

Minutes from AGM of Kinsale Community School Parents Association, Sept 25th 2017.

In attendance: Principal Mr Fergal McCarthy, Deputy Principals Ms Claire Sheehan, Mr Ger Hogan and Ms Jean Gaffney. Chris Cronin and Liz Timmons (parent reps on Board of Management), Owen Wills (Chairperson), Helen Hynes (secretary), Andy Ashford (Treasurer), Hillary McCarthy, Breda Harrington and Trish Cooney (PA committee members), and Parents.

Apologies: Ann Lyons, Siobhan Keogh, Donna O'Connor, Audrey Grennan, Kathy Etty, Samantha Bowen, Nessa O'Reilly, John Fitzpatrick.

Principal's address:

Mr Fergal McCarthy explained that since Budget 2017, schools with in excess of 900 pupils are entitled to 3 Deputy Principals. He introduced the 3 Deputy Principals Ms Claire Sheehan, Mr Ger Hogan and Ms Jean Gaffney, who is deputizing during Ms Kathleen O'Brien's maternity leave.

Mr McCarthy then outlined the work of the Care Team in the school including initiatives to understand resilience and complex feelings. He said that in the school's opinion human resources are more important than physical resources.

Regarding the new school building, Mr McCarthy explained that the school only received the keys to the building on the Friday before school resumed. This caused challenges in terms of equipping the facilities. In particular, there was a delay with regards to the arrival of the new lockers, which caused difficulty to first year students in the first week and a half of term. These lockers are now in place. There are a few items which have been ordered (eg tilted table tops for use in the Tech Graphics rooms, and some equipment for use in chemistry) which have not yet arrived, but the students can use the old equipment in the meantime.

It was reported that the E-block extension was due to begin during this academic year and would take 10 -12 weeks from start to completion and that the gym was nearing completion. The running track, hockey training surface (and some other sports facilities) will be installed as soon as possible. The pre-fabs have all been removed apart from those being used by the builders as site offices.

Mr McCarthy explained that the contract for the canteen had been awarded to a company who provide school meals in multiple schools throughout the country and was due to open shortly. The focus will be on healthy meals including breakfasts, lunches, carvery etc. The school will be given 10%

of the turnover, which it is hoped will be used for re-furbishing the sports surfaces when they need it in the future. There will be removable benches in the canteen and students will be welcome to bring their own food to eat in the canteen if they wish.

The school received a digital baby grand piano from 2 individuals who were selling their house in Kinsale and moving on. This has been placed in the new music room. In addition to this, the school has bought a baby grand piano, with money received from the prize awarded from the Google Science Fair, which has been placed in the foyer. This is accessible to students to play.

Professor Gerry Wrixon (previous President of UCC and living in the Kinsale area) has also offered to donate some of his personal library to the school. The new library will include a digital suite, research centre and a space for students to develop presentation skills. It will be located in the old balcony area.

Regarding the Leaving Cert, in excess of 23% of students exceeded 500 points. The Junior Cert results were also very good this year.

The school participates in the Féilte Scoile every year. This is a way for teachers who have attended Continuous Professional Development (CPD) events and developed particular expertise to share this knowledge with their peers. The school will be holding a Féilte Scoile workshop on Oct 4th in the school and officers of the PA were invited to attend.

Mr McCarthy thanked the PA for their assistance with the new school uniform.

The following points were raised from the floor:

- There was a discussion regarding the Mental health programme in the school (STEPS-A).
- There was a discussion about the new school uniform items (girls skirt and pants) and a clarification that DuBarry style shoe are acceptable footwear (but runners and other white soled shoes are not acceptable.)
- Some parents expressed dissatisfaction with the level of communication coming out of the school. Mr McCarthy pointed out the school has an active Twitter feed, and this is linked form the school's website. He said that from now on, all of the Principal's Reports to the Board of Management will be uploaded to the school website. One parent praised the material available on the website on the TY noticeboard but said if would be better for parents if this information was emailed to parents so that they did not miss deadlines etc.

- One parent asked if the students will be able to continue wearing their PE gear all day on their designated PE day, after the new gym is open. She said that for first years in particular, changing clothes during the school day can be challenging in terms of organising themselves, losing clothes etc. Mr McCarthy said he would consider this, and logistically it may be necessary in any event.
- Helen Hynes gave a summary of the Fundraising Activity for the year with respect to the track and pitch and invited parents to become involved with the fundraising committee.
- Liz Timmons (Parent Rep on Board of Management) said that she will be stepping down from her role on the Book Rental Scheme after this year. She is looking for volunteers to help run the scheme, and also for someone to take over the lead role. We collected a list of people willing to help, which was forwarded to Liz.
- Gearóid Wycherley, who is involved in the Kinsale Youth Café gave a brief presentation to parents looking for support for the Youth Café and explaining their plans to hold teenage discos in Kinsale (aimed at 1st and 2nd years.) He asked for parents to help.
- Chris Cronin, Parent Rep on Board of Management commended the school on its good results, and broad range of extracurricular activities. He commended the school and the teachers and said that “The people make the school, not the building”.

Owen Wills summarised the minutes from the AGM 2016. The minutes were accepted.

Owen Wills gave the Chairperson’s Report. (See separate document.)

Treasurer’s Report

Andy Ashford gave the Treasurer’s report. The opening balance for the PA account was €460. The only expenses this year were €40 for a floral wreath which was brought to the funeral of Mr Don O’Shea.

Election of New Committee Members:

- The following were elected to the committee for this academic year:
 - MariaGrazia Traverso, Rachel Casey, Tom Brennan, Jan Humphreys, Coleen Walsh, Eddie Kelleher

- The following committee members have agreed to stay on
 - Owen Wills, Andy Ashford, Helen Hynes, Breda Harrington, Hillary McCarthy, Ann Lyons, Siobhan Keogh, Donna O'Conner, Audrey Grennan

- The following committee members will be standing down:
 - Trish Cooney, Jennifer Kovacs, Rosita Kingston and we thank them for all their input to the committee and school activities.