Burwood Girls High School - P&C Meeting  
Minutes of Meeting 20/3/2013 

Attendance: Mia Kumar-Principal, Karyn O’Brien- Deputy Principal, Janina Longman- Deputy Principal, Alice Magoffin- President, Christine Williams-Vice President, Effie Balomatis-Treasurer & Social Secretary, Effie Matsas-Secretary, Lesley Jolly-Assistant Secretary, Kathy Kritselas-Committee Member, Other attendees as noted on attendance register.  

Apologies: Nick Miller, Elaine Browne, Helen Drury-Committee Member  

Minutes by: Effie Matsas  
Meeting Opened: 7.25pm  

1. Welcome  
Meeting opened by Alice Magoffin in the Library.  

2. Previous Minutes  
2.1. 20th Feb meeting minutes were tabled and accepted.  
Action: Kathy Kritselas proposed, Effie Balomatis seconded.  

3. Principal’s Report  
3.1. Photo of 2012 P&C members to be included in the annual report.  

3.2. Year 7 BBQ was a great success. Principal thanked Alice and her team for an excellent job. Big Sisters were also present to provide support.  

3.3. Year 12 Starr Day conducted over 2 periods was very successful with 26% of students advising “it was really good” and 65% said it was “good”. Areas covered include creating goals, researching websites, coping with stress and organisational skills. Ms Longman also added - reviewing of ATAR websites, where to locate additional information, how to research, how to organise. Next term, one period will be focusing on essay skills/structuring essays (which will be conducted by non-English teaching staff). Ms Longman, school counsellor, Year 12 advisers & careers advisor, as well as Jenny Hardwick, Head Teacher Curriculum, are among others who conducted the STARR Day program.  

3.4. Year 9 Laptops were rolled out. Year 9 IT parent information night was well attended. Laptops were distributed to Yr. 9 students and workshops were conducted by Mrs Diakos (IT staff member). Workshops included how to use laptops appropriately. Students were very keen.  

3.5. Raising True Colours Flag – a special celebration to be addressed by Ms O’Brien later with a special powerpoint.  

3.6. Year 7 Camp to Broken Bay. Comments included poor weather but all students and staff had a great time. Great location, fun activities and excellent participation. Year 11 Big Sisters were fantastic.  

3.7. Year 6 Information Night – now planning for Year 7 enrolments for 2014. Approximately 500-600 prospective parents/students attended our Information Evening.  

3.8. Tour of school by prospective Year 7 students and parents was conducted during the day. Parent feedback “it’s a very happy school”.  

3.9. Council Meeting with new members. Matter of access road was addressed and BHGS will monitor number of trucks passing via access road. Mrs Kumar advised change of name of the project, from “Wangal Park issue”, to “BGHS Sporting Fields”. Collaboration with FAST
football Academy to install new seating next to the soccer field, 50% payable by FAST and 50% by BGHS was seen to be a good idea.

3.10. **Annual School Report** to be finished by end of March. Principal thanked Alice for prompt response in submitting the P&C report.

3.11. **Clean Up Australia Day** – students cleaned up school grounds.

3.12. **International Women’s Day** – celebrated with breakfast in the library (special guest speaker from a refugee organisation). Students and staff encouraged to wear purple. Money raised on the day going to women’s charity.

3.13. **Field Study Day** all students attended

3.14. **Surf Camp** to Bondi was fabulous.

3.15. **Year 9 Maths Pie Excursion** to the Australian Museum was successful.

3.16. **Japanese School Visit** on 12th March. BHGS hosted 45 girls from Japan. Students studying Japanese were involved as well as the hospitality students.

**Upcoming Events**

3.17. **Staff Development Day** on 29/30 April focusing on new curriculum.

3.18. **Athletics Carnival** on 8th May.

3.19. **NAPLAN for Year 7 & Year 9** week beginning 13 May.

3.20. **Year 11&12 parent/teacher night** on 3 April

**New staff**

Welcome to new staff members. English Department - Matthew Chalmers, in place of Jodie Coleman. Music Department - Amanda Caltabiano relieving Ynping Mak. Congratulations to Mrs Mak who had a baby son and Ms Coleman who had a baby girl.

**Proud Schools Day**

Presentation by Karyn O’Brien. BGHS hosted Day of Celebration on 26th February, a pilot program by the NSW DEC Proud Schools. The day started with a school assembly attended by BGHS, representatives from Fort Street, St George Girls High, Dulwich Hill High, police and other organisations. This was followed by a flag raising ceremony and forum. Key message “everybody has the right to feel safe in our community”. Special thanks to Ms Patonay for taking up the challenge and baking 1346 cupcakes.

Feedback from students attending assembly – “very good”, “enjoyable experience”.

Feedback from one parent present at the meeting that some students who opted out of the assembly (about 300 students did not attend the assembly – staff only expected 30) were treated unfairly. There were several phone calls relating to this matter. The principal apologised for the situation and acknowledged that the school had not planned for the number of students opting out. Ms Longman indicated in hindsight it should have been communicated a bit more clearly to parents as it is a very sensitive topic for some families, however with no previous experience of this type of an event it was difficult for staff to predict and then accommodate the numbers of students who did not wish to participate. It was acknowledged that the day was a learning curve for both students and staff. However the message on the day was clear –BGHS supports diversity.
4. **Business Arising**

4.1. **Lack of P&C Contributions**

President indicated that there are two ways that the voluntary P&C fee can be paid:

1. Office sends a coloured sheet (different colour for each year) and parents indicate (tick off) monies to be paid according to the student’s subjects. This document includes the $25 P&C fee, and the parents have the option to pay for this item.

2. The problem arises when the school wishes to expedite incoming school fees. The office mails out a statement to parents which itemises the relevant subject per student. The statement includes the general school contribution; however the P&C fee has been omitted. Also note – this method is used for all incoming Year 7 students as the itemised statements are mailed before the school year begins.

The president met with Bronwyn Hatzis and she was emphatic that it was not the role of the school to include the P&C fee. This fee has never been on the itemised statement and it is not the role of the school to solicit money on behalf of the P&C.

Also raised: what happens to the early bird discount on the itemised statement (which is shown in full) if paid before 22 March.

Question raised: Is the voluntary fund tax deductable. Mrs Kumar advised BGHS is not a charity therefore maybe not deductable.

**Action:** Add the P&C Voluntary Fund item on the statement account which goes out to parents together with an asterix/note on the statement of account indicating that it is an optional fee which goes towards funding additional of resources for the students, giving examples of resources on which the funds have previously been spent. The principal Mrs Kumar, will take this up.

4.2. **How to recover funds for 2013?**

Another option - letters may be sent out to families (who have not paid the fee) outlining the work of the P&C and goals for 2013 – requesting voluntary payment (all optional of course). It may also be prudent to include a short article in Event at the beginning of each year, outlining how P & C contribution is spent.

Suggestion of a Trivia Night raised - however, the P&C do not have the resources/parents to do this at present time.

**Action:** Address at next meeting

4.3. **Beautification of grounds.**

Following from last minutes and previous suggestions, Mrs Kumar suggested that a working bee to improve the grounds would be welcomed by staff and executive. It was noted that presentable grounds is also one of the factors prospective year 7 parents look for. During the meeting the following ideas were brainstormed:

- The areas going down the hall need to be a priority.
- P&C may purchase sleepers and other landscaping materials; professionals can install the beds; parents to assist with the manual labour.
- Drainage problem around the hall needs to be addressed, as the bark washes away when it rains.
- The dragon mural is great – more of these projects are welcomed.
- Lovely grounds around the year 12 area, with new gardenias.
- Areas around the hall need work.
- Brickwork pathway is only half done. Now weeds growing in between pavers.
- Mrs Kumar advised we need a long notification period. Working bees need to be well advertised.
- Parent suggested that local SES, as a training session, may cut down the dead tree. They will not remove the tree stump. However, promotion may provide an arborist in the school community who can assist with the dead trees.
- Handling the grounds, section by section, so that the parents do not become overwhelmed.
- However if too many parents show up during the working bee need to have a plan that incorporates more than one area.
- Advertise for landscape architects in the school community to get a feel of what we need to do.
- Advertise for divisible plants – agapanthus, clivias etc. or any other specified plants.
- Approach TAFE (offering landscaping course) for assistance from students.
- Sleepers around trees and along the path ways will look good.
- Can the P&C confer with the finance committee – what funds do we have available?
- Start work around the visible areas around the hall.
- Promote via newsletter, maybe sent by email, SMS, notes sent home – use all mediums to saturate the message.
- Firstly see if we can establish interest and establish what resources / parent expertise / community / local business support we can draw upon.

**Action:** Alice and Effie M to put together a plan of action.

5. **Treasurers Report**

5.1. After Year 12 cake & Year 7 BBQ expenses and transferring $5,000 from locker rental, funds stand at $13,724 (as of 22 Feb).

**Action:** Motion to accept treasurer’s report – Effie M accepted and Kathy seconded. President advised not to sit on this money, review how to spend at next meeting. These funds may be all for the year, given the issue with the collection of P&C fees.

6. **Uniform Shop** – (Presented by Sue Staines on behalf of Elaine Browne)

6.1. New smaller sized blazers have arrived, 4 sold so far. However, need to redo order as sleeves are too short.

6.2. New sample of pants presented.

6.3. Sample for new style sport shorts with BGHS logo presented – which have been accepted by the uniform shop and PE Dept.

**Action:** Alice accepted, Kathy seconded.

6.4. Sample of new shorts to be worn as normal uniform. Consensus that shorts (old and sample) look “awful”. It was suggested that the contract for the blue shorts worn as standard uniform not be renewed.

6.5. Suggestion to review uniform- see NEW BUSINESS

7. **Correspondence Received**

Promotional Material tabled.
8. **General Business**

8.1. **Year 7/8 Supervision** - P&C to provide support for drinks, chips, ice, cups etc. Alice will be organising. Parent supervision also needed for the night. Suggestion that male supervision would be appreciated due to boisterous nature of the boys.

   **Action:** Principal to send email to Ashfield Boys and Homebush Boys to ensure more teacher supervisors. Effie M to send email re: parent volunteers

8.2. **International Day** - Volunteers for P&C BBQ include Effie B, Helen Drury.

8.3. Year 7 parent representative needed for the Year 7 selection panel in May, Alice volunteered.

9. **New Business**

9.1. Traditionally a token of appreciation is presented to staff as an award at the weekly staff meeting. Mrs Kumar requested a $200 advance for the purchase of these tokens to be presented to staff, on behalf of the P&C.

   **Action:** Motion proposed by Effie Balomatis, Kathy Kritselas seconded.

9.2. **Reporting P&C Report** - Annual P&C report prepared by Alice was reviewed. Also suggested, addition of the aim/objectives of the P&C for 2013 e.g. improvement of school grounds.

9.3. Suggestion if school needed a notice board. Mrs Kumar advised that Queen St is too narrow & cannot see it clearly and prefer to spend the moneys on the grounds/gardens. Mr Kumar emphasised that the web site is always updated and prefer parents to refer to website for information. All notes/notices are uploaded daily.

9.4. **ACER survey into Australian student performance** – Alice inquired whether results are available.

   **Action:** Karyn O’Brien to follow up and report next meeting.

9.5. **Uniform Issue** - President and Yr. 7 parent indicated that the school uniform is a priority when choosing a school – judgement is made on BGHS relating to the school uniform and how the girls wear the uniform. Most attendees agreed. This issue was also raised at the school council. Too many uniform types (shorts, skirts, pants etc.) does not look ‘uniform’. Shorts are an issue – principal suggested no shorts for 2014. But before this is done - suggestions/feedback from students and parents. There is excellent learning and excellent student outcomes at the school but we need to get everything perfect including the uniform.

   **Action:** Inclusion of a question about parent opinions on school uniform in the Parent survey at the parent/teacher nights.