

School Council President's Report for 2017

Footscray Primary School

Annual General Meeting – 28 May 2018



2017 was a year of notable achievements of which Footscray Primary School can be very proud. The school community united in a range of events and forums, to enhance the positive learning environment that exists at the school, to deepen the opportunities available to our young learners, and to strengthen the bonds between the school and the wider community.

I'd like to acknowledge the dedication and contribution of the school's teaching and administration staff, the 2017 School Council (especially retired School Councillor Mark Hollis who served 2 years as President), and all parent and carer volunteers, including those who contributed to the sub-committees of School Council. Special mention must also go to the organising committee of the inaugural School Fete for delivering an outstanding event.

The numerous achievements and activities of 2017 included:

- **School Review and Strategic Planning Process** – following a lengthy consultative process over many months involving staff, parents/carers, School Council and students, 2017 saw the creation of a new 4-year strategic plan for 2018-2021. Key goals of the Strategic Plan are to improve skills and knowledge in numeracy and literacy, to empower and support students, to develop leadership capacity for staff and to foster school-family partnerships based on trust and mutual respect.
- **Participation in the Footscray Learning Precinct** – Principal Philip Fox and 2017 School Council President Mark Hollis were members of the Footscray Learning Precinct governance group and other associated committees. The Learning Precinct will create an improved pathway for our children from primary to secondary school, as well as delivering new infrastructure. A key challenge for School Council in 2018 will be to ensure that our school benefits directly from the proposed government investment in the precinct.

- **Opening of our renovated oval and new landscaping** – Following a long campaign and a lengthy renovation process, the grounds were fully reopened in time for the 2017 school year. The transformative effect on the school is amazing and our oval is now an inviting space for the students to congregate and play.
- **Launch of our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)** – A committee of enthusiastic teachers, parents and Julianne Frazer (DET Koorie Education Support Officer) developed our Reconciliation Action Plan, which was launched in late May. The vision for our RAP is to improve the relationships between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians. The aim is for all members of our community to develop an understanding of the rich history of one of the world's oldest cultures and educate our community to understand how we can address the inequality between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians that began with colonisation of Australia in 1788.
- **Inaugural FPS School Fete** – The School Fete on Saturday 25 November 2017 was an outstanding success. All credit must go to the dedicated group of parent volunteers who spent many months and countless hours on organisation, as well as the classroom reps who coordinated the stalls and activities. The Fete was a wonderful way for the school to unite and have some fun while also engaging with the wider community. The success of the day could be summed up by the hundreds of smiles on the faces of our children. Importantly, the Fete raised in excess of \$20,000 which will be put towards improving the playground.
- **Vietnam study tour** – Our biennial Vietnamese study tour was a huge success, with a group of grade 5s and 6s taking part under the leadership of the Principal and senior teachers. The 13-day trip included visiting our sister school in Nha Trang, participating in cultural activities, touring historic sites, and independent sightseeing.
- **Parents' Vietnamese classes** – 4 sessions of Vietnamese classes for parents were organised by Vietnamese coordinator, Cô Chau Cong, assisted by several Vietnamese-speaking parents. 15 parent-learners attended the classes which offered a similar experience to our children's learning, including instruction in basic vocabulary, tones and expression.
- **Excursions** – To enrich their curriculum, students participated in many excursions and incursions during 2017. These included: the Shrine of Remembrance, Melbourne Museum, National Gallery of Victoria, Animal Land Children's' Farm, Serendip

Sanctuary, 100 Story Building, Melbourne Arts Centre, EcoLink, ACMI, Royal Botanic Gardens, the Interschool Swimming Carnival, Werribee Zoo, Mind & Body Incursion, Tabloid Sports Day Incursion, Yoga Fun Incursion, Interschool Cross Country, How the World Works Incursion and Orienteering Incursion.

- **Outside School Hours Care (OSHC)** – the contract for Camp Australia, our current OSHC provider, expired at the end of 2017. After seeking initial feedback from parents last year, it was decided to extend Camp Australia’s contract by 1 year to allow time to conduct a thorough expression of interest process to find a provider to run the service moving forward. The EOI process will be driven by School Councillors Raylene Varone and Charles Windeyer, with consultation and input from parents and school staff.

- **Garden Club** – one of the school’s most popular intramural activities is the long-running Garden Club, coordinated by a dedicated group of parent-volunteers. Each week dozens of children participate in gardening activities such as planting, weeding, watering and harvesting, while learning about horticulture in a fun and engaging way. At times during the year Garden Club also hosts picnics for the student gardeners using produce that they have grown, and excess produce is offered to the school community. In October, Garden Club members hosted a plant sale of seedlings that they had grown themselves, which raised \$440 to support the work of the Club.

- **All Aboard** – The school’s “All Aboard” program supports students to participate in excursions and activities by assisting with paying some or all of the cost of the activity. Fundraising for All Aboard came from class cake stalls and second-hand uniform sales.

- **Other notable activities in 2017 included** –
 - The introduction of Seesaw for learning portfolios
 - Bilingual Education presentation to the school community, by Professor Hajek from Melbourne University and bilingual teachers from FPS
 - Whole School Celebration of Learning including the Year 6 exhibition
 - Music Classes and Music Class concert
 - Chess Club
 - Helmet Day
 - Strength Based Parenting evening presented by Chris Daicos.

On behalf of all the 2017 School Councillors, thank-you to the school staff, students, parents and community for all of your contributions in making Footscray Primary School a place that lives up to our school values: striving for our best, respectful, diverse, responsible and cooperative. The 2018 School Council looks forward to building on the great achievements of the past year.

Kind regards,

Justin Mansfield

School Council President