

**North Wicklow Educate Together Secondary School Parent Staff
Association Meeting: Minutes
25th March 2019**

In attendance: Hellen Dalton; Evan Furlong; Angela Higgins; Samantha Holman; Karin Janssen; Ciara O'Mahony; Niall O'Malley; Conn O'Midheach; Caitriona Rogan; Maedhbh Rolff; Niamh Swan.

Apologies: Natalie Butler.

1. Welcome and apologies
2. **Correspondence** – e-mail from Mick Heffernan giving feedback on Clodagh Finn talk. E-mail from Aisling Sammon re Pieta House talk.
3. **Minutes and matters arising**

Logging in to NWETSS app by computer – deferred to next month.

Clodagh Finn – talk on Mary Elmes. Captivating. 'The Irish Oscar Schindler'. CF did research using 10,000 sources. Mick is planning to link with Clodagh again.

Pieta House talk – mixed feedback based on survey from children. The principle is to keep discussing these key issues in different forums. Teachers introduced Pieta House to pupils too at lunchtime sessions.

4. **Feedback/discussion by PSA on school SSE presentation (Mick's presentation at last meeting)**

Very positive. Realistic goals. Brave choice. Openness to consultation with stakeholders including the PSA was very welcome. Interesting to hear the points arising – for example – the fact that many children don't understand what is being asked of them. Collaboration throughout the school, together with collaboration by teachers with external stakeholders (Siobhain O'Brien and other teachers). Very positive suggestions emerged too from the parent evening, and these were reflected in the report. Expertise in the parent body, and willingness to help was positive. Definitive aim to improve day to day life in the school – quick fixes, plus longer term upskilling to create support structures. PSA was delighted to be involved in the collaboration.

5. **Feedback on cafe at 3rd year parent teacher night**

Income from the event was €30.00. There is a need for a consistent storage space for PSA café equipment. It is very useful to have the café at the Parent Teacher Meetings – it is welcome for people coming from work, etc.

Actions

- Decision to make price €1.00 for tea/coffee in future, in order to make some profit. Baked goods will be variable in price.
- Ask people to label the ingredients in cakes, and ensure not to bake with peanuts, as the school is 'peanut free'. Caitriona to make a laminated price label to be put inside the lid of the storage box so that all volunteers know the prices.

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6. Feedback on cinema night (including to note microwave replacement)

Attendance went from 1 to 19 in the last 36 hours. 27 attended. The team ran out of drinks. Ciara and ? did the refreshments. Concerns re freedom to roam around building. There is a need for more supervision. More Garda vetted volunteers are required. Microwave was replaced.

Actions

- Parents to be informed that organisers and volunteers have no responsibility for what happens outside the building.
- Identify an evening when Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann are not meeting in the school, as there was very little space.
- Organise parent social evening in September, including volunteer training and offer the Garda vetting form. Introduce PSA. Add this to the calendar.
- Consult with the Student Council about further activity nights – e.g. film evening, games evening, scavenger hunt.... Ask Student Council to consult with students about preferred activities (Natalie Butler).
- Decision to run another activity in October.
- Include request for GV volunteers in April Newsletter.

7. 3-5 year school strategy in preparation.

The Principal, with the school team has been working on a one year strategy to this point. Now they are working on a 3-5 year strategy.

Actions

More information to follow. (Ciara O'Mahony)

8. Communication between Board of Management and PSA.

BoM is preparing to provide advice on communications from PSA to BoM to prepare for situations that may arise in the future.

9. Visiting speakers for school

John Gibbons (www.Thinkorswim.ie) ; An Taisce has indicated he would be happy to visit the school to talk.

Actions

- Caitriona to send a paragraph about John to Ciara as a briefing for Jonathan.
- Caitriona to talk to Kate Minnock about the talk.

- School to send possible dates to Caitriona.

10. Writers' and Arts' Week.

There will be two evening events during Arts week, and will require promotion. Chris McHallem will be performing Strutting and Fretting on the evening of April 9th in the school. This has been publicised on social media.

There will be a creative schools open evening between 5 and 7 o'clock, on Thursday 11th, including show of work; music, drama, special effects.

Actions

- Promote Strutting and Fretting on April 9th widely.
- Niamh to talk to Jonathan about the possibilities for refreshments, and to find out the capacity of the hall.
- Niamh to ask Jonathan whether an Eventbrite account is necessary.
- Volunteers needed to supervise Creative Schools on Thursday 11th and cover refreshments: Maedhbh; Samantha and Niall volunteering. Maedhbh to put call out for volunteers.
- Caitriona to put out call for baked goods.
- Ciara to ask Lisa to find out whether volunteer details can be shared for the purpose of finding volunteers for activities.

11. Planning events up to May

PSA Programme to follow school programme – creative schools and arts week; drama event.

12. Initial discussion, calendar for September - December term:

Items to be included:

September – parents' social night;

September: Coffee Morning

October: Student Event;

October: AGM with speaker;

November: Pub Quiz;

13. Use of standard sections for agendas for future meetings:

It was agreed that headings used in future will be:

- Correspondence
- Finance

- Volunteering
- Communications
- Events.

Action

Angela to restructure Agenda template

14. Date of next Meeting

29th April 2019

15. AOB