

## St Joseph's School, Clare P&F AGM 2023

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2023

### President's Report- Denika Koch

- Welcome all and thank you for coming
- 3.5 years ago my family were embraced into the St Joseph's community with warmth and acceptance. But I certainly didn't imagine myself sitting in this position! In fact, I recall saying to Peter in our first enrolment meeting that I wasn't able to commit too much time to school activities, simply due to the distance that we live from Clare. Well here we are, I've got to know that Horrocks Hwy pretty well! As a new parent to the school and even to the Clare community, I felt welcomed and encouraged to be involved. In this time, I have come to realise that the Parents & Friends of St Joseph's is far more than a fundraising and events committee. We are a network of busy people giving valuable time and resources for the betterment of our beautiful school, and the experience it provides for our children. But most outstanding to me, is the support it provides for all involved.
- I believe 2022 was a year of progress for the P&F. The year began with the first meeting forced to be held online, due to COVID still restricting parents from attending the school grounds for a short time. This meeting discussed some concerns for our new parents and their lack of interaction within the school. But true to our pro-active community, off-site gatherings were soon arranged for new parents to interact.
  - **Class reps** were implemented in Term 1, an integral communication link between class parents and teachers. Thank you to the 14 parents who took on this role.
  - We had the pleasure of catering for the **Middle School Opening Ceremony**, which was extremely well supported in donations and help by our parent community, providing and serving beautifully presented food to the school's special guests. It was a privilege to showcase our new facilities on a glorious Autumn afternoon.
  - The **New Parents Dinner** is a fabulous annual initiative that was once again delivered in 2022, although a little later in the calendar (again due to COVID holding it off). The gathering has a social warmth and elegant atmosphere, welcoming our new school parents with beautiful food served by our young student leaders. A special thanks to Laura Davidson, Al Duncan, Kelli Shanahan and Teresa Burner, with the help of Peter Shearer, for offering this to our new parents for another year.
  - Multiple other **catering** opportunities through the year also allowed for some P&F fundraising. Again, very well supported by our parents and often staff as well, for which I was really grateful.
  - We were able to offer support to one of our own school families in a time of need by way of a **food drive**, filling their freezer with a variety of nutritious meals and lunchbox snacks. This was one of those occasions when our community really pulled together in such a quick response to a call out for donations. I was humbled by the generosity that flooded in through our Kiss & Drop zone and filled the back of my car, as I delivered the food to the family.
  - Our **coffee machine** continued to be utilised in various ways, including barista training and experience for our MS students as part of their Food Technologies curriculum, and the warm welcome of a morning coffee at the entrance to our school assemblies and events.

- Our **canteen** committee worked tirelessly to bring the service back to our students after COVID held it back for a time. But their progress certainly didn't stop there. They met frequently to review their processes and develop strategies for increasing volunteer numbers and matching experience levels. They implemented a new system of 3 volunteers plus MS student assistance for the busy Friday service. They surveyed the school community with a well-planned set of questions to draw a range of opinions and feedback on the service being provided. They reviewed the menu options, by collating data from the Qkr! ordering system to identify seasonal trends, which has enabled a more regulated and economical ordering system. They also continued to support local businesses in ensuring the bulk of our food items are purchased fresh and local. All of this was achieved while managing the juggle of weekly volunteers to keep the canteen operating. I sincerely thank the following people for their commitment: Jane Adams, Kerrie Weckert, Hollie Kain, Yana Zanette, Larni Ward, Amy O'Shea-Coulter, Stacey Hitch and Jen Chestnut.
- One of our consistent fundraisers, which also operates as a sub-branch of the canteen committee, has been the local **Bakery Orders** coordinated by one parent, Linda Redden. Linda has single-handedly and very discreetly, provided this opportunity to raise P&F funds through a great service of bakery goods to the school community. Thank you to Linda for her quiet and long-term achievement in this area. Linda also ensured a very smooth transition for her replacement, a warm welcome to Catherine Driscoll and thank you for taking on the role.
- P&F were able to support the Year 7 families and school staff in the delivery of another amazing **Community Dinner**, by way of rostering kitchen staff for preparation and service of the meal. Ali Paulett was very thankful for our quick response to fill the roster in her area of the community dinner, and what a fabulous job Ali and her team did!
- We held our 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive School & Parish **Fete** on the school grounds. This brought new growth and enthusiasm for the on-site format, along with considerable funds raised which were shared with our Sevenhill Parish. After many months of planning and set up in the days prior, as the event's coordinator, I was unable to attend the day due to a clash in Athletics commitments for 3 of my boys. So, I'm incredibly thankful for Amanda Redden and the team of stallholders who ran the successful day, particularly to Peter for the mop up at the end when I believe rain quickly approached!
- **School Photos** are always a much-appreciated annual service, as parents we love to capture a snapshot of our kids as they grow through their school years. This is coordinated by our great office staff and again parent helpers who make the service run smoothly throughout a school day. Getting 311 students and 14 classes to pose, looking their very best for multiple photos in between lessons is no mean feat!
- Our school **uniform** has taken considerable structure changes with the implementation of the middle school, while also continuing to improve our whole school uniform. Vicky Smith with her helpers have continued to work really hard in complimenting the school culture and routine with the uniform they supply. The inclusion of our school logo on formal shirts, larger school bags, a new MS jumper design, bigger sizes for the older students and the increased stock numbers are just some of the aspects they've worked tirelessly on behind the scenes. Thank you to Vicky and her team for keeping up with the demands of a growing and evolving school. The process for parents to purchase new uniform items could not be easier. From personal experience, I am blown away when we suddenly need a new shirt or jumper in our household, I click a few buttons on the Qkr! App and my children come home with it the next day!

- While mentioning the Qkr! App, I'd also like to thank Sarah Werfel, our incredibly reliable lady in charge of **finances**. Sarah is a huge support to the P&F in managing the financial arm of the committee, so that it compliments and works in conjunction with the school operations. Sarah, in general, plays a major part in supporting myself and the committee through all facets of what we do. Thank you Sarah for your unwavering support. Thank you also to Denny Polden for auditing the P&F finances in order for Sarah to provide a 2022 financial report.
- Finally, the ever-important P&F link with our fantastic **School Board**, is thanks to Jess Redden. Jess has attended both P&F and board meetings, reporting on discussions and sharing proposals. I'd like to thank Jess for continuing this communication and also to our wonderful school board for your support and encouragement of the P&F.
- As you can see from this long list of thanks and acknowledgements, the P&F is made of so many branches working parallel with each other to function in the wonderful and supportive way that it does. It has been my absolute pleasure to contribute to this part of our school and I thank the P&F committee and school staff for trusting and supporting me in this role. As many of you can surely relate, I have to juggle the balance of family business and volunteer roles, sometimes not doing it well. This has led me to step away from the formal role of P&F President this year, but I'm delighted to welcome Sophie Millington with the support of Abbe Weckert, and I know the committee is already in good hands.