Join the Party

At our first general meeting for the year, Huntingdale Primary School P&C decided on a recruitment drive for new members for 2015. A lot of us now have older children and thought it would be great to try and get some parents on board with younger children. This way we could keep our P&C growing and preserve the great community spirit we have at our school.

We wanted to alleviate the view that P&Cs are “full of clicky, boring people” who just gossip and chatted. We wanted to let everyone know how much fun we had at our meetings whilst still meeting our aims and goals, and of course, engaging with our children’s school in a proactive and positive manner.

So we agreed to take on the theme “Join the Party”, the party of parental engagement and enjoying being part of a team that all works together to meet the same goals.

We decided to create a brochure that wasn’t hard to read, was straight to the point, and encouraged people to be involved in the P&C. We were very upfront that even if they didn’t want to join the P&C right now or even this year, it was something to consider and it gave them an insight that we weren’t like the stereotypical P&C Association.

Prior to the AGM, the brochures were handed out by helium balloon-wielding members dressed in sparkly hats. Some of the brochures had special markings so that we could give away some prizes randomly to people spoken to (a voucher for the canteen or uniform shop for example).

Members walked around the school grounds wearing their P&C shirts at pickup time and stood at the entry gates (so nobody could escape!) As a result we had a large number of people ask questions as to what we do, what we have done, and in turn they were comfortable discussing their ideas. At our AGM, five new people joined as members PLUS most of our amazing team came back.

We are hoping as the year progresses and our fundraisers start firing up that we will get some more members on board who remember that day they were approached by a fun, crazy parent dressed in a sparkly hat!

It is good news all round for Huntingdale Primary School P&C.

Jen Clune, P&C President Huntingdale Primary School P&C Association Inc.

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WACSSO is pleased to announce that MSP Photography WA will continue to sponsor the Good News Stories segment for 2015.

Congratulations to the following 2014 P&C winners drawn at the WACSSO Conference: Bindoon Primary School; Glencoe Primary School; Makybe Rise Primary School; Singleton Primary School and Somerly District High School. WACSSO and MSP Photography WA want to promote your good news stories in future editions of P&C Voice and at the 2015 WACSSO Conference plus your P&C could win 1 of 5 cash prize draws at the Conference.

We are inviting your P&C to take an opportunity to highlight the successes and achievements of your P&C no matter how large or small – we want you to blow your trumpet! It is perhaps easy to underestimate the goodwill, appreciation and contribution to the community our vast network of organisations is making. What a fantastic way to promote your P&C and school community.

All stories received from August 2014 until 31st July 2015 will be placed in a draw at the 2015 WACSSO Conference which is being held on 22nd and 23rd August in The Astral at Crown Perth. A P&C delegate will need to be present to collect their P&C’s prize.

Please send your articles, which may include approved photographs to:
Jody Quinn, Affiliate Services Officer at affiliates@wacsso.wa.edu.au
fax: 9264 4948 or by post:
PO Box 6295, East Perth, WA 6892.

We want to hear from you!
Welcome to the second term edition of P&C Voice! By now all P&Cs should be immersed into their activities for the year, with new members settling in well and returning members bringing experience and enthusiasm back to their committees.

Feedback from across the state shows that increased numbers of P&C members are attending our school-based and in-house training sessions, which is fantastic to hear at a time of peak growth and also growing financial pressure in our public school system. Effective, cohesive P&C Associations are vital to schools now more than ever, which is why this year WACSSO State Council has chosen to focus on exactly that – the enrichment and strengthening of our P&Cs.

With this in mind, WACSSO Councillors, staff and I have been busy working on a number of tasks, including planning for our 81st Annual Conference in August. This year’s theme is Connecting the DOTS: Developing Opportunities for Teamwork & Success. You might already have heard that WA icon and former West Coast Eagles captain and coach John Worsfold will be presenting our Keynote speech, Securing Waouha is a great coup for WACSSO and we know whichever side of the fence you sit on, you are certain to gain a lot of knowledge and wisdom from this seasoned and well-respected community leader.

Conference will be held on Saturday 22nd and Sunday 23rd August at Crown Perth. It is the one time of year public school parents and school community members from WACSSO affiliated associations all across our state come together to learn and share experiences about education and the public school system. We have for you a fantastic line-up of speakers, plenty of opportunity for valuable networking, lots of entertainment throughout the weekend and of course our well-loved Saturday evening sundowner. Also this year, we are reintroducing workshops to conference. Delegates will be able to up-skill themselves and thus their P&C during one of four diverse sessions, facilitated by experts in their field. Conference registration is open online and all affiliates will receive their Conference Brochure in early June. Please see wacssoa.wa.edu.au/conference for all the latest information.

Also in keeping with our theme for the year, at the start of June we will be launching a new project focusing on the work P&Cs do in their school communities. We will soon be asking all affiliated P&Cs, with the assistance of their school Principal or administrator to complete a two-part online survey looking at P&C contribution and activities, and the impact of recent school funding changes on P&Cs and their schools. Additionally we will be approaching a number of P&Cs to take part in some face-to-face meetings to delve a bit deeper into these issues. We aim to use this information to understand more about the integral role P&Cs play in our schools and to assist our lobbying efforts to government on your behalf. We would love to see a 100% response rate to our survey and as that little extra bit of incentive, each P&C that completes a survey will go in the draw to win an iPad Air, thanks to Centrewest Insurance Brokers.

On a final note, WACSSO has had some positive engagement with the Federal Government and the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) with regard to the Australian Curriculum Review. After meeting with reviewer Prof. Ken Wiltshire last year during the initial consultation stages of the Review, WACSSO has been an active participant in providing feedback to the Review’s report, in the areas of parental engagement and students with disabilities. WACSSO now sits on the Abilities Based Learning Education (ABLE) WA advisory group, which is working toward implementing an improved curriculum and assessment tool for students who cannot access the mainstream curriculum. We will continue to work with ACARA and ABLE WA throughout the year.

Thank you for your continued support of public education and remember, you can always call or email your State Councillor or the WACSSO office staff with any concerns or queries – they’re always more than happy to help. I look forward to seeing many of you at Annual Conference!

Sharyn O’Neill
WACSSO President

From the President’s Pen

Message from Director General of Education

With the State Government’s recent release of its science statement, Growing Western Australia, science is once again a topic of hot interest.

The Premier has outlined his vision of WA as a scientific leader in the Asia-Pacific region. With science vital to the prosperity of our State, there will be outstanding career opportunities for young people.

These opportunities start in schools by educating the workforce of the future — your children. I encourage parents to do all you can to inspire your children’s interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics — what is now known as STEM — and to work with teachers to ensure there are opportunities for them to take part in interesting and challenging programs. By working together we can help build a culture of science in this State.

By the time you read this, children in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 will have completed the annual NAPLAN tests. I know this is always a burning issue in the community with many different views about whether we should even have the tests.

My view has never changed; I expect teachers to develop literacy and numeracy skills in their students every day and this is a brief series of tests to see how students are progressing. Teachers need this information to tailor and adapt learning programs for students and many parents find the information useful too. If your children felt undue anxiety about the tests, please talk with school staff as this is not the intention — children should just be encouraged to try their hardest.

The centenary of ANZAC was marked in schools across the State, with parents playing key roles in many events and services. From the stunning bronze artwork depicting a returned unnamed soldier walking to embrace his young daughter which was unveiled at Lake Gwelup Primary School, to the combined schools ANZAC parade through the streets of Albany and the service at Shenton College to highlight Australia’s deep connection with Turkey and its people, our schools are truly keeping history alive for their students.

We were also privileged to be able to send the largest ever group of students on the Premier’s ANZAC Student Tour. After camping overnight in very cold temperatures, the 32 students and select group of teachers were at the Gallipoli Peninsula for the dawn service on ANZAC Day. I cannot imagine how moving that experience would have been.

Our School’s a Star is well underway and is a wonderful opportunity to showcase the amazing things that happen in our schools every day. We already have nearly 150 registrations and you may have seen some of the stories and live weather crosses on Channel 7 and in The West Australian.

So often, staff and parents say schools only get media attention when something negative happens — this is the chance to redress that and show the world how great your school is. I encourage every one of our nearly 800 schools to be involved.

I wish you all the best for Term 2.

Sharyn O’Neill
Director General
Department of Education
The inspiration for this new playground came at a school camp in Fremantle in 2013. We’re not sure who wanted it more, the kids or the dads!

For such a large project to come into fruition, it required a lot of work from many people. As well as our previously raised funds, sponsorship was sought locally and there were so many generous organisations to support our project. Our significant sponsors were the Mukinbudin Church of Christ, Mukinbudin Transport, D & D Transport and Mukinbudin Agencies. Our school was also successful in obtaining funding from the Department of Education which enabled us to achieve the scale and quality of the project.

Many volunteer hours were spent by our current P&C President Ashley Walker in coordinating the project with the assistance of our parents and family members who were involved in the busy-bees to make it the beautiful area it is today.

The playground was officially opened in November 2014 with Ashley cutting the ribbon along with representatives of our sponsors and Principal Gavin Stevens.

We’re very proud of our playground – a collaborative project with our local school community, local businesses, organisations and the Department of Education.

Mukinbudin District High School P&C Association Inc.

The photo was taken on the day with staff, students, parents and sponsors together celebrating the end result.

Get road safety ready

Our fun, free program covers bicycle, pedestrian and passenger safety. Parents get access to online resources, interactive multi-level games and discounts and special offers. Plus your teachers can access in-class presentations, road safety incursions and teaching resources to help extend learning into the classroom.

Find out more at rac.com.au/littlelegends
In February, WACSSO called for nominations on the WACSSO State Council. State Councillors are volunteers who represent P&C Associations within their electorate and work to influence the direction of education for the benefit of students in government schools.

WACSSO is pleased to advise that at the close of nominations on Friday 3rd April, we congratulate and welcome one new State Councillor and three re-elected State Councillors.

New State Councillor:
Perth North: Jenny Blair

Returning State Councillors:
Fremantle Central: Lisa O’Malley
Joondalup South: Michael Clarke
Perth Central: John Gregg

Ballot in Progress
Two nominations were received for the electorate of Perth South, a ballot is in progress. The ballot closes on Friday 29th May.

WACSSO would also like to acknowledge our recently departed and outgoing State Councillors Tracey Sheikh - Canning Central and Chontelle Sands - Fremantle South and to the State Councillors retiring on 31st May; Ken Walker - Canning South, Paul Owens - Warren-Blackwood East and Alanna Bell - Peel South. Thank you for your passion and contribution to WACSSO and to public education.

The following electorates remain vacant on the WACSSO State Council:
- Albany
- Canning Central
- Canning East
- Canning North
- Canning South – as of 1st June
- Fremantle East
- Fremantle South
- Kimberley
- Midlands Central
- Midlands East
- Midlands North
- Midwest Central
- Midwest Coastal
- Narrogin
- Peel North
- Peel South – as of 1st June
- Warren-Blackwood East – as of 1st June
- Warren-Blackwood West

Not only do State Councillors set WACSSO’s strategic direction but they are invaluable in assisting and supporting your P&C Association. To check if you have a State Councillor in your electorate, please refer to the back page of this publication.

If you would like to know more about becoming a WACSSO State Councillor, please contact Richard Brand, WACSSO Training and Development Officer at: training@wacsso.wa.edu.au or by phone: 9264 5026.
WACSSO acknowledges and thanks the below sponsors for their generosity and support of the 2015 Annual Conference ‘Connecting the DOTS – Developing Opportunities for Teamwork and Success’ in the Astral at Crown Perth.

Please support the following:

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www.buildupzone.com

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www.photohendriks.com.au

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www.dvdinfinity.com.au

Kapture Photography  
www.kapture.com.au

Mantra on Hay  
www.mantra.com.au

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**Connecting the DOTS**

**WACSSO Annual Conference**

22nd & 23rd August | Crown Perth

**Register for Conference!**

Through 2015/16 affiliation, there is no cost for the first delegate attending Conference. A second delegate and observers from your P&C can attend at a cost of $150pp. Registrations close 24th July.

**Rural & Remote travel sponsorship**

A limited number of travel sponsorship packages are available for rural and remote delegates, generously provided by Lotterywest, covering travel and accommodation costs. Applications close 22nd June.

Visit wacssso.edu.au/conference for all forms and information
From May, early childhood teachers across Australia will contribute to one of the world’s most comprehensive measures of childhood development. The Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) is a three yearly survey that measures children’s development as they begin school. The information gained shapes Australia’s early childhood policy and alerts planners to services and infrastructure needs in local communities. It is invaluable to schools, governments and communities because it builds a national picture of children’s health and wellbeing. Australia is the only country in the world where every third year its entire population of children are routinely measured when they start school.

Since 2009, the AEDC (formerly known as the Australian Early Development Index) measures the development of children in their first year of full-time school across five areas: physical health and wellbeing, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive skills, and communication skills and general knowledge.

In 2012, 78 per cent of Australian children were developmentally on track in one or more domains, a marked improvement from 76.4 per cent in 2009. The third census in 2015 will offer richer and more detailed data for communities, schools and governments the information they need to plan for the needs of children and families. Associate Professor and Co-Director, Fraser Mustard Centre, Telethon Kids Institute, Sally Brinkman, said, “Since the census began in 2009 there had been a significant improvement in children’s readiness for school with fewer children falling behind in the skills that are crucial to succeeding at school.”

Associate Professor at the Royal Children’s Hospital’s Centre for Community Child Health, Sharon Goldfeld said, “Australia was the first country in the world to measure the development of the entire population of children starting school. The data is used to help schools, communities and government identify the services and resources that are needed to best support children and families. “In 2015, there is a unique opportunity to use the data to investigate and respond to trends in early childhood development over time.” “The AEDC is about our children, our communities and our future. It gives us the evidence we need to support health, education and community policy and planning.”

Australian Primary Principals Association President, Dennis Yarrington said the AEDC was invaluable, “It provides information at the school and community level that can be used to provide tailored programmes.” Teachers are responsible for completing the Australian version of the Early Development Instrument online for each child in their class, and schools are allocated funding for relief teachers when necessary. Participation rates have been consistently high for the last two cycles of data collection: 97.5 per cent in 2009 and 96.5 per cent in 2012.

The Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) has been praised by UNICEF as one of the best tools to monitor and measure children’s progress from a young age.
Questions and Answers

Every day, the WACSSO office receives enquiries from P&C members about the running of their P&C Association. The following are just some of the questions asked with answers that may be helpful to your Association. If there is a question you would like answered that does not appear here, please contact the WACSSO office or your WACSSO State Councillor.

Q: What is the acceptable timeframe to find P&C Office Bearers?
A: If the AGM does not get any nominations to fill these roles then the P&C need to advertise another General Meeting for this purpose and consider the options of closure if the P&C remains unconstitutional. The Election of an Executive Committee is a requirement of the P&C Constitution, without Office Bearers, the P&C is not properly constituted.

Considerations taken into account are what would happen to the money from a P&C canteen or uniform shop especially concerning insurance, liabilities, employees, and worst-case scenario of a wind down, closure of the P&C. If the P&C has not succeeded to fill the Office Bearer positions within 3 months from the AGM, please contact WACSSO office.

Q: What happens to the P&C when a school becomes an Independent Public School (IPS)?
A: Nothing changes. The P&C is an integral part of the school. School Council/Board and P&C members can work together on projects. The P&C is also entitled to nominate one of its members to become a member of the School Council/Board.

Q: Is WACSSO the governing body of P&Cs?
A: WACSSO is not the governing body of P&Cs, WACSSO represents and supports affiliated P&Cs.

Q: Can P&C minutes be taken using a computer at the meeting?
A: Yes. Minutes can be taken using a laptop or computer at the meeting, or can be hand-written. Minutes are an overview of what took place at the time and cannot be altered or written from memory.

Q: Can the P&C donate funds to a charity?
A: No. As stated in the School Education Act 1999 Section 143 (3); P&C Constitution Rules 2.2 and 4.1: The School Education Act 1999 Section 143 (3):

That “an association is not to expend its funds that are in excess of administrative costs otherwise than for the benefit of students at a government school”.

P&C Constitution:

2.2 assisting in the provision of resources, facilities and amenities for the school or group of schools.

4.1 The funds of the Association and the property acquired by the Association shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the objects of the Association and no part of those funds or that property may be paid or otherwise distributed, directly or indirectly, to members of the Association, provided that nothing herein shall prevent the expenditure in good faith of funds on the administrative costs incurred by the Association.
In House Training

Download the full 2015 calendar from our website!
Venue: Department of Education, 151 Royal Street (enter from Hill Street), East Perth, Ground Floor, Conference Room 16 unless otherwise stated.

Please go to WACSSO website for more details: www.wacsso.wa.edu.au and register your interest.

Training is a great networking opportunity so P&C members can exchange ideas. Note: Light Refreshments provided. Minimum numbers are required.

Next Session: Wednesday 10th June from 9:30am-12:00noon
Topics: Fundraising Guidelines for P&Cs and Social Media/Promoting your P&C

To RSVP: Register Online https://v1.bookwhen.com/wacsso or contact the WACSSO Office 9264 4000 or training@wacsso.wa.edu.au

Please leave your full name, best contact details and name of the P&C you are representing.

P&C Training at Schools

These 2.5 hour sessions cover governance, roles & responsibilities, meeting format and WACSSO’s role.

Would your P&C like to host a P&C Training session? Please register your P&C’s interest at https://v1.bookwhen.com/wacsso

Term 3, 2015 training dates are now available on https://v1.bookwhen.com/wacsso for schools in the Perth and Mandurah areas. Please follow the instructions at the top of the page to book a training session for your P&C.

P&Cs in regional areas can contact Richard Brand, WACSSO Training and Development Officer on 08 9264 5026 to book 2015 training.

If you would like to attend any of the training, please register your interest with the WACSSO office or email: training@wacsso.wa.edu.au or visit our website www.wacsso.wa.edu.au

Upcoming P&C Training

Is your district having a training session? See if a P&C is ‘Hosting’ a session near your school.

Venue	| Day	| Date	| Time
---|---|---|---
Booragoon Primary School	| Thursday	| 4th June	| 7:00pm - 9:30pm
East Maddington Primary School	| Thursday	| 11th June	| 9:00am - 11:30am
Safety Bay Primary School	| Wednesday	| 17th June	| 9:00am - 11:30am
Dampier Primary School	| Monday	| 22nd June	| 7:00pm - 9:30pm
Baynton West Primary School	| Tuesday	| 23rd June	| 9:00am - 11:30am
South Newman Primary School	| Wednesday	| 24th June	| 6:30pm - 9:00pm
North Tom Price Primary School	| Thursday	| 25th June	| TBC
Willetton Primary School	| Wednesday	| 1st July	| 6:30pm - 9:00pm
Creaney Primary School	| Wednesday	| 22nd July	| 9:30am - Noon

Training is free with affiliation

Contact the WACSSO office on (08) 9264 4000 if your P&C would like to nominate someone to represent a vacant electorate or if you would like further information on the roles and responsibilities of a State Councillor.