

## 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 22 Aug 2017**

*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.*

#### **• Future of Education P&C Council/associations forum 7pm Thurs 7 Sep at HBCTL Stirling**

**1. Presentation by Mark Whybrow, Director Strategic Finance, Education Directorate.** Mark provided an overview of the implementation of needs based funding in the ACT and the methods used to allocate funding to schools, both government and non-government. He noted the following:

- a. The ACT government provided 84% of the funding for government schools and Federal funding provided the other 16%, while for non-government schools it was 25% Act and 75% Federal funding.
- b. A total of 778million was expended on ACT public education which includes 87 schools and 46,557 students with an average spend per student of \$16,149.
- c. 28,851 students in 47 ACT non-government schools averaged \$9,932 per student in government funding.
- d. The Schools Resourcing Standard (SRS) produced was used to calculate the amount of funding that each school should receive based on needs, with a base amount per student plus add on amounts for specific needs.
- e. All funding including that provided by the Federal government, is channeled through the ACT Education Directorate which then allocates the funding to schools and other areas of education as it sees necessary. It follows the SRA model in allocating this funding.
- f. Schools with additional funding needs can apply to EDU for special grants and most schools appear to have retained funds each year.

#### **2. Items for the EDU Senior Executive Team meeting on 29 August**

- Natalie Howson while acknowledging the establishment of our Parent Support Group on Violence in Schools was cautious about the risks of providing certain support services.
- EDU agreed that they had some work to do to address the issues identified in the recent Auditor General's report into ACT public schooling. This included addressing the school autonomy issues, which the Directorate saw as a failing of different levels of implementing their policies. We agreed that EDU generally had well developed and researched policies which unfortunately were not always implemented fully at the school level.
- EDU was looking at a framework for reorganising schools to differentiate between those that respond well and those that don't. This would include a Schools Network Directors' charter to help them work together.
- We emphasised the need for greater promotion of the Pathways website and the EPiCC program for parents.
- EDU advised that there were 62 fulltime equivalent school psychologists with 5 new ones being engaged each year for the next 3 years. They would like to hear of any schools that felt under serviced for school psychologists. The problem in providing such services to schools was that the people employed had to have skills fit for the specific area, it was not a funding issue.
- EDU would investigate the issue of students having to stand in school excursion buses.
- EDU was fully supportive of our new volunteer survey and had circulated it to all school principals.

#### **3. Topics for the Minister meeting on 5 September 17**

- School Crossing Supervisors & Traffic Plans  
We look forward to the commencement of the crossing supervisor trial and the individual traffic management plans that are to be produced.

- **Future of Education consultation**  
The Council's own Future of Education Forum is to be held on 7 Sep. What is the Minister's assessment of the process to date and are there any areas on which we need to concentrate efforts to ensure full consultation coverage?
- **Solving equity problems in preschool enrolments**  
Council has been considering ways to assist parents without their own transport and with access issues (language difficulties, disabilities, mobility, no IT skills or facilities etc) to enrol their child in their local area preschools. Options to assist these parents are now being developed by the Council and will be circulated for consultation to stakeholders before finalization and presentation to the Minister and EDU.
- **Independent Appeals Authority**  
The Parents' Support Group on Violence in Schools has recommended the establishment of an independent authority to hear appeals by parents in dispute with schools and/or the EDU. The Council encourages the Minister to pursue options for providing such an independent appeals authority.
- **BYOD issues, Tablets for every student – timing of advice to parents**  
We are seeking advice as to whether the government's promised tablets/BYO device is to be provided to them for the start of the next school year?

#### **4. Issues from P&C Associations**

- a. Chapman PS & Torrens PS still have traffic problems. Chapman was not included in the crossing supervisor trial.
- b. Fadden was concerned at the effect on students' performance by splitting classes due to lack of relief teachers. Having assigned split classes in the event of a teacher being absent was useful. To be raised with EDU.
- c. Giralang PS & Harrison School are suffering from the lack of volunteers. Harrison had cancelled their annual Fair this year.
- d. Narrabundah College addressed its financial issues & is pursuing activities for the college & parents.
- e. Neville Bonner PS addressed certain administrative matters left by the previous committee & now looking ahead. All P&Cs might consider registering with the ACNC because of the better service provided in following up outstanding annual reports etc. Council office is to circulate notes on the ACNC/ORS forum of 17 Aug.

#### **5. School Traffic Forum on 27 July 17.**

Significant changes to traffic and bus routes etc will follow the introduction of the Light Rail.

#### **6. Disability Education Reference Group meeting report.**

The schools for all policy seems to be absorbed into the Future of Education consultation. Concerns that some parents may not be receiving the respite support they need due to a lack of NDIS relief funds.

**NEXT MEETING** - The next General Meeting will be the Hot Topics meeting 24 Octo at Stirling.