

# Bellingen High School P & C Association

## Minutes

Monday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023 6pm

Bellingen High School Staff common room

Gumbaynggirr Country

**Attendees** – Rachael Case (chair), Graziella Reeson, Elisa Hall, Tim Laverty (relieving Principal), Caroline Thomas, Melanie Tyas, Kathleen Hannah, Beth Edwards, Milo Bowd , Michelle Bowling, Katharine Sutherland, Sandra Ruming.

### 1. Welcome, Acknowledgment of Country (5.59 pm)

1.1 Welcome and Acknowledgment of Country (Chair) – Rachael Case.

1.2 Apologies (Chair) – Kim Childs, Raelene Carey,

We welcome new voting Members for 2023 P&C & acknowledge receipt of payment:  
None.

### 2. Previous minutes

2.1 Approval of Minutes – Move Graz 2<sup>nd</sup> Caroline

- Incorrect date on minutes sent out. Should have been 1 May 2023. Has now been changed.
- Amendment to minutes to add the suggestion from a student to have the first day back each term as a soft return? Maybe this is something we could get the students to design?

2.2 Business Arising from Previous Minutes (Chair)

- Tell What You Think BHS P & C Survey
  - 41 Responses in total.
  - Most respondents thought fundraising should be social or sporting activities.
  - A lot of people did not feel connected to the school/teachers.
  - Educational session on Learning Support. Strong support for Mental Health information.
  - Strong support to be able to attend P&C meetings via Zoom/online – could try it to see if extra engagement.
  - Perhaps more communication from the school inviting parents/carers to eg. Athletics Carnival
  - Faculty focus in the newsletter or an email at the start of the year from teacher so parents know who they are. Tim to address the survey feedback with teachers to address “not feeling connected” and respond at next meeting.
- Perhaps we can have a P&C Section in the Newsletter for messages and meeting highlights?

- Square reader set-up success (Mel)
  - Is now set up & ready to go. Committee needs to download the app in order to use it.
- Request from Kendl Cramer: BHS Café use P&C bank account for POS
  - Accountant (James Davis) advice was that all money going into P&C account belongs to P&C.
  - P&C are not willing to take on the responsibility to keep this money, and advise that the school should take this on.
  - Tim will investigate this further from a school perspective.
- Principal position – No further progress.

### 3. REPORTS

#### 3.1 Principal's Report

- Staffing – With some of the changeover in staffing has reduced our casual pool plus staff being on leave as well as sick. This has led to a number of uncovered classes resulting in minimal supervision. This is the worst it has got at BHS post COVID, however the majority of other public schools in NSW have been juggling these extreme shortages for quite a while.
- There will be a reduction in the time period that a Casual Teacher can move across to permanent employment. Now reduced to 3yrs. This is rolling out across NSW.
- With seniors the expectation is that have work set online and should go to the library to complete and we are just refining class rolls being taken for when this happens.
- Sentral Parent Portal- Towards the back end of this term this will go live so parents and carers will be able to check their students whole day attendance, newsletters will be archived here as well and student reports will go online.
- Community Partnerships Program – We are still working on developing our networks and processes to support all our students with a focus on some of those who have become disengaged.
  - Reviewing the processes and legalities of the program.
  - Determining how to match students with workplaces/mentors.
  - Working with community partners to determine what they could provide the program.
  - Developing support processes to help community partners manage safe and secure engagements.
  - Setting up interviews with community partners to determine best fit for students and programs.

#### 3.2 Financial Reports (Treasurer) –

- Current account balance - \$4,196.13 CR Deposit of \$3 – membership
  - Still awaiting invoice for lighting from BHS Administration before we can make donation for lights.

### **3.3 Correspondence (Secretary) –** P&C Federation Magazine

## **4. PRIORITY BUSINESS**

### **4.1 Advisory/ Information**

- Interview Panel Training - open to all for future panels - register your interest

### **4.2 Events / Relationship Building**

- Breakfast club volunteers always appreciated: Wed, Thurs, Fri, 8 – 9am, Contact the school to participate.

This is a great way to engage with the school & students. Breakfast club is well attended by students & any assistance is appreciated.

### **4.3 Fundraising**

- Grants subcommittee Update (Graziella, Mel) - help always welcomed.
- 2023 Fundraising subcommittee (Milo) - help needed!
  - BHS musical “Shrek” 22 - 24 June (Wk 9, Term 2) - need bakers & people on site setting up & selling for 3 performances (Thurs, Fri, & Sat eve)
  - Water, drinks, tea, coffee, Biscuits, slabs of cake.
  - Helpers needed 5.30-8pm

## **5. OTHER BUSINESS (Chair)**

- P&C discussed staff shortages after principal’s report, and expressed their concern for the teachers and students struggling in this depleted and stretched environment. Ideas were:
  - Appealing to skilled community members to help out with special workshops or activities to help provide meaningful learning at school for those without teachers.
  - Parent suggestion to have seniors step in for absent teachers as more of a mentoring program or help with school work? However, there was a concern that seniors too are struggling with teacher absences and this could overload them.
- Student Support Officer position – Kim is taking over from Magda at the moment (1 day/week) with Katie Fitzgibbon coming on board in Term 3? Katie/Magda doing handover.
- Training for staff re Rainbow families (Elisa) – A recent incident with a teacher highlighted that further education needed for teachers with regards to being inclusive of queer families. Kids & families need support

particularly at this time where there is an ultra-conservative backlash towards LGTBQA+ community that is resulting in regressive changes in queer/transsexual legislation in US & UK. There are well-grounded fears that this could also happen in Australia. The impact on rainbow kids and parents' is serious and concerning as a marginalised group they are already at higher risk of negative mental health & wellbeing outcomes.

- School bus for sporting and other events (Kev /Rachael) – There is often not a lot of notice given to parents around out of school activities and private transportation is usually required. Jenny Farrands has the bus for Indigenous activities, however the bus can be used if not booked in. Another idea is to fundraise to purchase a bus, or alternatively more planning from the school to hire the community bus or private coach.
- Stories of disruption & disengaged kids - what can we do to help? (Kev /Rach) – Not discussed further (as meeting went overtime), but noted that this could be due, in part, to teacher shortages.
- Mental health issues - communication with students / parents (Kathleen) – Sensitive information concerning a Year 8 student was disclosed widely by students (with misinformation). This caused concern with some parents unsure how to handle because they were not informed. Tim advised that what happened was an accident, and the information should have stayed in a small group. He assured P & C that the school priority is always supporting and protecting the students. There is a school process for serious issues which will always be followed where parents are consulted if their child is impacted.
- Recent incident of destructive behaviour by young people in the community shared on social media (Rachael) – Tim was unaware. What can we do as a P&C and school to help reduce incidence of this, help young people have appropriate and meaningful outlets, and educate and appeal to their better side? Parent suggested request for mental health workshop might be helpful here.
- NSW Teacher's Federation Tree levy (Rachael) – This is an annual opportunity for up to \$500. Need to be a teacher to apply. Tim to investigate further.
- Teacherless classroom – when do students find out? Tim said that it is difficult to know in advance, but noted that they could look at ways to inform and educate students more effectively as to what they can do if they don't have a teacher. He flagged putting it on student notices. Suggested they are given 3 options of what they can do. Can students come home if parents agree? Yes, through calling admin and signing them out. Reach out to the community to assist? (see notes above)

**6. CLOSE AND NEXT MEETING 7.32pm**

**Monday 14th August 2023, 6pm**