Shanghai, China received ACT Senior Secondary Certificates for the first time in December 2017.

The last 12 months has seen a number of organisational changes, on top of the general business of the board. Rosemary Follett AO completed her second three year term as Board Chair in December 2017. In June 2018, after an open selection process, the Minister for

Education appointed Roberta McRae OAM as the new Board Chair. Roberta currently holds the position of Director, Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice (GDLP) in the School of Legal Practice, ANU. John Stenhouse, Executive Director of the Office of the BSSS, has announced his retirement. Martin Watson is the temporary appointment to the role of the Executive Director while the substantive recruitment process is undertaken.

BSSS—Review of Assessment and Moderation Committee

Representative: Crystal Cox

This review looked at current assessment and moderation policies and procedures to determine how to meet future needs. ACT will soon be the only jurisdiction in Australia to not have external high stakes exams, as Queensland moves toward these external assessments. Instead a continuous assessment based model is in place. The report made from meetings will be presented to the BSSS board as recommendations.

Meetings have included, vision and principles, models for structured peer review, quality assessment guidelines, number of tasks and weightings, specific tasks and conditions for types of assessment, selection of quality tasks, processes and procedures for meshing of courses.

Collaborative Working Group on Food at School

Representative: Terry Sanders

Council has been a member of this group since its formation four years ago. The group brings together government and non-government organisations to work together to help schools and canteens provide healthy and sustainable food services. It includes ACT Government, Healthy Kids Association, YMCA and Nutrition Australia.

Its main focus area has been on publishing the Canteen Business Manual which is to be completed this year. Members again presented Canteen Connect – an event to inspire and help canteen managers, staff and volunteers. Council involvement in this group allows us to hear what each organisation is doing to assist canteens and incorporate this information into Council publications, so that P&Cs running canteens can make full use of the available assistance.

Work with the Saxx Institute in evaluating the pros/cons of various models of operating canteens is ongoing and should be monitored for conclusions/resources of interest/use to P&Cs.

It also established the Create A Café project to provide five high school canteens with modern environmentally friendly furniture. Council has sponsored this project.

Disability Education Reference Group (DERG)

Report: Sharon Ding

The Disability Education Reference Group met regularly to provide information, input and feedback into disability education in ACT public schools. Council representatives (Kirsty McGovern-Hooley, Sharon Ding and Viv Pearce) provided considered advice on disability education in ACT public schools including disability support units, the model of student resource allocation (and how it will feed into the *Future of Education* strategy) which was under review, special needs transport and the NDIS. Council supports the continuation of work from the *Schools for All Review*, to keep the momentum of the valued reforms achieved from the 50 recommendations. We will also review the evaluation of the *Schools for All* initiative. Through engagement with DERG, Council continues to follow the implementation of this new education approach, it's impact on students with disabilities and how inclusiveness will be achieved for students with disabilities.

Council has provided advice on issues such as the need for ACT public preschools to work with NDIS providers to identify students requiring support, the difficulties

External committee reports—continued

experienced in seeking to repeat preschool students due to disability, the level of variation in practices across ACT schools for disability students, and the disparity between school leaders and parent and carer feedback.

Council continues to advocate for inclusive education, as outlined in the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Article 24)*. Council is committed to ensuring every ACT public student is supported to access and engage with high quality learning and be an active participant in their school community.

Safe Schools Roundtable

Representative: John Haydon

Under its terms of reference this 'roundtable' is limited to providing advice to the Minister on achieving the National Safe Schools Framework (NSSF) vision that '*All Australian schools are safe, supportive and respectful teaching and learning communities that promote student wellbeing*'.

Parent input is provided by the Council representative and the equivalent private school parent organisations.

The Roundtable was not convened by the Education Directorate this year.

School Transport Liaison Committee (STLC)

Representative: Viv Pearce

This group is a forum for

concerns about Transport Canberra bus services for school students. The Committee is chaired by Transport Canberra (Formerly ACTION buses) and includes stakeholders from ACT public, catholic and independent schools and their respective peak parent organisations.

This has been an important area this year with major changes announced to the bus network for 2019. Council's lobbying efforts in the Committee and in separate meetings with Transport Canberra have been successful in reinstating many dedicated school buses that had been planned to be removed.

The STLC remains a valuable place for parent and carer views to be represented to Transport Canberra as it makes decisions over the allocation of its limited bus resources.

Council also provided input on disability awareness training for bus drivers and other areas relating to travel by students with disability. We have provided feedback on successful trials of school crossing supervisors.

We also expressed parents' concerns about the impact of the light rail on student movements in to and out of the inner city area and the impact of light rail users parking in already overcrowded car parks near light rail terminals.

Suspension, Exclusion and Transfer Policy Review Advisory Group

Representative: Kirsty McGovern-Hooley

This group reviews and provides advice on the proposed changes to the Education Directorate's policy on Suspension, Exclusion and Transfers, as one of the key projects under the *Schools for All* Initiative. The group conducted the first two phases of meetings in 2017, and Council provided advice on proposed changes to the policy, with particular attention to fair due process, clear communication with parents, the Safe Schools Policy and implementing the Positive Behaviour for Learning Program.

After further review and adjustment based on advice from the Attorney General, the review policy and procedures were released for public consultation in August. Council promoted and circulated the consultation links to our members through electronic communications and at our general meetings. Council provided further feedback based on new information received this year regarding apprehended violence orders, and requested clarification on some of the policy definitions. The committee is due to reconvene later this year to review the feedback from public consultation.

Council Representatives

ACT Council of Social Services (ACTCOSS)	Viv Pearce
ACT Curriculum Advisory Group	Bonnie Roppola
ACT Schools' Animal Ethics Committee	Richard Lucas
Australian Council of State School Organisations (ACSSO)	Andrew Bidwell
Board of Senior Secondary Studies	Adam Miller
Canteen Collaborative Working Group	Terry Sanders
Disability Education Reference Group	Kirsty McGovern-Hooley Sharon Ding Viv Pearce
Healthy Kids Association Board	Megan Hemming
Healthy Schools Network	Alex Abrahams
Preschool Consultative Committee	Crystal Cox
Safe Schools Roundtable	John Haydon
School Transport Liaison Committee	Viv Pearce
Suspension, Exclusion & Transfer Policy Review Advisory Group	Kirsty McGovern-Hooley
School Sports ACT	Lara Wood Gladwin

Council Executive

Executive Committee

President	Kirsty McGovern-Hooley	Farrer Primary School
Vice Presidents	John Haydon Andrew Bidwell	Lyneham High School Florey Primary School
Secretary	Cecilia Shlegel	Bonython Primary School
Treasurer	Crystal Cox	Gowrie Primary School
Committee Members	Sharon Ding Jayne Trustum Jane Koitka Bonnie Roppola Vivienne Pearce	Weetangera Primary School Neville Bonner Primary School Farrer Primary School Southern Cross Early Childhood School UC Senior Secondary College, Lake Ginninderra
Council Life Members	Grant Battersby Pam Cahir Trevor Cobbold Graeme Evans Ian Morgan Vivienne Pearce Richard Scherer	

Financial statements and auditor's report

Committee's report

The committee members submit the financial report of the Association for the financial year ended 30 June 2018.

No significant change in the nature of the Association's activities occurred during the year.

The loss of the Association for the financial year amounted to \$8674 (2017: \$10,703 profit).

No matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the Association, the results of those operations or the state of affairs of the Association in future financial years.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Executive Committee:



Kirsty McGovern-Hooley
President

Financial statements and auditor's report

Profit and loss

ACT P & C Associations Inc.

100 Maitland St, HACKETT ACT 2602, Australia
Compared to Last Year

Cash mode

01 Jul 2017 - 30 Jun 2018

ABN: 53870517949

Generated 02 Aug 2018

		Jul 17-Jun 18	
		Actual	Last Year
Income			
4-1000	High Schools & Colleges	8,777	6,673
4-2000	Primary Schools	17,779	19,484
4-2500	Pre Schools	2,406	3,205
4-3000	Special Schools	172	72
4-3500	Associate Members	-100	100
4-4000	Grant-ACT Education Division	126,811	123,905
4-4500	Insurance Commission	3,439	2,670
4-4600	Interest Received	5,191	7,073
4-7200	ParentAction Advertising	850	712
4-8155	Trnf from Chq acc to Pty Csh	-	69
Total Income		165,324	163,962
Less Cost of Sales			
Total Cost of Sales		-	-
Gross Profit		165,324	163,962
Less Expense			
6-1050	Insurance Expense	699	625
6-1100	Photocopying	629	743
6-1110	Postage	182	318
6-1111	Travel	1,712	2,009
6-1115	Stationery & Office Supplies	492	678
6-1120	Telephone and Internet	1,960	1,813
6-1125	Internet and Web Development	815	782
6-1127	Rent Payable	9,472	9,167
6-1130	Equipment/ maintenance	709	452
6-1135	Equipment/ software	472	3
6-1300	Dues & Subscriptions	1,021	652
6-1750	Other Minor Expenses	527	1,090
6-1850	Affiliation Fees - ACSSO	8,300	7,455
6-1875	Conference - ACSSO	245	1,725
6-1901	Conference Expenses	-	244
6-2551	Advertising	20	20

6-2555	Audit	1,350	1,275
6-2556	Bank Fees	474	443
6-2557	Contingency	865	350
6-2570	Meeting Expenses	610	496
6-2575	Research Fees & Books	-	207
6-2582	Depreciation Expense	1,370	1,494
6-2650	ParentACTion	2,253	2,233
6-2675	Printing-Other	2,762	932
6-5200	Workers Compensation	-	666
6-5400	Superannuation expense	11,663	10,863
6-5500	Provision for LSL	1,630	1,556
6-5600	Staff Training	525	-
6-5750	Provision for Policy Projects	-	432
6-6200	Wages & salaries	122,766	114,351
Total Expense		173,997	163,639
Operating Profit		-8,674	323
Plus Other Income			
Total Other Income		0	-
Less Other Expense			
Total Other Expense		-	-
Net Profit		-8,674	323

Financial statements and auditor's report

Balance Sheet

ACT P & C Associations Inc.

100 Maitland St, HACKETT ACT 2602, Australia

Accrual mode

30 Jun 2018

ABN: 53870517949

Generated 02 Aug 2018

Asset		Total
Banking		
1-1110	Cheque Account	14,592
1-1112	Business Online Saver	55,888
1-1140	Undeposited Cash	0
1-1150	Petty Cash	31
Total Banking		70,511
Current Assets		
1-1222	Term Deposit C Card 50172247	5,000
1-1223	Term Deposit LSL 50141803	15,329
1-1224	Term Deposit 50148924	50,000
1-1225	Term Deposit 50165089	0
1-1226	Term Deposit 50165070	0
1-1227	Term Deposit 50166831	100,000
1-1800	Accounts receivable	0
1-1900	Accrued interest on term deposits	626
1-3410	Office Equipment-At Cost	28,162
1-3420	Office Equip-Accum Depcn	-26,215
1-4000	Prepayment of Wages and Superannuation	0
Total Current Assets		172,902
Total Asset		243,413

Liability		Total
Current Liabilities		
2-1420	PAYG Tax Payable	0
2-2200	GST collected	2,608
2-2400	GST paid	-681
2-2600	PAYG withholdings payable	6,838
2-2800	Payroll deductions	0
2-3200	Superannuation payable	3,575
2-6125	LSL T S	7,792
2-7000	Suspense	0
Total Current Liabilities		20,132
Total Liability		20,132

Net Assets	223,281
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Equity

Current Earnings

3-1800	Current year earnings	-3,625
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Total Current Earnings	-3,625
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Retained Earnings

3-1600	Retained earnings	226,906
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Total Retained Earnings	226,906
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Total Equity	223,281
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Financial statements and auditor's report

Independent Audit Report to the members of ACT Council of Parents & Citizens Associations

Report on the Financial Statements

I have audited the accompanying financial statements of the ACT Council of Parents & Citizens Associations, which comprises the statement of Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2018 and the Statement of surplus or loss for the year ended 30 June 2018.

Committees' Responsibility for the Financial Report

The P&C committee are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view of the financial state of the Council.

Responsibility of person conducting audit

My responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on my audit. An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion

Independence

I confirm that I am not a member of the ACT Council of Parents & Citizens Associations and am not related to any member of their committee.

Audit report qualification

The Council has determined that it is impracticable to establish control over the collection of membership revenue prior to entry into its financial records. Accordingly, as the evidence available regarding membership revenue was limited, my audit procedures with respect to membership revenue had to be restricted to the amounts recorded in the financial records. Therefore, I am unable to express an opinion as to whether the membership revenue the Council recorded is complete.

Opinion

I have audited the attached financial statements of the Council.

a) In my opinion, except for the matter mentioned in the previous paragraph, the financial statements of the Council are properly drawn up;


So far as to give a true and fair view of the matters required by subsection 72(2) of the Act to be dealt with in the accounts for the financial year reported on;

In accordance with the provisions of the Act;

b) Proper accounting and other records have been kept by the Council

c) The audit was conducted in accordance with the rules of the Council

Dated 03.08.2018



Harry Hoang
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