

Denmark Senior High School Board Meeting Minutes – Friday 9 December 2016

Board Members Present: Wayne Austin, Katy Mitchel (Acting Deputy Principal), Brad McDougall, Gavin Lacey, Sarah Pozzi, Ceinwen Gearon and Lauren Anstiss (Manager Corporate Services as scribe only)

Apologies: Adele Heaton.

Public Attendees: Kandi Watkiss, Janine Watts, Sarah Carver, Romy Surtees, Allister Dickson, Julie Glynn, Anna Ramrath and Jan Lewis.

Meeting opened at 5:00pm

Agenda Items

1. Approval of previous minutes

- Previous minutes moved by Sarah Pozzi and seconded by Brad McDougall.

Business Arising

- Final updates to the website are to be completed by the HOD's in Term 1, 2017.
- Discussion on the use of Connect, and if the P&C could utilise it as a communication tool as well. Training for the use of Connect for board members will be organised at the next board meeting in 2017.
- Follow up discussion on the school survey and the board running their own survey, with input from public attendees as to how Denmark Primary School currently utilise Survey Monkey, where they have developed their own questions for various surveys.
- The teachers passed their thanks to the board for hosting the 'teacher appreciation morning tea'.
Action: Board members to undertake training in the use of Connect at the next board meeting.
Action: Board Chair of the DPS board (Julie Glynn) to provide a copy of survey questions from DPS. P&C Member (Romy Surtees) showed interest in assisting with the development of a school survey if required.

2. Denmark SHS Charges and Contributions Information to Parents for 2017 for endorsement

- Discussion on the voluntary contributions and clarification on the set amount of \$235 for lower school contributions. This amount is set by the Education Department for all schools. The school usually receives around 75% of contributions which makes up less than 10% of the overall operating budget.
- Budget review will be part of the agenda for the board in early 2017.
- Query on how the school receives the P&C Contribution, which is paid to the school directly, and then paid to the P&C upon request. Discussion on the use of P&C donations to the school.
- Discussion on the Extra Optional Costs document, which is an indication for parents of any additional costs that may arise throughout the school year. This document is final and parents cannot be asked to fund activities which are not provided on this list for 2017.
- Query on governance of the document, as it was emailed to parents prior to board endorsement on 1st December. Manager Corporate Services explained that the document was approved by the Finance Committee and then circulated to the board via email a few days prior seeking endorsement; but had to be sent out for the 1st December deadline and apologised for the late notice.
- Gavin Lacey moved to endorse the document, seconded by Sarah Pozzi.

3. Thank you to Diane Cole from the board

- Gavin Lacey passed his thanks to Diane Cole from the board, who announced her retirement in December.

4. Thank you to Annette Carmichael

- Gavin Lacey passed his thanks to Annette Carmichael, who assisted the board with reviewing the 'Performing Arts Centre' and having input into the discussion of possible upgrades.
- Discussion on the possibility of working with the community for a Performing Arts Centre, both long term and short term.

- Discussion on the possibility of the Drama teacher moving to a larger teaching space, with storage as a priority. Gavin Lacey spoke about the importance of supporting our teachers as much as possible.

5. Thank you to Katy Mitchell

- Gavin Lacey passed thanks to Katy Mitchell on behalf of the Art Department, who has been fantastic within her role as Student Services Coordinator and HOD of the Arts team.
- Katy spoke about the achievements of the Arts teachers, the benefits on the students and also thanked the support received from the 'Roadies'.

6. IT Upgrades and New Staff for 2017

- The Principal spoke about the possibility of improving bandwidth within the school, as well as an upgrade of the schools video conferencing equipment, with all schools within the district receiving the same upgrade from the Department of Education. This opens up communication to the world for staff and students, with opportunities for education and professional learning.
- The school has recruited new staff for 2017, which includes two English teachers and a Digital Technologies teacher.

7. Questions from the Floor

(Parents and Community Members were asked to submit questions or topics for discussion to the Board prior to the meeting).

What is the IPS procedure for appointing our new Principal? What's the timing? What's the succession plan?

- The Principal explained that the selection process for appointing a new Principal is a standard government recruitment process, which is advertised to the public and then appointment by a selection panel which includes the Regional Director and a member of the current school board. The new Principal will be appointed for the start of Term 2, 2017, with Wayne continuing acting throughout Term 1. Succession planning depends on the outcome, which is all merit based selection.
- An expression of interest has gone out to all staff for the Acting Deputy Principal role for Term 1, which will be put in place by the end of the year, in preparation for next year.

Topics for Discussion

1. Religion at DSHS

- Parent member raised the topic for conversation in regards to the visit to the school from the Gideon's, and stated that she was not satisfied with the response from the school, and suggested an 'opt in' option for parents for any religious activities.
- The Principal explained the Department of Education policy, which states clearly the schools responsibilities for implementing religious education. He reiterated that the school does not run religious education, and that the board agreed to notify parents of any upcoming visits from religious organisations via newsletter, providing parents the opportunity to opt out their student if they wish to.
- The issue was discussed at length, with views from multiple members of the meeting discussing the pros and cons of having religious groups visiting the school.
- A motion to 'opt in' only was discussed at length, with the board not coming consensus on the wording of that motion.
- Discussion at length of moving a motion or leaving the issue for the interim until the appointed Principal can decide, with input from the board members as well as the public attendees.
- Motion was moved by the board to reject any religious visits to the school *in the interim* until the appointed Principal make a formal decision. This motion was accepted by all board members.

2. Bring Your Own Device Policy

- The Principal explained that the school does not have a bring your own device policy, but the school does have a 'Mobile Phone Policy' which allows students to bring their devices to school for personal use outside of class only (unless they have permission from their teacher).
- Students can access the wireless network whilst at school, which can monitor data use and access to inappropriate content. The school has no control over the use of internet through their own telco.
- The school has a right to confiscate mobile phones if they're used inappropriately, and may pass them onto police, with parents present, in the event that there is suspicion of inappropriate material on the phone. Schools do not have rights to go through content on any student devices.

- Discussion on concerns in regards to social interaction if students have their mobile devices at school.
- Teachers present at the meeting spoke about the high level of social interaction that they see during the breaks, and also spoke of how utilising a mobile device can benefit students.
- Discussion on how we can teach students how to use technology appropriately and assist them with purchasing devices that are suitable for their needs.

Action: Wayne Austin to liaise with Allister Dickson in regards to recommending devices to students.

3. SAER Coordinator

- The Principal explained that Melissa Palmer is has worked with SEN students 2 days per week (2016), with her time being increased for 2017 subject to salary budgeting. She works with teachers to develop IEP's, SEN planning and reporting. Katy Mitchell is the Student Services Coordinator who is employed full-time. Nikki Coxe was also mentioned as the Literacy Specialist, who has been working successfully with students on their literacy, and will be taking on a full time role in 2017 that does include some teaching responsibilities.
- Discussion on providing parents with the contact details of the relevant staff who assist SAER students. It was encouraged that the parent contacts the relevant year coordinator as first point of call, who can then pass on direct contact details where necessary.

4. Teacher Performance Appraisals

- The Principal spoke through the performance management process for all teaching staff, which was formally implemented and ramped up in 2016.
- All staff have undertaken training, who are engaging and completing their performance management plans as well as providing feedback to admin going forward.
- Discussion on utilising possible student feedback through the use of student surveys.
- Discussion on the process for identifying exceptional performance as well as the management process of poor performance, which includes consultation and ongoing management from HOD's.
- Discussion on the process of collating feedback from parents, as well as the importance of valuing such feedback and taking the necessary steps to investigate issues, with further discussion on the steps to report issues further if required.

5. School Exposure within the Denmark Community

- Discussion on how to advertise the school to the wider community, and the importance of being included in the local media both print and online. The LED sign was well received and has been a very useful tool for communicating to the community.
- Discussion on the great contribution and exposure that the P&C have provided for the school this year.

6. Change of Celebration for Leavers

- Query on changing the time of the leavers celebration for next year, suggested to be after the year 12's complete exams. It was explained that school finishes and then exam timetables are externally set.
- Action:** Administration team to liaise with Year 12 group for 2017 re leavers celebrations.

7. Oval closure and activities for students

- Discussion on other play/break time options, particularly for lower school students, during the wet weather when they school oval is closed. It was agreed that the idea of a 'nature playground' would be beneficial for the lower school students. This playground idea was also discussed at a recent P&C Meeting.

8. Future Open Board Meetings

- It was suggested from parent members of the meeting that the board holds open board meetings more frequently, possibly twice a year.
- Discussion on queries to the board. If queries are addressed to the chair of the board, they will be addressed by himself directly; if they're addressed to the board then he will present the queries to members at the next available meeting.

The next meeting will be held on Friday 10 February (Week 2, Term 1).