

***Southern Cross K-12  
Parents and Citizens Committee***

***Business Plan  
2006***

***'Towards Tomorrow'***

## **Southern Cross K-12 School**

### **Background**

Southern Cross K-12 School is a comprehensive high school with over 1200 students enrolled across four separate schools on one location; a Primary School, a High School, a Distance Education Centre and a Support Unit. These schools operate in a collegial manner with shared space and resources including staff working across the whole school.

The school has a P&C Committee that contributes significantly to the school through management of the High School and Primary School canteens and the Uniform shop. Parents and citizens also contribute to the school through assistance in the canteens and at various fundraising activities as well as participation at P&C meetings and on staff selection panels. Less than 1% of the parent community assists the school in this manner.

The Committee recognizes that the education of our children is a difficult and complex task and that input from parents to support staff and the school will benefit our children. The form of this assistance could be;

- Providing funds and resources to assist and enhance the delivery of the curriculum
- Promote the successes of the school to enhance positive messages about the school
- Create an ethos from which its graduating students can benefit in later life
  1. through a strong feeling about the positive value of their school
  2. a diverse and thorough education assisted through community partnerships
  3. an exposure to current work practices and
  4. an exposure to ideas that stimulate their learning as well as those of teachers and parents

Historically the P&C Committee has worked hard in fund raising efforts to supply additional resources for the school. However, opportunities now exist to create an expanded role for parents in working with the school. Ideas to contribute in this manner were discussed at P&C meetings during 2005 and were raised at an informal meeting with staff in December 2005 (See Attached). These ideas include but are not limited to;

- Changing the operation of P&C Meetings to be more social and/or informative
- Increasing the number of P&C/ Staff social interactions
- Improved use of email/ website to facilitate P&C business
- Better relationships with DEC parents
- Development of Faculty Guilds to assist the school particularly in curriculum teaching
- Improved administration of P&C with development of database/ contact/resources register/direct mail outs to parents
- Activities that would assist in enhancing traditions for the school
- Building relationships with local businesses
- Activities to increase the number of parents involved in the P&C

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- Potential monetary rewards or exciting job placements to encourage academic excellence
- Promotion and improvement of the role of the school and students in community service
- Creation of student ownership of the appearance of the school assisted by the P&C
- Reexamination of the uniform/ dress uniform/ sports uniform.

These ideas as well as the original proposal put forward to the P&C

- For the Parents and Citizens Assn in conjunction with the school to pursue key actions to create a '**Towards Tomorrow**' Program that would;
  1. Build and maintain a profile for the school as having 'State of the Art' equipment, resources and teaching capacity and enhance community links in terms of employment, training and skills development of teachers and students through a '**Towards Tomorrow**' Guild. The P & C would identify the businesses and skilled citizens that could assist and work with the school. The school would identify potential areas of cooperation.
  2. Develop and promote a '**Towards Tomorrow**' Forum that invites guest speakers to speak on the future of our society (Social, Environment and Economic) and stimulate learning in the school community. The P & C could support this by organisation of the whole event including financial underwriting, sponsorship, speakers venue etc
  3. Develop and manage a '**Towards Tomorrow**' Trust Fund to support (through interest earned) the actions of the '**Towards Tomorrow**' Program and the school. The P & C could identify how it could manage funds it raises, as well as seeking financial support from parents of students finishing in Years 10 and 12.

There are though a number of constraints to undertaking any new activities.

- The existing number of parents could not undertake further activities
- Change from the status quo of P&C operations may not be fully supported by staff or parents
- Contact and other information for parents is limited
- There will always remain inherent risk in the management of our businesses and considerable effort will always be required to manage the businesses and to reduce the risk
- Bookkeeping practices for our businesses were by hand rather than computerized prior to 2006. Considerable time will also be required to be spent learning these new systems.
- Due to the lack of success of the 2005 Arts and Crafts Festival significant effort will be required this year to ensure the success of the 2006 Festival

In contrast to this, efforts in December to increase numbers from incoming parents appear to have been successful and the Principal and staff are in support of new initiatives

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### Plan

Assuming an increased parent involvement it is proposed to restructure the P&C Committee and alter the way we carry out our business and to expand the role of the committee by undertaking new initiatives.

### ***Creation of Subcommittees***

The following subcommittees will be created.

#### **1. Communication.**

Pursuit of positive media coverage  
Advice and input to the website  
Improved contact with DEC parents  
Development of P&C Database

#### **2. Fundraising/ Social Events**

Creation of calendar of fundraising events  
Organisation of parental involvement in fundraising events  
Development of some parent, parent/staff social events as well as supporting staff social events

#### **3. Arts and Craft Festival**

Management of parental input into the Arts and Crafts Festival

#### **4. Business Management**

Management of the Canteens and the Uniform Shop  
Development and management of the *Towards Tomorrow Trust Fund*

#### **5. Community Relations**

Enhance and create Community Service options  
Find and develop opportunities for rewarding excellence  
Creation of and respond to outcomes of the *Towards Tomorrow Guild*  
Assistance with Smithy's Flyer  
Development of the *Towards Tomorrow Forum*  
Consideration of need for an Annual

### ***Creation of new Committee positions***

The Committee should have the following positions;

President, (also leading the Community Relations Subcommittee)  
Secretary, (also leading the Communications Subcommittee)  
Business Manager, (also leading the Business Management Committee and on the School Finance Committee)  
Leader - Arts and Craft Subcommittee  
Deputy Leader – Business Management Subcommittee  
Leader – Fundraising/Social Subcommittee  
Faculty Guild Representatives (DEC, Support Unit, K-2? 3-6?, English, Maths/TAC, Technology, Science, HSIE, CAPA, LOTE and PDHPE)

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### *Development of new programs*

Apart from the new administrative and other issues to be pursued in 2006 three key programs will be initiated subject to parent interest; the ***Towards Tomorrow Forum, Towards Tomorrow' Trust Fund*** and the ***'Towards Tomorrow' Guild***. While the Forum and Trust Fund are reasonably self explanatory given potential concerns by staff the role of the Guild needs further explanation.

It is proposed that the Guild operate as a group of parents, citizens and businesses working with each faculty and school. They might assist the Head Teachers and staff with skills, interests, resources to assist in the delivery of the curriculum. They could also provide opportunities for enhanced extracurricular activities or workplace and community experience opportunities to improve.

The P&C with the support of individual Head Teachers or Deputy Principals would identify Faculty Guild Representatives to work with each Faculty and School. These representatives would ideally **not be** skilled in the particularly area of education but merely be a conduit for requests to the P&C and a catalyst for ideas that might contribute from outside existing school resources.

The Guild would also identify and pursue additional funding through means other than fundraising. These might include grant applications, direct requests of Government, and pursuit of industry support.

### *Change of Meeting Format*

It is proposed that from the AGM onwards the monthly meeting of the P&C be used for the following key purposes.

- To provide an opportunity to hear from visiting educators or staff on key educational or other issues of interest
- To confirm that we are in position to pay accounts as they become due.

The meeting would also be used

- To bring forward any new matters arising from Parents and discuss possible solutions.
- To confirm and/or support decisions made by subcommittees
- To socialize with other Parents

In addition subcommittees would be free to organize their activities through the internet or at separate times agreeable to members of those committees

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### Attachment 1 – Outcomes of a meeting between Staff and P&C

#### Part 1

- ✓ More social interactions: this will lead to more interaction between the staff and the parents so that the teachers know who we are and recognise the parents when they are on campus. This will also help to build the knowledge base about the resources the parents have to offer.
- ✓ Working bees ie work on the grounds, painting etc. Helps build community ownership of the school and helps the school with general maintenance.
- ✓ Be selective about 'out of hours functions'. We all have lives outside of the school and if we do too much it is harder for people to commit. Equally this needs to be offset by the fact that people will be able to attend at different times etc therefore a variety of times will help to attract the most people possible overall. Keeping in mind we have 150 staff - they can't all attend every function or meeting.
- ✓ Incorporate extra questions on the enrolment form to gather a 'resources register' ie occupation, qualifications and interests/hobbies of parents. We need to build a register of information about the resources we have in the school community.
- ✓ Social functions need not always be on school grounds.
- ✓ A couple of times per year directly invite the parents of new students to a P&C and staff social function. End of terms one and three or two and four. If it is a direct, personal invitation and with a more social feel we might ease new parents into the school community. Harder to say no when it is a personal invitation.
- ✓ We need to consider the whole community - not just parents! Grandparents and other family members are also important. Many have skills etc to offer. Grandparents often have more time available to offer to the school to help out.
- ✓ Actively help the parents and community to understand the skills they take for granted and don't actually think about. These can be useful to the school, ie active living history as offered by our senior citizens. Grandparent who have been to war zones, seen Prime Ministers sacked, other events in Australian and world history etc.
- ✓ Build a community register. Build relationships between businesses and community services in the Ballina and Lennox Districts to create

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opportunities for our kids. This will be a win/win situation for the organisations/businesses and schools.

- ✓ We need to look at ways to incorporate the Distance Education students. Obviously they are limited in many respects in the ways they can actively participate. However, for the students that have no other school community we need to talk to them about ways in which they can participate. They are a significant section of the school.
- ✓ Look at creating a mail out to all families at the beginning of each year incorporating:
  - Invitation to P&C meetings
  - Suggestions about how people (parents and family) can help the school community.
  - Explain how peoples skill may be incorporated into the school register, ie they can help the school students by sharing their skills or their skills can be used in maintenance of the school or offering students work experience etc.
- ✓ We need to develop a strong email data base so that we have access to the parents and community. Access to information and awareness of a 'skill bank' will be invaluable.
- ✓ Staff need to maintain control about when and how the assistance is given. Ultimately it is there responsibility when dealing in classrooms.

The overriding theme was we need to know more about each other. The more we know about what the school needs the more likely we'll find people with the skills to assist. If our parents, families and the community are actively participating in the school's day to day activities the growth will be self generating ie people talk to each other and if they hear about what their neighbour is contributing to the school they may realise they also have something to offer.

### Part 2

\*We would like Southern Cross School to be known as a Centre of Excellence  
- in all endeavors

\*To be known as an environment that offers everything - primary, secondary,  
distance ed and special ed (not always understood by the community)

\*To be known to have a tradition

\*Inclusive education

\*A place that increases children's life options

How can the P&C contribute?

\* Involving more parents in the school - eg Morning P&C meetings, having a class parent rep, buddy system

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Suggestions for next year.

- \*Build communication lines between school, P&C, parents and teachers
- \*Dinner or dinner dances for teachers and parent showcasing the hospitality students
- \*similar function to last night - between teachers and parents
- \*Year function - eg Year 7 parents and teachers get together
- \*Establishing a relationship with local businesses - eg Retrovision

### Part 3

Question 1. What would you like to happen/do/change at school?

- Uniform needs a little bit of an update or some minor changes. Compete with the fashionable (private schools) we need to be setting trends
- School tracksuit for use across all years. Logo, hood, zippered, drawstring
- Blazer for secondary not just seniors
- Change culture of school to encourage academic excellence. Monetary rewards or exciting placements ie
- Traineeships, competitions
- E Team - problem solving, Big Tasks
- Promote community service - SES, Lifesaving, LEO Club, Meals on Wheels, Red Cross, Cancer Council, Landcare, Dunecare, Coastguard
- Visual look of the school. It is modern but lacks student ownership and pride. Give each class a garden

Question 2. How could parents be more involved in the school?

- Contacts with the outside world. Non-government organisations and government departments. Businesses ie professional, manufacturing, retail, hospitality
- Identify contacts within the parent body. Committee could liaise with Careers Adviser
- Fundraising events - BBQs, socials each term, Movie nights, restaurant/dinners, fetes, Art Festival
- Canteen, Uniform shop, volunteers in class, tutoring, P and C

Question 3. What other interactions are available for parents?

- Various faculties have opportunities especially English and CAPA
- Linkages with parents and teachers not just talking but in the classroom and staffroom