

Minutes
Mater Dei Parents & Friends Association 7.03.11

Date / Time:	Monday 7 March 2011 – 7pm to 9 pm
Attendees:	As per Attendance Book
Apologies	Diane Beers, Tanya Leadbeatter
Minutes:	Trish Hedges

<i>Agenda Item</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Action Required</i>	<i>Responsibility of</i>
Discussion regarding the role/responsibilities of elected office bearers.	Garry Saunders, 2010 P&F President, explained the roles of the President, Treasurer and Secretary	Nil	
Nomination and election of office bearers for 2011	The meeting was handed over to Pincipal/CEO Tony Fitzgerald who called for nominations for 2011. Garry Saunders was nominated for President by Trish Hedges and this was seconded by Tracey Jones. There were no other nominations and Garry accepted the position. Trish Hedges was nominated for Secretary by Jennifer Haigh and this was seconded by Anne Adam. There were no other nominations and Trish accepted the position. Diane Beers was nominated by Gary Saunders (in her absence) for Treasurer. This was seconded by Anne Adam. The meeting was advised that Diane has advised she is willing to be Treasurer in 2011. There were no other nominations.	Nil	
President's Report	Gary advised that he has enjoyed undertaking the role of President and looks forward to 2011. Gary spoke about the friendships he has formed by being part of the P&F and how valuable these have been for his family. Gary said that he would like to see the P&F expand on its' activities and he would like to see if Family Days and other activities can be scheduled for 2011.		
Family Day	There was discussion regarding Family Days and suitable venues. It was decided that a Family Day (picnic) will be held on Sunday the 3 rd of April. Garry will draft an invitation to be included in the school newsletter as well as liaising with Sister Mary and Anne Lauder re the availability of Wivenhoe gardens on this day. Alternate venues suggested included: Curry Reserve at Elderslie The Australian Botanical Gardens – Mt Annan	Need to check with Sister Mary availability of Wivenhoe gardens and draft invitation for newsletter	Garry Saunders

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Discussion regarding the focus of P&F meetings	Some attendees spoke about their wish that P&F meetings can cover more issues than just the Annual Fair, and that if this is able to occur then more families may attend. There was discussion about parents feeling isolated from the school due to children attending via taxi and there not be the opportunities to “chat at the school gate” afforded at other schools. Jennifer Haigh suggested that Family Days may assist children in forming friendships and build on our children’s social skills. There were suggestions that guest speakers are invited to P&F meetings on issues relevant to the families and students, that the school newsletter contain in invitation to families to contribute agenda items to be discussed at P&F meetings and that minutes be posted on the school web-site under a link to the P&F. There was also a suggestion that an evening school disco be arranged for students and their siblings – the disco to include supper.	Note to be included in school newsletter the week before P&F Meetings seeking agenda items Disco to be added to agenda of next meeting	Trish Hedges to liaise with school to have this included Trish Hedges
Discussion regarding ways to encourage more parents & carers to attend P&F Meetings	The following were some of the suggestions made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The President to send a letter of introduction to new families • Have a P&F meeting early in the year just for new families • Members of the P&F Committee to attend school functions and actively promote the P&F • A parent from each class to take a lead role in talking to the other student’s parents about the P&F and encourage them to attend • Feature members of the P&F in school newsletters speaking about the P&F, including their photo, so that other parents are aware of who is on the P&F and may be able to make a personal connection. 		
Brief overview of the Fair Committee	There was some discussion that parents are reluctant to attend P&F Meetings due to a concern that they may be given a task in relation to the Fair. It was discussed that in 2010 specific Fair Committee meetings were held outside of P&F meetings so that the details of the Fair could be discussed at length and not take up the entire time of the P&F meetings. There was general agreement that this would continue in 2011. Tony raised the option of having a number of sub-	Issues to be discussed at Annual Country Fair Committee Meeting	Date still to be set. Trish to liaise with Mater Dei re date and have an invite included in the school newsletter.

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	committees to be responsible for various aspects of the Fair (e.g.: purchasing, stalls, food etc) and that there be five or so meetings held where the chairperson of each sub-committee attended to discuss progress rather than the members of each committee. It was agreed that a separate date will be set to convene a Fair Committee Meeting. Tony spoke about the need to grow the Fair and include more of the community in planning and running the Fair. Tony spoke about the enormous amount of work that goes into the Fair and that it does not appear fair to undertake such work without an increase in financial profit. There was discussion regarding the philosophy about the Fair being to engage with the community and inform the community about the work undertaken at Mater Dei. There was also discussion about: outside stall holders and whether it would be better for Mater Dei to run all of the stalls rather than receive a small donation from outside stall holders; the history behind outside stall holders being invited; the difficulties in obtaining more rides for the Fair and inviting service clubs such as Apex and Rotary to be involved in the Fair. It was agreed that these were matters to be discussed by the Fair Committee when it is convened and meets. Tony advised that Debbie Gates may be able to have an increased role in the Fair.		
Canteen for Term 2	Anne Adam gave a brief overview of the Canteen and the benefits parents can gain from being involved (eg: making new friendships, sharing information about services). It is hoped that the Canteen will be operating again in Term 2. Generally parents arrive at about 9.30 am and finish at 1.30 pm. The co-ordinators for 2011 are Tanya Leadbeater and Kirstie Weatherly.		
Mother's Day Stall	Anne Adam spoke about the Mother's Day stall for this year and there was discussion regarding an appropriate day for this to occur. It was suggested that May 6 appears to be the most appropriate day however Samantha Giles, Secondary Co-ordinator, will check this.	Mater Dei to check whether 6 May is suitable for stall	Samantha Giles
Uniforms	There was discussion regarding the frustrations and difficulties some families are experiencing in obtaining uniforms in a timely manner. Pamela Templeton provided a history regarding Mater Dei and obtaining uniforms and explained that	Macarthur Uniforms to be contacted regarding ways to	Tony Fitzgerald and Samantha Giles

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	<p>there is an ongoing difficulty in this area due to the small population of the school. Mater Dei did investigate an alternative to Macarthur Uniforms however the quality was poor. The following suggestions were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A person be appointed to co-ordinate school uniform orders and that these be made in bulk • That the uniform shop attend the school twice per year at which time parents/carers can attend the school and order/purchase uniforms 	improve the current situation	
Principal's report	<p>Tony thanked parents/carers for supporting teaching staff attending professional development days. Tony acknowledged that this can pose difficulties for families however highlighted the benefits these days can provide to students in terms of program development and service delivery.</p> <p>Tony advised that the school hall is now in use and is a beautiful space which the children are enjoying. There is a plan to name the hall after Sister Carmela Ritchie sgs. Sister Carmela was the Principal of Mater from 1962 until 1974 and set the school on its' course as a school for children with disabilities. The P&F were in favour of naming the hall after Sister Carmela.</p> <p>Tony advised that building works on the school are progressing well and it is still hoped that the school will occupy the new building at the commencement of Term 2. The issue of the fire hydrant is still to be resolved. Mater Dei will now need to meet the entire cost of this.</p> <p>Tony spoke about St Benedict's College and the decision that it will no longer be built on the grounds of Mater Dei. Tony spoke about Mater Dei's hopes to still forge a relationship with St Benedict's in the future even though the schools will not be co-located.</p> <p>Tony advised that the Leadership Team are drafting a Futures Directions Document to look ahead for the next four year and they will be seeking input from parents and carers regarding priorities parents/carers see as important. Tony will provide a summary of the goals the leadership team has identified for the next P&F meeting so that parents/carers can provide feedback.</p>		

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	<p>Tony advised that the Early Intervention funding currently targeted at children with Autism has been extended to children with cerebral palsy, fragile X, sensory impairment and Down Syndrome. Pamela will provide additional information regarding this and other funding possibilities available to families (eg: Medicare assistance re dental services) at the next P&F meeting.</p> <p>Tony ended his report by thanking Pamela and Samantha for the dedication, enthusiasm and new ideas they have each brought to their new roles as well as thanking the teaching staff for their commitment in continuing to deliver quality programmes/education to our children despite not having been able to move into the new school in Term 1 as had been planned.</p>	More detailed information to be provided at next P&F meeting	Pamela Templeton
	Next Meeting – 4 April, 7 pm		