

ACT Council of P&C Associations Inc

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To: All P&C Delegates, P&C Presidents & Secretaries

Report on P&C Council General Meeting 23 February 2016

This report is issued after Council meetings to assist delegates in reporting back to their P&C associations and to inform parents generally about the activities of P&C Council.

- **Effective P&C workshop Thurs 31 Mar 16 at Stirling or 2pm Sat 2 Apr 15 at Hackett.**
- **P&C Treasurers' & Insurance workshop (combined) 7pm Thurs 7 Apr 16 at Stirling.**
- **ETD has released its Review of Decisions policy – it includes most of our changes.**

PRESENTATION: Bring Your Own Devices to school by Mr Anthony Kola, National Education Manager for Harvey Norman.

It is clear that the role of the school teacher is changing as technology becomes more available in the class room. Teaching is becoming less didactic and teachers are now guides using technology to steer students to knowledge and information. There are various BYOD models used around the country and in the ACT and these include mandated devices, a combination of devices or any device purchased by parents or provided by the school. Accidental damage protection can be purchased with the devices. Some schools may buy in devices and then flexi rent them to parents, or offer finance to parents to buy them from the school. Total reliance on such devices is not likely as it has been shown that skills such as hand writing have advantages in student comprehension and framing of written work over typing on devices. There are many devices available that have both keyboards and write-on screens. School autonomy allows Principals to do as they wish as to the model they use in their school. There is no ACT Edu comprehensive policy on BYOD. Edu's preferred device, Google Chrome, has the advantages of low cost, fast switch on & ease of use but suffers from a lack of more advanced applications and supported programs. It seems fine for primary schools but limited in applications at high school and college. I pads are excellent devices for early learning and students with disabilities. Teachers need training in the use of the devices and this is partly being met by their professional development training. [See powerpoint presentation](#) given by Mr Kola (pdf file)

1. Election 2016 lobbying plan and education priorities

The meeting reviewed the education priorities and the consultation/implementation plan that would include both ACT and federal election candidates. Two further priorities were added to the list, which were:

- Encourage schools to employ more specialist teachers and
- Implement all the recommendations of the expert panel review into special needs students.

2. P&C associations' satisfaction/concerns survey Dec 15

The most common concern was the lack of volunteers for P&C committees and particularly the lack of skilled volunteers to fill treasurer and other business management positions. This will be discussed with Edu at a meeting on 3 March and a number of ideas were to be considered and a strategy developed that may include employing a researcher to produce options and a plan to address the shortages. The survey would be repeated at the end of the year in early/mid Nov.

3. Items for the ETD meeting 16 Mar 16

Two additional items were added to the list in the papers, these being:

- Request for a briefing on changes to special needs student transport –
- The BCC Charnwood campus application for years 4 & 5.

We will also discuss with Edu the issues around gifted & talented students and the lack of support that seems to exist in many schools. Also, we will seek information from Edu on how they calculate school capacities.

4. First meeting with new Education Minister 26 Feb 16- a get to know you meeting.

5. New 5 year Strategic Plan

The new five year strategic plan was adopted.

6. Amendments to the P&C Council Constitution

The proposed amendments to the Council constitution as presented in the paper were approved.

7. Issues from P&C Associations

7.1 School sport participation age policy and implementation in schools.

A parent has succeeded in changing a school's sport policy in relation to student age restrictions on attendance and participation in the school swimming carnival. Details of this situation are available from the Council office if requested.

7.2 Maximum class sizes in the ACT – ETD policy

Concerns over class sizes and the Edu policy on student to teacher ratios, resulted in apparent receiving advice from the Minister's office as follows: The ACT is moving towards a change in contemporary teaching methods, which will see combined team teaching and intensive small group arrangements. Edu has moved to using the teacher to student ratio method instead of the class size measure, which they believe provides a more consistent measure of teaching resourcing in schools. School autonomy again means that some schools may have much larger classes than others or share teachers among more students. Classroom crowding is another issue which needs to be watched. However, comparisons with other jurisdictions show the ACT has the lowest average class sizes in Australia.

7.3 School traffic issues at Harrison School

The ongoing issue of school traffic & student safety at Harrison School was raised. The P&C fear it is only a matter of time before there is a tragedy. They believe that the only workable solution is to have school crossing supervisors to control traffic and student behavior during drop off and pick times. The school traffic pilot program is still running and we will receive a briefing on its results shortly. AB suggested the P&C consider the walking school bus model which has the additional advantage of involving many parents with a topic they feel passionately about. We will raise Harrison's concerns directly with Edu and invite the Harrison delegate to the briefing.

8. NEXT MEETING - The next General meeting is a Hot Topics meeting to be at 7pm on 22 Mar 16 at CTL Stirling. The guest speaker for this evening will talk about fund raising for P&Cs.