MINUTES OF Meeting – Wednesday 8th February 2012

Attendees
As per the circulated Attendance Book.

Apologies
Rebecca Hastings, Sharon Weismantel, Robert King

Minutes of Previous Meeting
Motion: To accept the Minutes as read
Moved: Zoe Thompson    Seconded: Greg Tunnock    CARRIED

Business Arising

- A question was raised about the dissemination of the Local Schools, Local Decisions NSW Government initiative. Greg Tunnock confirmed that the information has been circulated via the P&C email list.

- This lead to a discussion about the new RGHS and P&C system for communication with parents. Greg Tunnock outlined that we are currently in a transition period where the old system which had been run by the P&C has been closed down but the new system, which will be administered by the school, is not yet operational. The new system involves parents logging on to the parent portal and ticking the box that says that they want to receive communication from the P&C. The school will communicate formally with parents to advise and remind them of how to use the Parent Portal. In the meantime the P&C will send reminders by SMS of those parents who have indicated that they are happy for this to happen. The school sent out hard copy pink paper invitations for this meeting. Parents indicated that they had received these and had been a welcome reminder.

- Ruth McConnell indicated that work had started on the Sustainable Garden Project. She had joined teachers and students on the last day of term and put in place three large planter boxes and three smaller ones. The Environment Club has been actively involved. Step two of the project is to create an open classroom for classes to take place outside.

Correspondence In

- An advertising flyer was received from Lane Cove Bowling Club inviting the P&C to hold functions at their venue.

Correspondence Out

- The P&C had sent flowers to the family of a student in Year 9 whose father had passed away in December. Greg Tunnock thanked Sally Morgan for organising this.

Principal’s Report

- Ms Kelly welcomed everyone to the meeting and was very pleased to see such a large turnout.
• Ms Kelly introduced Ann Vogelnest, new Head Teacher, Teaching and Learning, and noted that she has been relieved of all administrative duties and has been asked to concentrate on inspiring teachers to continue to improve their teaching. She also has responsibility for the Learning Support Team.

• Ms Kelly announced that RGHS had received a grant from the Federal Government for $200,000 to bring one of the kitchens up to industry standard. This is an imperative for the Hospitality students and will also benefit the Food Tech students.

• Staffing at the school is very stable. The only vacancy at the school is in English/Drama/ESL and this is currently being filled.

• The school has produced a two page brochure on school successes in 2011. Ms Kelly distributed it to those present and said that it will also be available on the website.

• Ms Kelly also distributed a letter that had been sent to parents of students in 8T and said that Ms Vogelnest would talk further to the project.

• Ms Kelly and Ms Vogelnest had been on a professional development to China which had many benefits including the enrolment of additional international students.

• School numbers are stable and should result in stable teaching numbers for 2012. The school has stopped taking additional out of area students in Year 7 as the enrolment is currently at 177 and the cut off is 180.

• The School Planning session took place on 22-24 November last year with the SRC, teachers, support staff and parents all participating. Targets were discussed in the following priority areas:
  o Numeracy
  o Literacy
  o Student engagement
  o Leadership
  o Organisational effectiveness

• Ms Kelly emphasised that the school is at the beginning of a three year planning cycle with targets up on the website shortly. All targets are ultimately about improving student outcomes.

• ICT Following the Principal’s Report Ms Ann Vogelnest spoke briefly to the meeting.

• She outlined her teaching history which included an extensive time at Ryde Secondary College (previously Malvina High) and then 3 years as the Northern Sydney Regional IT consultant with an emphasis on the introduction of the laptops. She was keen to get back into the classroom and feels very fortunate to be working at RGHS and has been impressed by the open atmosphere of the school and the politeness of the girls.

• Ms Vogelnest elaborated on the 8T project where the class will be learning Mandarin. This will take place in their ICT lesson where they will learn via video conference. The main teacher is a Mandarin speaking teacher from Chatswood HS who will conduct two video conferences with the students each week. Ms Vogelnest will be the receiving teacher in the classroom, helping with questions and organisation.

• Ms Vogelnest noted that she also has responsibility for innovation in student engagement and student leadership, two of the school target areas. She also teaches Senior Business Studies.
**Treasurer’s Report**

In the Treasurer’s absence Greg Tunnock presented the Treasurer’s Report. The P&C has a healthy opening balance for the beginning of the year of $16,134.

The question was raised about how much is raised through the P&C contribution. Mr Tunnock noted that it had been approximately $40,000 per year but the figure had fallen slightly over the last few years. This was an issue that the P&C would like to address in 2012 taking effect on the 2013 contributions.

A number of year 7 parents suggested changing the fees form to integrate the P&C contribution into the total payment. Some parents had found the form a little confusing.

It was suggested that school fee and P&C contribution form be looked at before the end of Term 2, 2012.

**New Business**

**Assessment and Reporting**

- The issue of assessment at the end of Year 10 in the light of the demise of the School Certificate exams was raised. Some parents felt it was important to replace these exams with across the board Riverside exams at the end of the year 10 to prepare students for examinations in Year 11 and 12. The advantages and disadvantages of end of year examinations were debated.

- Ms Kelly noted that the discussion was timely as the Executive were meeting the following day to talk about options for Year 10 in Term 4. Examinations were one of the options up for discussion. Ms Kelly saw the additional time in Term 4 as an opportunity to prepare the students better for Senior School. She believes that there are a number of valid options the preparation could take and would like to hear from staff and parents before making a final decision. She stated that a definitive decision would not be made until the end of the term.

- The issue of reporting was also raised by a number of parents. A percentage of Riverside parents feel that they are not well enough informed about the progress of their daughters education to help them make educational decisions – e.g. elective subject selection. Others felt that the tone of the reports was very encouraging and reflected well on their daughters. Parents debated the pros and cons of a reporting system which included marks and grades. Comparisons were made with other schools.

- It was agreed that without concrete examples of RGH S reports and reports from other schools the discussion remained too generalised and relied too heavily on hearsay. Ms Kelly offered to continue the conversation at a subcommittee meeting of interested P&C members or at the next P&C meeting. Ms Kelly agreed to bring copies of the reports from Riverside and other schools to facilitate the discussion.

**P&C involvement in Open Day**

- Ms Kelly requested that the P&C participate in the RGH S Open Day on Thursday 8th March from 2-6pm.

- The P&C agreed to run a sausage sizzle and the Music Committee would be invited to run the Gelato Cart as they had done on previous occasions.

- Zoe Thompson said that she would sms attendees to ask for volunteers to help run the day.
**Future Meetings**

Meetings for 2012 would be held on the second Wednesday of the month including:

- 14\(^{th}\) March
- 9\(^{th}\) May – set aside to look at funding the school ‘wish list’.
- 13\(^{th}\) June
- 8\(^{th}\) Aug
- 12\(^{th}\) September
- 10\(^{th}\) October
- 14\(^{th}\) Nov (AGM)

Greg Tunnock asked attendees of the meeting whether they would like to hear from guest speakers at P&C meetings and also asked Ms Kelly whether other Head Teachers (HOD) would be willing to attend the meetings.

It was suggested that it might be interesting to hear from teaching staff, not just HODs and also from student leaders within the school. Parents commented that they found the Principal’s report particularly informative and gave them a better insight into the running of the school.

Meeting was closed at 9.00pm