Parent Forum Meeting
Monday 29th July 2013

Meeting opened
Claire Price opened meeting at 7:05pm.

Apologies
Sarah Wilkinson

Present

In attendance
Brian Laybutt, Philomena Zambelli

Welcome & Prayer
School Prayer

Minutes of Previous Meeting
Accepted by Melissa Toms, seconded by Gillian Taylor

Treasurer’s Report – presented by Kathryn Leslight
Treasurer’s Report table by Kathryn Leslight:

- Estimated to 30 June 2013 as awaiting bank statements to 26 April 2013. Bush dance funds need to be added to these figures. The closing bank balance shows $27,381.10.
- Skillathon funds raised $8,592.39 which is the best year to date with approximately $1,000.00 above last year’s.
- Mother’s Day is not undertaken as a fundraiser however profit of $527.85 was made from this year’s sales.

Report accepted by Melissa Toms, seconded by Gillian Taylor

Motion tabled by Brian Laybutt to move funds from ANZ account to Diocesan Investment Fund. The interest rate is 4.6% and significantly higher than ANZ. 24 hours is required to withdraw funds. Funds will need to be deposited into ANZ and electronically transferred to the Investment Fund. The ANZ account will be retained with a minimum balance of $3,000.00. The school generally pays for items upfront and is reimbursed.

Motion seconded by Claire Price and accepted by all present.

Secretary’s Report
Incoming correspondence:
- Mr Daly, Principal, Mount Saint Patrick College – 27 May 2013
Outgoing correspondence:
- Mr Daly, Principal, Mount Saint Patrick College – 14 May 2013
- Mr Daly, Principal, Mount Saint Patrick College – 3 June 2013

Report accepted by Kathryn Leslight, seconded by Karen Anderson

Parent Assembly Report
- Seasons for Growth Programme - Presented by Paul Edgar

*Seasons for Growth* is a small group loss and grief education program. The Young People’s Program aims to strengthen the social and emotional wellbeing of children and young people (aged 6 -18) who are dealing with significant loss or change including the death of a loved one, parental divorce or separation, the experience and aftermath of natural disaster and moving house or school as well as many other life changes and losses.

Small groups of 4-7 children work with a trained adult Companion (facilitator) who supports the children to have a say and learn new ways to think about and respond to the changes and losses in their lives. Children learn that they are not alone in dealing with the effects of change, loss and grief, and build their understanding and communication, decision making and problem solving skills as part of a supportive peer group.

The *Seasons for Growth* Young People’s Program is a structured eight week program filled with peer-to-peer learning opportunities - time to talk and listen as well as take part in activities including drawing, music, art, journaling, role plays and stories. A celebration session and two follow up ‘reconnector’ sessions complete the program. Each session is approximately 45 minutes and explores an age appropriate concept, for example “I am Special” and “Feelings”. The story of the seasons is used to explain the cycles of life, including change and loss, and provides a valuable metaphor for children to explore and understand their own story.

The *Seasons for Growth* Young People's Program has three primary school levels, each with its own age-specific journal;
- Level 1: 6-8 year olds
- Level 2: 9-10 year olds
- Level 3: 11-12 year olds

Sessions are negotiated to fit in with learning. Children can attend each year however they can participate the following year. There is generally no cost to families - this is dependent on the school however Mt St Patrick Primary covers the cost of the journal. This is a great program for boys particularly as boys may act out in inappropriate ways rather than talk. What is shared in the group stays in the group - confidentiality is a high priority.

Invitations to participate are placed in the newsletter and families can take up the invitation by contacting Philomena Zambelli or their child’s teacher.

*Seasons for Growth* for Parents currently being piloted which looks at the programme from the eyes of their children. This is a two-night course for approx. 2 hours per session, and can be arranged for Mt St Patrick Primary parents.

For more information, visit [www.goodgrief.org.au](http://www.goodgrief.org.au)
Mission & Values Facilitator’s Report – presented by Brian Laybutt

Mrs Zambelli is the school’s Mission and Values Facilitator and she facilitates or participates in the:

- Environment committee – which was recently involved in World Heritage Day, Stage 2 went to Tree Planting day (the school will continue this to promote activities that give to the community).
- Bullying program
- Minnie Vinnies

Principal’s Report – presented by Brian Laybutt

Term 2

May
- Polding Winter Sports Trials
- Staff Development Day
- School Photos
- Mother’s Day Stall
- Zone X- Country
- Parent Forum
- NAPLAN
- Enrichment Music Program
- Boys in Education – Parent Evening (very successful)
- Enrichment Art Program
- SDD – Proclaim

June
- 1st Eucharist
- RE test – Yr 6
- Bush Dance (Fri 14th June and it didn’t rain! A very enjoyable and successful evening)
- ICAS writing/Spelling
- School Athletics Carnival
- Murwillumbah Performing Arts Festival

Term 3
- SDD Day – Australian curriculum
- Rugby League gala day
- Zone Athletics carnival
- Enrichment Program – Science and Music
- National Tree Day
- World Maths Day
- Byron Bay Writers’ Festival – Middle School students
- ICAS Maths
- Anxiety – Parent workshop (10am, Wednesday 31 July)
- Parent Confirmation evening
- Tweed Public Speaking
- Banana Festival
- Confirmation
- Preschool visits
Monster Raffle
Father’s Day stall
Mt St Pats Has Got Talent
Middle School excursion – Brisbane/Sunshine Coast
SDD – Friday 21st September

Principal’s Reflection – presented by Brian Laybutt
- School garden beds – 12m³ dirt was piped in over the holidays and planting should commence next week.
- School environment committee – once a term 4 children from Years 5 and 6, along with students from Mt Joseph, go to Murwillumbah High School and talk about environmental issues. At tomorrow’s meeting we are planting trees at Byangum and making a scarecrow to enter in the competition to be judged at the Farmer’s Market by the ‘Guru’. The major prize is a workshop with a fabulous gardening person worth almost $400.00. A recent $1,000.00 grant from TSC will be used to modify water usage.
- Bush Dance – very successful night.
- School Athletics Carnival – combined all the primary school and this event proved very positive.
- Words Their Way program has been implemented across the school.
- Bullying program promotes the power of the third person with a three-tiered approach and has been facilitated by Philomena Zambelli.
- Assessments will be going home weekly to give parents more detail about their child’s learning.

Important School Dates – presented by Brian Laybutt
- Monster Raffle Fundraiser – Term 3 (MS S)
- Mt St Pats Has Talent – Friday 6th September (Year 1D)
- Father’s Day Stall – Thursday 29th August (Stage 2D)
- Grandparents Day – Friday 1st November (MS M/Year 1T)
- World Teachers Day – Friday 25th October (Year 1D)
- Murwillumbah Show: School display set up stage– Thursday 31st October (KM)
- Disco – Term 4 (2N/2P)
- Term 3 Parent Function - TBA

General Business

Music Program – presented by Brian Laybutt
In a recent newsletter, a variety of instrument lessons were offered to families for their children. With the departure of the music teacher, there has been no one to manage the band. We now have a qualified concert music instructor (concert music does not have stringed instruments).

Brian Laybut proposed that the school purchase instruments and parents pay for the tuition ($15.00 per lesson) where the child has the use of the instrument for a minimum of 2 terms and a 30 minute lesson in a group of 3 children per week, and also a 1 hour lesson per week for the entire band. Proposed instruments to purchase would include keyboards, trumpets, clarinets, saxophones and flutes. The school would be looking to spend approximately $6,000.00, with an ongoing cost to service these instruments each year. These instruments will be offered to Year 4 as the target group (then offered to Year 5, then to Year 6 and then back to Year 3).
Q. Is there a music room dedicated?
A. Yes, the room next to the library. Music lessons are conducted once a fortnight in this room. Children access this room during their lunch break.

Q. Have you considered class-based lessons where all children in the class learn that given instrument?
A. Yes and provision of these lessons is very much dependent on the teacher and if they feel comfortable teaching the instrument.

Q. The cost of the instrument can be included in school fees.

Q. My child is in Kindy - will she have a chance to have a play or look at the instruments?
A. Yes, we want to generate interest and expose children to instruments.

Motion to spend funds on the purchase of instrument was tabled by Brian Laybutt. Motion seconded by Claire Price, and accepted by all present.

Play Equipment – presented by Brian Laybutt
Brian Laybutt proposed to purchase additional playground equipment to accommodate the increase in classes in kindergarten, Year 1 and Year 2. Brian Laybutt presented some options from a play equipment provider and noted that the cost would be around $10,000.00 for the equipment alone, with additional costs for installation.

Jan Cronly noted that the current research shows that natural play spaces engage children, nurture social interactions, develop gross motor skills, and the elements of risk taking in the play space enhance negotiation and problem solving skills. Jan had liaised with Ian Bentley from Tweed Shire Council in the development and installation of Junction Park, Tumbulgum, and is aware of the safety requirements regarding fall zones and materials.
Action: Jan Cronly to provide research on natural playspaces and make recommendations on possible inclusions for discussion.

Monster Raffle – presented by Brian Laybutt
- Looking at motorbike or quad bike as a prize, and iPads. Also a Salt voucher has been donated as a prize.
- We need to get prizes organised fairly quickly as tickets get printed and distributed around the Banana Festival (i.e. end of August).
Action: Parents to consider options for donated prizes through contacts etc.

Uniform Changes – presented by Brian Laybutt
Kathryn Leslight proposes that runners be worn at lunchtime during play times such as recess and lunch. At the previous meeting, black sports/school shoes were provided as an option. The question was asked if this could be extended to girls too, and Brian Laybutt noted that it could be. A concern was raised that children could attend school with volleys etc. Further discussion identified the need to list what footwear options were acceptable to the school bearing in mind cost and availability for families.

Q. Can we ask the local shoe shops to stock the shoes we opt as acceptable?
A. Yes

At the previous meeting, the calottes supplied for girls can be phased out and replaced with shorts. Brian Laybutt noted that the uniform shop has an excess of the calottes and that these will either
need to be purchased by the school, or the shorts will need to be phased in as stock in calottes reduces.

Q. What do the shorts look like?
A. We have not designed these yet. They are likely to look like the college shorts. Parents will be involved in the designing of these.

Action: Brian Laybutt to price shoes and place these in the newsletter.

Parking and Traffic Update – presented by Brian Laybutt
The school engaged an impartial third party to review the school’s proposal and the subsequent response from the College. The Road and Safety Officer from the Diocese was invited to review the proposal and has since visited the school and observed the afternoon pick-up routine, has obtained statistics from the school regarding delivery and collection, and has met with Tweed Shire Council. The school is awaiting the Officer’s report/proposal.
Action: Brian Laybutt will include the Officer’s report/proposal in the newsletter upon receipt.

Banana Festival – presented by Brian Laybutt
Theme is “Once Upon a Time…” Brian Laybutt proposed that our school ‘float’ be an adult sitting in a chair reading a big book with all the children listening to the story and walking behind the chair. Two classes were asked what their favourite fairy tale was and they responded with ‘Shrek’ and ‘Wizard of Oz’.
Action: Children are to be offered the option of how or who they would like to be dressed as and for them to let their teacher know what they are coming as.

Typing for Students – presented by Brian Laybutt
The school’s Technology teacher has introduced ‘Typing For Students’ which is actually an online typing tutor (www.typingweb.com). It is very simple – basically a child logs on and follows the steps. This is to run concurrently with hand writing lessons from Year 1 onwards, and will become part of the children’s homework and part of their assessment (tells us speed and accuracy rate). Middle school students have started and this will filter right through the school.

Term 3 Parent Social Function – presented by Brian Laybutt
At the beginning of the year, it was agreed that we need to have a Term 3 Parent Social Function. It is up to the parents to decide whether to pursue this - when and where? Brian proposed “A Day at the Races” and activities can be organised for the kids such as a jumping castle – children can be optional.

Action: Kathryn Leslight, Gillian Taylor, Nikki Clark and Karen Anderson to review. Friday 13th December is available as a twilight racing day.

Parent Forum organisation – presented by Brian Laybutt
Brian Laybutt expressed that he feels he sits and talks to parents. Is there a better way of conducting these meetings? This is to ensure that parents feel that they are getting a say. The general consensus was that the meetings work well in this manner given Brian Laybutt has the information prepared and “knows everything.”
Additional Questions
Q. Maths tutoring – is it possible to organise a tutor that children pay for? The cost can be divided by all the children participating.
A. This has been raised before and is an issue because of public liability. OOSH (after school care) is hired by the school and they have the public liability insurance to operate on the school grounds.

Q. Can one of the teachers offer tutoring after school?
A. It is a rule that staff cannot tutor internally. They can only tutor externally.

Action: Brian Laybutt to look in to this and see if this is actually viable.

Meeting closed
Claire Price closed the meeting at 8:55pm