

Minutes of Marr College Parent Council Forum Meeting



Wednesday 17th January 2018

Present – Hilary Ramage - Chair/Secretary, Timothy Wight - Vice Chair, Kate Dunn - Treasurer, Graeme Hobson - Acting Head Teacher & Katherine Woodhouse - Minute Secretary

Council Members – Ady Allan, Alan Blackwood, Angela Malcolm, Clair Milne, Karen Dunlop, Katie Atkinson & Mark Fitzpatrick

Forum Members – Shona Elder

Apologies – Duncan Beckwith, Lisa Rossi, Kaye Matthews, Marianne Gunn, Nicki Penman & Jackie Harvey

	Action
<p>1. <u>Welcome and Apologies</u> Hilary welcomed those in attendance and apologies were noted from those unable to attend.</p>	
<p>2. <u>Approval of Minutes and Matters Arising</u> The minutes of the meeting held on 6th December 2017 were approved by Kate Dunn and seconded by Karen Dunlop and the action plan reviewed as follows:</p> <p><u>Matters Arising</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graeme reported that outdoor signage has been checked and is working correctly. • Hilary to contact Carol Pritchard to arrange meeting to discuss funding. • School show – Marianne Gunn had provided a 'wish list' for the following items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ LED lights for music stands; ○ Stage walls to be painted black; ○ Blackout coverings for fire safety; ○ Radio mikes – quote received was £6752 for 10; Tim did not think this was unreasonable. He is still pursuing the possibility of renting out radio mikes from Centrestage and Marianne is also looking into the cost of hiring. • Programme - Marianne has passed on a few show programmes to Kate who will feed back at the next meeting. • Fundraising - Marianne has made contact with Morrisons re bag packing and will report back with date. • Tim will e-mail Marianne with regard to setting up a meeting to discuss issues with auditorium. • Christmas fayre – Mark suggested better co-ordination at future events as there were too many parent helpers at the fayre with not enough to do, the students had everything covered. • Graeme spoke to Catherine Hornby, HT at Troon Primary, with regard to the communications app. She has provided him with a contact name which he will follow up on. • Respect for Learning project – a group of parents have offered to help and Laura Cleland has started the process. • Arrangements for the Careers evening are ongoing with a lot of careers and further education establishments represented. Hilary will get together with Stuart McNeill to put together details of who will be attending. 	<p>HR</p> <p>TW</p> <p>KD</p> <p>MG</p> <p>TW</p> <p>GH</p> <p>HR</p>
<p>3. <u>Captains' Report</u> The captains were unable to attend the meeting due to their prelim exams.</p>	
<p>4. <u>Proposed Budget Cuts by SAC – Lesley Duncan</u> Lesley introduced herself as one of the School Assistants at Marr and gave a presentation to the meeting on what the proposed budget cuts in Education would mean for the school.</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The directive from Education Scotland states that all children should be included in mainstream schools regardless of their disabilities. As such there are now only two special schools left in South Ayrshire, therefore a lot of pupils who require additional support. • There are various categories of additional support needs catered for at Marr. The role of the school assistant is to provide support with learning activities to all pupils but especially those with additional support needs, and the majority of time is spent supporting those pupils. • To put this into perspective at Marr Lesley provided some statistics – there are 3 stages in the staged intervention framework as part of GIRFEC (Getting it right for every child). At Marr there are currently 216 pupils on staged intervention; 5 pupils who are looked after and accommodated and 12 pupils currently receiving support from CAMHS. • SAC are proposing to cut £17m from their budget in 2018/19 and the cuts in Education account for 56% of the overall total. The public consultation on this will close on 11th February – surveys are available via the SAC website and there are two 'have your say' sessions planned on 1st February – one at Morrisons in the morning and the other at Marr in the afternoon. • There has been a reduction in school support positions from 27 in 2005 to 17, yet there is an increase in support needs. SAC proposals are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Removal of home link services; ○ Removal of school library services in 2019; ○ Reduction in school assistants over next 2 years (from 217 currently down to 113 by 2020). • Hilary read out an e-mail she had received from Catherine Owens, school librarian, which detailed all her responsibilities and the support she provides in the school, including help with reading, school website and Twitter account, research and referencing in senior phase, etc. In addition the school would lose its access to the public library stock by not having a library. • Angela felt there was a real disparity between what the Scottish Government are saying and what the local government are planning, i.e. Marr is awarded funding through the Pupil Equity Fund, which is supposed to be additional funding from the Government, however the amount awarded does not match what they are proposing to take away. Marr currently receives £42k which is not enough for one teacher's salary and this amount is not supposed to represent a replacement. • The final decisions on where the cuts will be made is down to the Councillors. Hilary suggested that parents should make their own personal objections but an official response should be made from the Parent Council on behalf of the school, emphasising its disappointment with the bias towards Education. It was decided to draft a letter voicing the objections to the Councillors and MSPs and to prepare a template letter that other parents could sign and post. It was also felt that the Parent Council should have a representative at the meetings on 1st February. Graeme advised that there will be letters about the consultation meetings coming from the school so it would be better to wait until these have been issued. Hilary asked if everyone could send her the points they felt were relevant so that she can draft a letter. She will also speak to Lindsay Campbell with regard to distributing this via the Facebook page. 	<p>HR</p>
<p>5. <u>Proposed Changes to School Week – Graeme Hobson</u> Graeme advised that he was looking for feedback and suggestions from the Parent Council with regard to the proposed changes to the school week. Following discussion, Hilary summarised parents' comments as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Happy with 10 minute registration taking the place of PSE/tutor time. 2. Suggestion for lunch to be at the same time every day – i.e. after period 4 - it is felt that the current long mornings are too much and adding 10 minutes before this would only make it worse. 3. The only impact with regard to PSE seems to be for 4th and 5th Years - with regard to meeting their requirements to have PSE/PE and RE, it would perhaps be an option to have a 'Health and Wellbeing Class'. This would enable all these subjects to be 	

<p>taught in a more flexible way and perhaps provision to be made for those children who do not attend PE classes to instead attend a Health and Wellbeing class.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Suitable communication and warning for parents and students would be required to allow for childcare needs to be met in the lower school particularly. 5. Concern over lunchtime clubs/supported study being impacted and perhaps having to move to after school - in this instance, it is of particular concern that there will be a greater impact on pupils in Dundonald who rely on the bus. 6. Agree that reducing lunchtime to 40 minutes might reduce problems in town - however, there will be more demand placed on lunchtime provision elsewhere - both in school and outwith. Canteen facilities will need to increase provision accordingly and potentially also have other local shops notified of changes (Co-op/van etc). 	
<p>6. <u>Scottish Government Consultation</u> Having read the consultation document on the new Education Bill several times, Alan had compiled both a summary document and one with suggested responses to the questions which are raised in the original document. He will e-mail both documents to Hilary for circulation to the Parent Council so that they can provide feedback. He gave an overview of the main points in the document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To establish a Head Teacher’s charter to give them more freedom to manage the school. • Establishment of 6 Regional Improvement Collaboratives in Scotland – Marr would be in the South West Collaborative, led by Douglas Hutchison. • Each Collaborative should have a detailed Regional Improvement Plan in place by January 2018. • Strengthen links between parents and school. <p>As the original document and letter from John Swinney was sent to the Chair, the Parent Council would be responsible for sending a response back by 30th January. Hilary asked parents to get back to her prior to the weekend with their feedback so that she can include pertinent points in her response.</p>	<p>AB</p> <p>ALL/HR</p>
<p>9. <u>AOCB</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The issue of the fire alarm being activated during the school day by pupils had been raised by a parent and Hilary had spoken to Graeme about this. He advised that a letter will be put in school bags today. He advised that the council is being very supportive but the difficulty is in identifying the culprits. • Rae Anderson held a meeting with a few of the parents prior to the main meeting to review the school building project and obtain parents’ views. • 	
<p>10. <u>Next Meeting</u> The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 14th February at 7.00 pm.</p>	