

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 25 Feb 20 (attended by 18)

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.

Notices: Schools Clean Up Day 28 Feb 20 and Clean Up Australia Day 1 Mar 20

Mr Trevor Cobbold, National Convenor of Save our Schools gave a presentation on the sources of school funding, the breakup of funding from government sources and the comparison with funding provided to the nongovernment schools. He noted that claims funding to public schools was increasing were misleading because they were not correctly adjusted for increases in inflation/CPI and rising costs of teachers' salaries and other direct and indirect costs to schools. Once correctly adjusted it was clear that public school funding was behind that provided to the nongovernment sector, largely due to the special deals for church and independent schools made outside of the national funding agreements. [The presentation is available here.](#)

1. Items for the meeting with EDU Senior Executive Team on 20 Mar 20

It was noted that at this meeting we were concentrating on the lack of recognition and acknowledgement of P&Cs by EDU and how they can help us to recruit more parent volunteers. It was suggested that those schools with good parent focussed Principals tended to have more successful P&Cs and that we should consider ways to encourage Principals to be more supportive of their P&Cs where such support was lacking. This might include KPIs for parent engagement/involvement in Principal's employment contracts. EDU might also consider a policy on Principal's and their relationships to their P&Cs covering such things as what they can and cannot expect of their P&C. We might also consider an award for Best Principals.

2. Election 20-20 public education priorities and lobbying plan

The short list of public education priorities is:

Modern Infrastructure including security, safety, maintenance, parking, air conditioning.

Modern Libraries including teacher librarians, specialist teachers eg music PE.

Better Student Supports including violence & bullying, students with disabilities & learning needs, gifted & talented students, wellbeing & mental health.

Sustainability & Composite classes including a years' leaning in a year, differentiated education made reality.

Increased funding above CPI/cost rises which is necessary to the above.

3. Council's proposals to address issues raised in the Membership Survey

There had been 47 P&C responses to the membership survey conducted in Nov/Dec last year and while the overall comments were generally favourable about Council's performance, there were some good suggestions that they are considering. These include increased visits to P&Cs by our SCIP (Schools & Communities in Partnership) team, more hands on/practical topics for our General Meetings speakers or workshops, specific training for P&C officers eg bookkeeping for treasurers and a number of other ideas. These would be developed by the staff and Executive.

4. Proposed project partnering ACT P&Cs with NSW P&Cs in drought areas

This involves ACT P&Cs adopting a NSW drought area school, possibly raising some funds for them to assist students in greatest need and working with their P&C to provide respite for selected students by billeting them with a school family for a week or two. Reciprocal visits to the NSW school may also be arranged. An application for a federal grant has been submitted by the Council office and support for the project requested from the NSW Federation of P&Cs. Members at the meeting welcomed the project.

5. What topics do P&Cs want our General Meetings to cover in the future?

The following were offered by the meeting:

- i. Events management eg for school fetes/fairs
- ii. Food safety for volunteers and staff

- iii. Employment of staff – regulations, secure local jobs code etc
- iv. Conflict management
- v. Grant application writing
- vi. Success fund raising activities
- vii. School Banking and the P&C
- viii. What school psychologists, counsellors and youth welfare officers do?
- ix. P&C websites and social media management.

6. Complaints about the Office Max student stationery packs.

Problems reported by Torrens PS included late delivery, incomplete delivery, lack of communication, poor quality of items and unhelpful/rude staff. These comments were supported by other P&Cs who deal with Office Max. It was noted that there are two other contracted suppliers schools can use being COS and Winc. P&Cs that manage the book packs themselves have better results than schools using the designated contractors. We will again raise the issue of Office Max with EDU.

7. Political authorisation statements required on P&C websites Face Book pages etc.

We had received a letter from the ACT Electoral Commissioner advising that we must include an authorisation notice on any political comment or articles that we publish or post online via website of Face Book. This would also apply to any P&Cs that have websites and /or Face Book pages where comment is made about the performance of the ACT Government or MLAs. Our statements will be “authorised by TL Sanders for the ACT Council of P&C Associations”.

8. NEXT MEETING – Next Hot Topics General Meeting will be Tuesday 24Mar 20 at Stirling.