



ACT Council of
Parents & Citizens
Associations

The parent voice on public education

NOTES FROM THE ACT COUNCIL OF P&C ASSOCIATIONS

HOT TOPICS/GENERAL MEETING OF 28 August 18 at Chisholm

Attendance 30: Including delegates from 15 schools and 5 local Members of the ACT Legislative Assembly, plus T Sanders- Executive Officer, V Elliott – Policy Officer.

Our interest in Tuggeranong schools. The Council is aware that Tuggeranong schools are generally under capacity for student enrolments for various reasons which we would like to understand more. We will use the information gathered at this meeting in our negotiations with the Education Directorate (EDU). Our aim in this is to make every one of our schools a “Great school”.

What are the good things about our Tuggeranong schools? The following list was supplied by individual schools and may not apply to all the schools represented:

1. They have a great school community (for multiple schools)
2. Good facilities and opportunities for students (at least one school)
3. Love the smaller size of their schools (all)
4. Teachers in the smaller schools know students and parents more than larger schools.
5. Use of positive learning programs benefit the younger students
6. Play (enquiry) learning for birth to P2 works well.
7. Smaller schools integrate well with local businesses and community
8. Favourable teacher to student ratio compared to larger schools
9. Better access and good relations with teachers
10. Regular informal reporting on students by the teacher (at least one school)
11. School participates in Fresh Tastes and Sustainability programs (a number of schools)

What are the issues facing your Tuggeranong school?

1. Break ins, burglars, thefts, rocks through windows (a number of schools)
2. Traffic safety around schools and parking problems
3. Slow response of security patrols to alarms.
4. Lack of CCTV deterrent
5. Losses from burglars, thefts, vandalism is not just financial but also time and resources.
6. Some local communities may be problematic
7. Combination classes are not ideal for year 1s having to join in with year 2's, Harder to handle behavioural issues
8. Turnover of teachers and Principals is a problem.
9. Some schools have not been accessing student teachers and therefore not able to recruit good new teachers.
10. Often schools are carrying significant absent teachers and are unable to replace them
11. Communication with the Principal is an issue in some schools. Parents need to be able to meet the Principal.

What changes would you like to see in your school?

1. Support for an injured caretaker who is having difficulties doing work

What is your P&Cs funds raising spent on?

1. IPADS
2. Additional student resources
3. Cubby house,
4. Quiet places
5. Students can apply for funds to do things in the school

6. Students encouraged to tell parents what they want in the school
7. Roof for outdoor structure
8. Science week program
9. Mothers' and Fathers' day stalls
10. Providing author's attendance for book week
11. Grounds equipment, books for students, library resources
12. Bike track, school camp, garden shed
13. Employing canteen staff and canteen development
14. Free school disco
15. School bus

Other comments

1. We need to hear more from speakers on the Future of Education plan
2. Schools need to be prepared for preparing students for multiple careers
3. Tuggeranong is ideally placed for the future with small that have good facilities and excess capacity
4. School capacity calculations must not include specialist rooms such as environment centers, libraries etc
5. There must be clear pathways for passage in specialist subject eg languages from primary school to High school and college

What can Council do to help P&Cs

1. Press for more specialist teachers in schools and cover for absent teachers
2. Better co-ordination with feeder schools
3. Greater flexibility for teachers to work in multiple schools, thus sharing their expertise
4. Argue for greater sharing/pooling of school resources
5. Explore viability and greater use of virtual classes where appropriate
6. Teach students and teachers sign language
7. Provide a simple explanation of school funding – how it is calculated distributed and spent
8. Obtain a clear definition of what is a “class room” for capacity calculations
9. Lobby for visible policing of school traffic areas
10. Press for greater consideration of teacher and parent parking at schools
11. Advocate for school crossings where walk to school programs are stopped by lack of road crossings

Reports - Meetings with EDU senior executive team and Minister were discussed as in the meetings reports attached to the agenda.

P&C issues.

Coles school voucher program – a number of schools expressed disappointment at the quality of the prizes being offered by Coles in their promotional campaign, while one school was happy with what they were given. School should write to Coles and express their disappointment with the promotion.

Parent representatives on school boards need better induction training to cover other than just reading financial statements. Their responsibilities and right to information need to be better explained and met by school boards/EDU. School returning officers also need proper support. Council should provide P&CS with information on school board elections. School board representatives' responsibilities need better coverage in the School Board manual.

Cashing in cans and bottles as fund raiser – Some schools are doing this but not many.

Next Meeting

Policy Conference and P&C Business Model Review General Meeting 25 Sep 18 at Stirling,