Happy New Year

On behalf of the P&C Executive I would like to welcome all new and returning families to the Bush School. It was fantastic to see so many new parents at the Tea & Tissues on Tuesday.

Over the holidays the school installed some new interactive projectors, ten of which were funded by the P&C. The increasing use of technology in the classroom is changing the way our children are educated and more than ever “Education is not the learning of facts, but the training of the mind to think” (Albert Einstein).

P&C Executive

It is our intention to hold the P&C AGM on Wednesday 2nd March.

At this meeting all positions held by the P&C Executive will be open for nomination and election. If you are interested and would like to discuss any of the roles please feel free to send me an email to the address below. I will not be standing for re-election for 2016.

I look forward to seeing you at our meeting this week on Wednesday evening.

Nicholas Fiennes
wpspandc@gmail.com

Diary Dates

P&C General meeting – Wednesday 2nd March at 7.00pm in the staffroom
Wahroonga Public School P&C Association
General Meeting Agenda

Date: Wednesday 3rd February 2016
Time: 7pm
Venue: Staffroom

Please ensure you have signed the attendance register and paid 50c annual membership fee if you intend to vote at the 2016 AGM.

1. Welcome

2. Apologies

3. Previous minutes – General Meeting held 2 December 2015

4. Principal’s Report – Tom Moth

5. Treasurer’s Report – Derek Lightfoot, including audit update. Impacts whether we can hold AGM in March 2016

6. Band Report – Anne Seage

7. Events and Fundraising

8. Correspondence

9. General Business

10. Any other matters

Next meeting: Wednesday 2 March 2016
Wahroonga Public School Parents and Citizens’ Association

General Meeting

7pm, Wednesday 2nd December 2015 in the P&C Bandroom

1. Welcome

Nick Fiennes opened the meeting at 7.04pm, thanking Band Coordinator Anne Seage for letting us use the Bandroom.

Present: Nick Fiennes (President), Tom Moth (Principal), Derek Lightfoot (Treasurer), Ghretta Smith (Vice-President), Tanya Sandoe (Co-Secretary), Tracey Haynes (Co-Secretary), Anne Seage (Band Coordinator), Hilary Hutchinson (Extension Teacher), Laurence Hibbert, Vanessa Hodgkinson, Karen Campbell (paid), Karen Welch, Jo Wilbrandt, Emma Ashington, Alison Underwood, Hamish Greig, Kate Gardner (paid)

2. Apologies

– Kerri Cooley, Ingrid van Loon

3. Previous minutes

Minutes from last meeting on 11 November 2015 received as a true and accurate reflection. Proposed NF, seconded LH.

4. Treasurers Report:

DL advised that the 2013/14 accounts have been forwarded to the auditors. Hopefully the 2014/15 accounts will also be finalised shortly and sent through so the auditors can do all accounts at the one time.

5. Principal’s Report

Refer to his written report, attached (APPENDIX A).

In addition:

TM asked everyone to please write down a statement that you believe would make a good ‘customer service charter’ to have at the front office. TM wants to ensure parents are always being well informed. TM emphasised that he is ‘not a closed book’ and will always be open to suggestions

A new staff member may need to be appointed and if so, a panel will need to be formed to appoint the teacher.

Next year lunchtime clubs will be considered and may include activities such as: Remote control Club, IT Club, Visual Art Club. This will provide opportunities to all children who have an interest in certain areas. It will also allow new friends to be made and across the different years.
TM provided spending list. He would greatly appreciate the P&C to decide if they would like to fund anything from the list. TM’s 2 top priorities would be for:

- Observation room: whereby good teaching practice/performances can be reviewed and enhanced. It was suggested that perhaps video cameras could be purchased instead yet still achieve the same result for less money.
- Books: TM stated that he would like to see many more books available in the library.

P&C to decide on this and other spending requests at the next P&C meeting. TM added that no. 9 Internal Phone System and no. 10 Signage will be done, it was just if the P&C wanted to put their name to these items also.

A discussion was had about spending monies raised by the P&C. It was agreed by all that it is best to spend the money instead of sitting in the bank. Parents raise the money therefore want to see it be used for their children. KB suggested that the money be spread over different areas. TM will provide a consolidated list of spending areas at next P&C meeting. P&C will then decide what to spend the available money on.

LH asked what the voluntary school contribution would be for 2016. TM has to liaise with Alison, his boss for the amount. It was agreed that parents need to be informed what the money will actually be used for. Hopefully this will encourage all parents to pay their contribution. TM said he will be very specific in the letter that is issued to parents.

KB mentioned that sport equipment was not noted on the list provided by TM. Her suggestion was perhaps we can ask people to pay for certain items and then they can have their name on it. For example a new basketball hoop and a plaque can be put on it from the volunteering family. NF advised that this has been tried previously over many years and unfortunately parents like to do this for private secondary schools but with no luck for our public primary school.

6. Band Report
AS spoke about band fees which are showing nearly up to date with the exception of one family which the Band Committee has agreed to waive the fees.
TM commented that the Band Program is a great advocacy for our school and public education in general.

AS advised that at the last band meeting there were very few attendees whereby historically there have always been approx 14-15. AS is worried that the negative comments about outstanding debts are going through the school and this is being badly reflected on the band and volunteers. It was suggested that an email be directly sent to parents with a list of jobs that require filling and parents can volunteer for one particular job.

Please also refer to AS’s written report, attached (**APPENDIX B**).

7. Events and Fundraising
KW advised that the Social Committee had met and come up with numerous ideas. TM is happy to drive these ideas with teachers to try to keep parental involvement to a minimum. Example of ideas:

- **Golf Day:** Perhaps we can get sponsors to help with this
- **Tea & Tissues:** Very important to get the new kindergarten parents involved. It was agreed to make more of this function with suggestions such as better signage for directions, nicely set up tables to be put under the COALA to make it more inviting. KW has drafted a letter to be sent out. NF said to include an email address so a reminder can be send closer to the date.
- **Walkathon:** These have been held previously and are very easy to organise and raise money.
- **List of Events for the Year:** This will be provided so parents can plan for events. A calendar issued to parents would be very useful.
- **Events App:** TM advised a new app will be available next year which will feature ‘Events’ on it.

HG asked if teachers at the beginning of the year could encourage parents to participate and get more involved with the school. TM will make a video to be played when classes get asked for class co-ordinators. Video will show how important the role is.

Another suggestion was a ‘Just One Thing’ notice to be sent to parents. This is being done at St Ives High School so perhaps could be useful for our school. Copy of flyer to be obtained to allow review.

KB has made changes to the survey and will forward to NF for final review.

**8. Correspondence**

NF read an email received from LH & JH. It related to outstanding debts. NF advised again that not all debts related to band, attempts of recovery had been exhausted, new bookkeeper has meant that going forward all accounts are in order. NF did agree that ‘due process’ needs to be consistence. TM added that the past cannot be changed and we need to move forward and looking at the accounts for 2015, shows that lessons have been learnt and problem has been rectified.

**9. General Business**

**Enrichment Teacher:** NF proposed the P&C contribute $20,000 for employment of enrichment and extension teacher in mainstream classrooms for 2016. This to be reviewed at the end of 2016.

Proposed: NF  Seconded: TS  Passed unopposed.
Visual Arts Program: AU discussed her concern about art enrichment no longer being available. AU felt there is nothing extra available for children who love art. TM advised that all teachers have to teach the curriculum which includes art and the art standard at our school is very high therefore no extra resources/time is required. HH uses her experience to direct the teachers on what to do and advised all children had enjoyed coming to the enrichment room for art. TM asked AU to please approach him at the end of term 3 next year. This would enable enough time to see if the kids/teachers like the new changes that have been made. It is also hopeful that a lunch time Art Club will start up in the new year.

Secretary Roles for 2016: Karen Campbell and Kate Gardiner very kindly volunteered to take over the secretary roles from Tanya Sandoe and Tracey Haynes for 2016.

Livestreaming of Meetings: A parent enquired if this could be possible for P&C Meetings. It was agreed that this would not be a good idea. If people could not make the effort to attend, would they actually find the time to watch. Also if everyone stayed at home to watch, would anyone bother to attend the meetings.

End of Year Lunch for the Teachers: TS was organising this for 17th December and asked for volunteers to please prepare something for lunch and have it delivered to the staffroom before 11.45am.

Tennis Courts: Lindy from Absolute Tennis has advised that the tennis courts are not in a good condition when she arrives to do her lessons. Absolute Tennis pay to use the courts and therefore asks that the courts be blower vacced and rubbish removed before each lesson. TM will look into this.

Meeting closed 9pm.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING:
Wednesday 3rd February 2016
CUSTOMER SERVICE CHARTER: I am working with the front office staff and teachers to develop a customer service charter. This will be a simple set of principles that underpin the way we interact with our community. Could everybody please complete one post-it-note with a statement about something they believe would make for positive customer service? E.g. my query will be answered in a timely manner.

STAFFING UPDATE: At the end of 2016 we will farewell a number of staff members and I would like to publicly acknowledge their fine efforts in supporting students reach their learning potentials. Mrs Susan Kindred enters retirement at the end of this week. Miss Joanna Mayne was a student of The Bush School herself and has been teaching 2DJ for the majority of the year, but in 2016 will take on a permanent classroom teaching role at Cammeray Public School. Miss Margot Dempster has provided a lengthy contribution to our school, as a skilful and knowledgeable classroom teacher for a number of years. She will continue her career closer to home. Mrs Julie Carr is taking a very well-earned break from classroom teaching in 2016, but we hope to see her return in 2017 and beyond as she is widely regarded as a highly engaging and inspirational educator. Mr Michael McGregor and Mrs Judy Buckle have shared a teaching role this year and will no doubt again be familiar faces around the school in 2016, but will not be allocated to a class. Today another staff member received notice that she was successful in gaining promotion to the position of Assistant Principal in another school. I cannot announce who due to an appeals period, but this will also mean another new member of staff in 2016.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING: 12 staff members have started an intensive course in Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorder. This course is the equivalent of 20 hours PD. This will help participants effectively teach Autistic students and others requiring learning adjustments. On school development days (December 17 & 18) staff members will participate in anaphylaxis and CPR training which are annual requirements.

SMART DEVICE APP COMING: The old Skool Bag app should no longer be used after this year. In 2016, SchoolStream will be the app of choice for WPS. It will be updated regularly and used to send push-notifications to users’ phones. The functions are many and varied.

SPENDING PRIORITIES: Thank you for the opportunity to present a list of ways the P&C might choose to financially support the school over the next 3-5 years.
SOCIAL COMMITTEE: I was pleased to meet last week with a small group of parent volunteers whose mission it is to engage the community further with a range of events and fundraisers. Thank you to Karen, Vanessa, Emma and Hamish.

SCHOOL PLAN: The school’s plan will continue to focus on three strategic directions in 2016 ➔ deep student ownership and engagement in learning; excellence in delivering quality teaching; strong resilient and happy students.

ENRICHMENT & ART: Thank you for the opportunity to discuss alterations to the enrichment program in 2016. Feedback that I have received has generally been positive and teachers seem happier with the arrangement. The loss of enrichment art has been raised as a concern and I am happy to field suggestions as to how this can be addressed. My points for you to consider are: teachers are qualified and expected to teach the range of Key Learning Areas of which art is one area. Teachers have the skill and expertise to deliver art in classrooms. Teachers are resourced to deliver art in classrooms with abundant supplies at school level – I have not declined any staff member’s order for art supplies. Where comparisons have been made about the RFF program delivering music education and a preference for this to be art – the general consensus amongst teachers is that they, as general classroom practitioners, feel more comfortable teaching visual arts than teaching music. Music is more of a ‘niche’ area and we are fortunate to have two highly skilled leaders of music education at our school. At this stage I have planned on running a visual arts lunch time club during 2016 for students who demonstrate higher level interest and who wish to spend time creating a range of paintings, sculptures, etc.
BAND TOUR
Last week Concert Band undertook a 3-day tour to the Southern Highlands. They performed at six schools, ranging from a large school of over 600 children, to a small country school of only 25 children. I have had some delightful emails from the schools thanking our children for their wonderful performances. Five schools have small band programs and are sure our band will have inspired some new interest in learning an instrument and being a part of their school band.

Our children were beautifully behaved, worked really hard without any complaint and enjoyed their bush camp at Fitzroy Falls Conference Centre in the evenings. It was a pleasure taking them away.

A huge thank you to Mrs Gilchrist and Mr Edwards who so kindly gave up their time to accompany us and to Mark Barnsley for rearranging his hectic schedule to be available.

I would also like to thank Belinda Zorian and the school office staff for all their assistance.

END-OF-YEAR CONCERT
The Christmas Concert was a great success with all our bands and recorder ensemble performing. We had a great audience. A huge thank you to Hamish Greig, Rebecca Saunders, Tamsin Avtarovski and the wonderful group of parents who assisted with the sausage sizzle, cake stall and with decorating the hall.

BAND COMMITTEE MEETING – POSITIONS FOR 2016.
This year we had 4 families turn up for the band committee’s “AGM” as opposed to previous years where we have had many more. Despite pleas at the Christmas Concert on Monday night and a list of small jobs to be filled, we had no volunteers. The Band Program cannot function without some parent help. The two most worrying positions to fill are chairman and no festival convenor.

I am extremely concerned that the ongoing negative discussion around reported “debts” of the band program is impacting on parents being willing to become involved. I stress once again that the “debts” are due to accounting procedures. There are virtually NO OUTSTANDING FEES.

ASSEMBLIES and PERFORMANCES
Intermediate Band is looking forward to performing at the K-2 Celebration Day and Concert Band and the Saxophone Ensemble will perform at the 3-6 Presentation Day.

Anne Seage