

Mount Lawley Senior High School

School Council Report 2007

This brief report is in the context of the School Council's powers and duties as expressed in its Terms of Reference.

*The Council has the following powers and duties:
to take part in:*

- *establishing and reviewing from time to time, the school's objectives, priorities and general policy directions;*

The Principal brought a number of strategic issues to the Council for its input including:

- Continued discussions about the strategies needed to offset the impact of Perth Modern School as a selective school. This included (unsuccessful) meetings with senior staff of the Department of Education & Training.
- Changes to assessment and reporting required by the Department of Education & Training. The Council made representation to the Minister for Education about concerns that related to the loss to parents of the rich information provided by levels and the impact of a grades system that required all students (for each subject) to be assessed on a single state-wide continuum.
- Increasing demand by students for entry to Mount Lawley generated by the impact of changes of access to Perth Modern School and increasing popularity of Mount Lawley.

- *the planning of financial arrangements necessary to fund those objectives, priorities and directions;*

School Council has an input into major budget allocations and regularly reviews progress of Actuals to Budget. Council members have contributed specialist skills in finance to assist the School's financial operations.

School Council undertook substantial work to develop a reporting framework that would allow Council to receive reports about the outcomes of financial decisions approved by it. The Deputy Chair (Rob Walker) worked with staff in the Department of Education & Training to develop a reporting framework that provides meaningful aggregated information, presented in a graphical format. DET has provided system access to allow the data set to be generated within the school at the end of each month.

School Council members (Catherine Smith, Rob Walker, Christine Richardson) assisted the School to secure chaplaincy funding of \$20,000 per annum for 3 years. Council has continued to promote additional streams of funding from parent population.

- *evaluating the school's performance in achieving them; and*

The Principal routinely brings very comprehensive performance statistics to the attention of Council members and provides opportunity for discussion. The Chair of School Council was invited to participate in the School Review 2007.

- *formulating codes of conduct for students at the school;*

Nil 2007

to determine in consultation with students, their parents and staff a dress code for students when they are attending or representing the school;

The new **school uniform** was successfully implemented in 2007, with a very high level of satisfaction from students. Council members lead a consultation process with parents, students and staff during the year to resolve outstanding issues around whether to include a hat and a bag as part of the School's dress

code. The recommendations made to Council were to strongly support (but not make mandatory) a sun safe hat and an ergonomic bag.

School Council also endorsed a process for the ongoing **review of dress code**, and developed a **School Dress Advisory Panel** (as required by the Department of Education & Training). Information is attached.

School Council also reviewed issues raised by parents regarding heavy bags and the lack of lockers at the School. An analysis of issues was undertaken and a number of strategies implemented to reduce the risk of back injury by students. Key strategies were the identification of an ergonomic back pack, educational information about correct use of back pack and the provision of class sets of heavy books so that books do not need to be brought to School. Detailed information is available from the P&C website at http://mlshspc.org.au/uniform_back_pack.html.

Thanks to Jo Furness for the excellent work carried out with finalising dress code issues and investigating back pack options.

to promote the school in the community;

In 2006, the School Council was also involved in the nomination of the School for a **Teaching Australia** School- Parent partnership award and the nomination of Terry Boland for the WA Principal of the Year. In early 2007, the School received a \$15,000 award for its School – Parent partnership and the Principal was a finalist for Principal of the Year. The Council supported the allocation of these funds towards an activity that would assist the development of the partnership between ECU and the School. To date, no specific project has been identified for financial support.

Members of Council were actively involved with staff and members of the P&C in the development of a proposal to '**Healthy Active Australia**' for a grant of \$200,000 for the project titled:
Proactive Keep Active @Lawley

If successful, this project will augment the current Health & Physical Exercise (HPE) curriculum and provide a broader array of opportunities for students to improve their physical fitness through school-based activities. It will have 2 key areas of focus:

- Help a 'low activity' at-risk group of Year 10 students change their lifestyle by increasing their level of physical activity and improving their physical fitness.
- Enhance the physical education curriculum for Years 8 & 9 students to sustain their interest in physical activity into the senior years of secondary schooling.

A key element of the project will be the purchase and installation of physical fitness equipment on the School grounds; its incorporation into the Health & Physical Education curriculum and its subsequent availability for fitness training during breaks, in HPE classes and after-school.

This project will be a natural extension to the School's very successful healthy eating initiatives and its implementation will involve the School, parents through the MLSHS Parents & Citizens Committee and Edith Cowan University (ECU) through their School of Education and their Health & Fitness Centre. Both organisations are strong supporters of this project and have agreed to partner the School in this application.

The announcement of successful projects has been delayed following the change in federal government in November.

Members of Council had significant input into the **farewell function** for the principal Terry Boland, with many past parents and community members invited to the event.

to approve:

- ❑ *charges and contributions for the provision of certain materials, services and facilities under section 99(4) of the School Education Act;*
- ❑ *extra cost optional components of educational programmes, under section 100(3) of the School Education Act;*
- ❑ *items to be supplied by a student for use in an educational programme, under section 108(2) of the School Education Act; and*
- ❑ *any agreements or arrangements for advertising or sponsorship in relation to the school under section 216(5) of the School Education Act;*

School Council provided guidance to the Finance Committee about key directions for funding and reviewed and approved subsequent recommendations for fees, charges and voluntary contributions.

with the approval of the Minister or the Director General, as the Minister's delegate, to:

- ❑ *take part in the selection of, but not the appointment of, the school principal or any other member of the teaching staff under section 129(2) of the School Education Act; and*

Following the resignation of Terry Boland as Principal, the School Council requested inclusion in the placement process for Principal. The Chair and Deputy Chair consulted with staff and with parents regarding key attributes. The Chair represented School Council in informal meetings held as part of the placement process for principal.

to do all things necessary or convenient to be done for or in connection with the carrying out of its functions.

The Council has continued to review and made changes to its Terms of Reference to improve the representation of students onto School Council.

Christine Richardson
Chair, School Council
29 February 2008

Dress Requirements for Students

Mount Lawley Senior High School

Background

In 2005, the School Council agreed that it was timely to review and update the dress code for Mount Lawley Senior High School. There was a significant level of support for a uniform in keeping with the new image and profile being developed for the school. The School Council developed Terms of Reference and formed a working party to review and update the School's dress code during 2006. The new dress code was implemented in Term 1 2007. Concurrent with the development of the new dress code, the P&C agreed to operate the Uniform Shop for the School. The new uniform has been very well received by students and their parents.

ONGOING REVIEW OF DRESS REQUIREMENTS

There is now a need to embed a process for ongoing review and updating of School dress code into School Council's annual activities. It is recommended that a Working Party reporting to School Council be constituted as the group that carries out the ongoing consultation with all stakeholder groups and makes recommendations for modifications to the School's dress code. It is clear that there is some strong but not uniform support from parents for the inclusion of ergonomic backpacks or a wheeled school bag and hats in the dress code for 2008.

School Uniform Working Party

It is recommended that a School Uniform Working Party be established each year to consult with the school community about modifications to the current dress code and then make recommendations to School Council about School dress code.

The membership of the working party will be:

- 2 School Council nominees (1 to act as convenor)
- 2 P&C nominees
- 1 Primary school P&C nominee
- 2 student nominees from the Middle School
- 2 student nominees from the Senior School
- 2 Staff nominees

The Working Party will report its progress to School Council Meetings and to meetings of the major parties (P&C, Student Council, Staff)

Review of Dress Requirements

The School uniform will be updated on a regular basis in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. The school uniform will
 - reflect the desired brand, image and profile of the School
 - recognise the different needs of students in both middle school and senior school;
 - comply with the requirements of the DET regulatory framework
2. Transition from current to new uniform requirements will balance costs to parents from recommended changes with the desirability of moving quickly to project a consistent image throughout the School.
3. All aspects of personal appearance comprising clothing, jewellery, make-up and hair are part of the School's dress code and are also subject to review.
4. It is expected that major review of dress code will operate in a 5 – 7 year cycle, and that the next major review will be no sooner than the 2012 school year.

School Uniform Shop and P&C Sub-Committee

The P&C has agreed to run a Uniform Shop from 2007. This is managed through a P&C sub-committee and has the responsibility for making the agreed uniform available for sale to students and parents. This group implements the decisions of School Council regarding dress code.

COMPLIANCE WITH DRESS REQUIREMENTS

In 2007, the Department of Education & Training promulgated new policy for Dress Requirements for Students and required that School Councils determine details of procedures for managing:

- exemptions from the dress requirements;
- assistance with compliance, including convening **school dress advisory panels**;
- sanctions for non-compliance; and

In general, applications for individual exemptions from parents, adult students and independent minors are dealt with by the Principal. School dress advisory panels will be established to assist with compliance with dress requirements.

School Dress Advisory Panel

It is recommended that a School Dress Advisory Panel be established to assist with compliance with the School's uniform requirements. Members of a school dress advisory panel will have an awareness of and sensitivity to local conditions. The panel will include:

- Chair of School Council (or nominee)
- Student services representative
- Parent representative
- Student representative

Terms of Reference – School Dress Advisory Panel

- School dress advisory panels will offer assistance and support for students and their families where difficulties with compliance arise.
- Care will be taken to deal sensitively with those reluctant to apply for exemption or in any other way make public their difference from others.
- Principals will ensure that parents are aware of the conditions for financial assistance, including direct assistance to holders of some pension and health cards at the secondary level

2007 Recommendations on Dress Code

Recommendations from the Uniform Working Party

Regarding inclusion of a hat in the school dress code, the recommendations are;

- A school hat becomes a highly recommended but not compulsory part of the school uniform
- The hat is sold through the uniform shop and appears on the uniform order form
- Education on sun smart behaviour is provided to students in the first few lessons of Health Education every year
- The design of the hat will be the most popular (as voted by students) of four sun smart hats provided for review

Regarding inclusion of a backpack in the school dress code, the recommendations are;

- A school backpack becomes a highly recommended but not compulsory part of the school uniform
- The backpack is sold through the uniform shop and appears on the uniform order form (pre-paid basis)
- The backpack of choice is the Spartan Chiropak, which will be in navy with the school logo
- An information sheet for parents should be prepared
- Details from the information sheet should be published in the school diary each year
- Education for students from an appropriate health professional should be provided in the Health Education program every year
- Educate students as to what needs to be carried in their backpacks each day
- The P&C should look at funding an education session for parents eg P&C meeting, Middle School Support Group