School Council Meeting
Wednesday July 27th 2016
7.00 pm
1. Welcome

2. Apologies:

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting/Business Arising

4. Correspondence In
   As listed

Correspondence Out
   As listed

5. Business Arising from Correspondence

Motion: Acceptance of Correspondence

6. Principal’s Report
   Bryan Nolan

7. Reports

   i. Finance Report
      Tet Corso

      Motion: That accounts be ratified/passed for payment.

      Motion: That the Statement of Receipts and Payments for the period
      1.6.16 – 30.6.16 be accepted.

   ii. Buildings and Grounds
       No report

   iii. Education/ICT Committee
        Jill Ridgwell

   v. Parents and Friends Club
      Caroline Jory

   vi. Student Representative Council
       Jill Ridgwell

      Motion: Acceptance of all reports

8. General Business

   • Ambulance Policy
   • Parent Payments Policy
Oak Park Primary School Council

Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd June 2016 at 7:00pm

Attendees: Denise Anderson, Caroline Jory, Sally Morath, Joanne Roolker, Jill Ridgwell, Andrew Ward, Fitret Corso, Cherie Marnell, Bryan Nolan, Craig Yorston, Jessica Costanzo

Apologies: Rory Sercombe, Tracy Demarco, John Reece, Kane Miller

Visitor: Malcolm from Bendigo Bank attended and discussed student banking.

Minutes from previous meeting

Motion to accept minutes of previous meeting as fair and as accurate representation of the previous meeting.

Moved: Craig Yorston
Second: Jill Ridgwell

Correspondence in

Incoming correspondence presented by Bryan Nolan as listed in agenda.

- Child safe standards- revamp few policies, a checklist will be given to the school and by the end of the year all standards will be achieved.
- Polling booth 2nd July - PFA will sell sausages
- Application to object tree at 26th Murphy Street to be removed. Date had passed.
- Put in for service awards for Sam and Paul. They will receive a letter and gift from the school.

Business arising from correspondence

- Bryan wrote a response to the region regarding letter of complaint from a parent
- Bryan met with area coordinator, they advised that a response will be given in Term 3. Bryan will let us know when this happens.

Motion to accept correspondence.
Moved: Caroline Jory
Second: Jessica Costanzo

Principal’s Report

The Principals Report was presented by Bryan Nolan.

- 411 students at the moment enrolled. May go up to 420. Looked at extra grade to make it up to 18 but not possible.
- Sandra on leave until September 30
- Dale, Serena, Rob, Nicky, Tess, Melanie, Jodie, Stephanie have option to come back.
- Bryan, Jill and Sally attended a conference. A disco was won and there will be a disco in 2nd week Term 3.
- CBL - get children to ask questions. Most difficult thing with CBL is to set challenges to suit different children. There was talk about looking at opening up school after hours and measure peoples fitness that attend. After 5 weeks they come back and measure fitness again. Some children went to Bryan and discussed this.
- Lunchtime activities to go in newsletter.
- Silent disco was a hit for after care on the 17th June.
- School considering introducing a holiday program. May trial next school holidays. They bring their own cleaners and give school $1000 to purchase equipment. They can do excursions too.
- It was discussed that athletics is clashing with 3/4 camp and concert. It needs to be looked at and look at changing dates for 2017.
- Tournament of minds changing to 3 teams.

**Finance Report**

The finance report was presented by Joanne Roolker

High Yield $192,000 which is healthy
Term Deposit $4000
Official Account $60,500

- Looking at having a safe area on compass to display financial reports. On website to access it as follows: Go to Parent info, then school council documents and password SC4721.
- Bendigo Bank chosen for student banking. Money collected and given to bank (no parents or teachers needed to collect money), this was big reason for them being chosen.
- CSEF - Prep students were entitled to a free uniform and only 2 students took up the offer.
- Regarding banking, suggest to Bendigo Bank that the students should be able to have the option to choose whether they want a ball or an apron etc.

Motion to accept that accounts be ratified/passed for payment

Moved: Andrew Ward
Second: Jill Ridgewell

Motion that the statement of receipts and payments for the period 1.5.16-31.5.16 to be accepted

Moved: Jill Ridgewell
Second: Denise Anderson

Motion that the school transfer $20,000 from the Official Account into the Bendigo Bank term deposit Account

Moved: Caroline Jory
Second: Joanne Roolker
Buildings and Grounds

The Buildings and Grounds report was presented by Craig Yorston.

- Andrew and Denise would like to be added to apologies for the Building and Grounds meeting
- Oval - Craig approached Essendon Football Club and they are keen to come and have a look. Pot holes, cracks and onion weed being main areas of concern. Tiger turf not an option due to cost and with it being a landfill issue. Was discussed how well however the existing tiger turf is after it being 10 years old??
- Chicken coop - school council thought it was approved. Craig spoke with John about it. John put forward quite an impressive report about them with great benefits for the children. If they end up going ahead they need to be well protected because of foxes etc. Craig will forward report to Bryan about Johns report.
- 60 trees per year to be planted in mini forest. Planned to be planted on National Tree Day (end of July). John to put forward a report on more details of this.
- Garden shed - old shipping container suggested. Talked about a small garden shed would be vandalised or stolen? Looked at cleaning out shelter shed but talked about it being out of the way?? Caroline looking into shipping container.

Education Report and ICT

The Education report was presented by Jill Ridgwell.

-Needed parents’ feedback about school reports. Spoke with Committee about what was good on report or what could be changed. Looked at putting out survey. Looked at ways for parents to easily understand report format. Will trial next semester a more of a checklist and rating system.

Parents and Friends

The PFA report was presented by Caroline Jory

-Election BBQ - 8am set up and will go until 4
- A Day In May - Approx. $500 donated to Challenge
-Family Movie Night - Booked in for end of August
-Photo (service to local community) booked in for December
-Fathers Day - coming up
-Gold coin donation for casual clothes day (last day of term)

Student Representative Council

- Proposals to improve school, revamp the houses, mini Olympics within houses??
-Want to conduct fundraising
-Do a rebound wall?
-Sell food (e.g. Toastie Tuesdays)
-Promote other students to be leaders in the school
-More plants to be planted at school
-Create more sport ideas to do at lunchtime at school
-Grade 6’s to participate with more activities with their buddies
-Create cooking as a subject??
Motion to accept all reports

Moved: Caroline Jory
Second: Andrew Ward

General Business

- Compass - Parents nearly all on board. Looking at putting events and excursions and also making payments on there.

- Walking School Bus - been at school for 10 years. Running out of children and Mary Petts won’t be doing it after this year. All agreed it is a great idea and minimises school traffic. Mary Petts will talk at assembly and a survey given to parents?

- 3/4 camp - 7th - 9th September. Mount Evelyn camp. Includes bush walks, camp cooking, flying fox, giant swing and orienteering etc.

Motion to ratify the 2016 Grade 3 and 4 Camp to Mt Evelyn as outlined.

Moved: Joanne Roolker
Second: Andrew Ward

Meeting Closed 9.20pm
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>SOURCE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Department of Education and Training (DET)</td>
<td>2016 Census of population and Housing: Information for schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>DET</td>
<td>Navigator gets underway</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>DET</td>
<td>Planning and responding to emergencies</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>DET</td>
<td>FISO in Focus: Mitcham Primary School rises to the reading challenge</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>DET</td>
<td>Building communities: Release of new Parent payments policy</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>DET</td>
<td>Schools End-of-Financial-Year Attestation</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>DET</td>
<td>Core Admin and Curric ICT Equipment in schools Term 2, 2016</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>DET</td>
<td>2016 Parent Opinion Survey</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>DET</td>
<td>The revised Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework has been released</td>
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FISO and Communities of Practice

You may be familiar with the State Government’s vision for education in Victoria. This is encapsulated in the Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO) which was tabled at School Council last year. The framework is structured around four state-wide priorities that are proven to have a strong bearing on the effectiveness of a school:

- Excellence in teaching and learning
- Professional leadership
- Positive climate for learning
- Community engagement in learning

The implementation of FISO has led to a refining of education regions and local networks. For the past ten years or so, Oak Park has been part of the Moreland Network of schools but now we merge with the Hume network to create the Hume/Moreland network.

This year is seen as a transition to the new arrangements. We meet for the first time as a new network this week. It is an expectation that small group of schools work together to form ‘Communities of Practice’.

The following summary from the region is an explanation of what a Community of Practice is:

“Communities of Practice are about making a difference and shared learning – offering the opportunity to deprivatise our practice as principals. While collaboration is certainly not new in our network, Communities of Practice have some specific features and expectations. In essence, they bring together groups or networks of schools to learn together in a deep and trusting way. The Community, united around a shared goal, uses baseline data to set targets from which to monitor and measure its progress. Its purpose is to learn and achieve more collectively than any school could alone. It acknowledges and draws on the practice wisdom within the Community, as well as within the wider network. It concurrently researches the theory and better practice available in the wider education community.
and through collective problem solving and examination, develops, applies and evaluates new learning."

**Professional Learning**

Staff have been asked to submit expressions of interest in a professional learning opportunity that will take place between Oak Park and the Victorian College for the Deaf.

A teacher from Oak Park will work with a teacher from the VCD over two weeks. One week will be team teaching with the VCD partner at the VCD. The other week will be a reciprocal arrangement where the VCD colleague will team teach with one of our teachers in their classroom.

There is a huge push from the DET with regards to developing greater ‘inclusivity’ in schools and it is now a requirement for registration that all teachers complete professional learning in the teaching of students with disabilities.

There have already been several expressions submitted.

**National Tree Day**

As part of the school’s commitment to sustainability, Oak Park students are again being given the opportunity to be involved in a National Tree Day planting with Moreland Council. The primary objective is to educate students about the positive environmental benefits of revegetating local areas. Students will be working along the Moonee Ponds Creek at the Herbert St. Reserve, Pascoe Vale.

**Serendip Sanctuary**

On Friday, Grades 1A and 1B students will attend an excursion to the world renowned Serendip Sanctuary in Lara. The sanctuary is home to more than 150 species of birds, as well as iconic Australian animals such as kangaroos and emus. The Grade 1 studies in ‘Sustainability’ this term will be related to getting to know nature and this opportunity supports the intended learning perfectly. Students will be involved in a wildlife walk guided by the ranger/educator from Serendip as well as a ‘ponding’ experience looking at the life that exists in the lakes of Serendip. It will be a wonderful opportunity to become immersed in nature and record interesting observations, building towards an appreciation of the natural environment and the species that live within it.
Hairspray the Musical

Our Grade 5 students will be attending the Penola Secondary College production of Hairspray the Musical on Wednesday 27th July.

Whole School Disco

STOMP Dance Company visited the school last week and taught a wide range of different dances and styles to all grades F-6. They followed up by running the school disco on Friday night, in conjunction with the SRC. There was a great attendance (both student and staff) and over $1100 was raised.

Bully Zero

Next Monday, students in Grades 3-6 will participate in an antibullying program presented by the Bully Zero Foundation.

Bully Zero staff will also present to teachers at the staff meeting after school.

In the evening there will be a Parent Information Night in the Foundation area from 6.30 until 8pm.

Information has been sent out on compass we are hopeful that it will be well attended.

There isn’t any cost to the school for this as the day is funded by a private donation to the Foundation. There will however be items for sale (bracelets, pens, rulers etc.) for a gold coin donation.

Child Safe Standards

The new Child Safe Standards come into force for all Victorian schools from August 1 and from that date schools must be fully compliant with the Standards or have a plan in place to be fully compliant by the end of the 2016 school year.

Schools will receive a request from the Victorian Registrations and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) on 1 September 2016 to undertake an online self-assessment and make a declaration about the extent to which the school meets the new Standards.

Government schools will have until 28 September 2016 to respond to the VRQA, unless an individual school has sought an extension.

All schools are required to be fully compliant by the end of the 2016 school year.
**Release of new Parent Payments policy**

The Department has recently released a new Parent Payments policy.

The new policy brings a stronger focus on transparency and outlines expectations regarding support for hardship and communication with parents.

It also emphasises that all children have access to the standard curriculum regardless of their parents' ability to pay.

**Key Changes:**

- One policy template to be used in all schools
- Policy rationale and principles to govern practice
- School-nominated contact person for inquiries about parent payments
- Documented school approach to responding to family hardship
- Transparent processes and communication
- Clearer definitions and payment request categories
- Increased guidance and supporting materials for schools
- School councils to monitor and review parent payment practices to ensure full compliance

* For further information, see the summary attached to the end of the agenda/minutes

**NAPLAN Online trial**

Our school will be involved in the trial for the NAPLAN online system between **Tuesday 16 August and Friday 26 August 2016**.

The trial is a valuable opportunity for us to set up and utilise the system, as well as to provide feedback regarding any suggested changes or issues. The trial will also be used to confirm the capacity of schools to participate in the 2017 Pilot.

Our Grades 3 and 5 classes will complete the following two tests as part of the trial:

- An ‘omnibus test’ (includes questions from the Reading, Conventions of Language and Numeracy domains) - 50 minutes
- Writing test - 40 minutes

Prior to the commencement of the trial, the VCAA will be providing training for staff in the use of the NAPLAN online system.
**ICT Support**

David Lu was successful in his application for a part time IT Support position at The Lakes in South Morang. David will work 3 days at The Lakes and 2 days at Oak Park for the remainder of the year.

We have appointed Francesco Bifari 3 days a week to replace David.

**Facilities:**

John Hughes will be attending the next meeting to present his plan for the chicken coop. He is hopeful to have this up and running this term.

Some recent works completed, or about to be completed:

- Ross has installed the water tank connected to the northern end of the gym – this will provide water for the vegetable gardens from roof run off.
- The old toilet block on the eastern end of the 3/4 relocatable classrooms was removed over the school holidays.
- The large shed near the car park was cleaned out during the holidays.
- Ross and Craig cleaned up the area of the ‘drop off’ zone removing overflowed tan bark etc.
- Ross will be churning up the tan bark, which has become compacted in play areas.
- Breaking up of ground at the southern end of the school yard, near the ‘V’ tree (the site for the mini-forest planting).
- Wednesday 27th July – to coincide with National Tree Day grade 6’s will be planting their mini-forest.
- Ross to install taps from the water tank at the southern end of the gym to supply water to the frog pond, (proposed) orchard and chicken coop sites as well as for use in Sustainability room.
- Fruit trees and two trees hitting buildings have been trimmed
- Girls and boys toilets in gym checked over (new toilet roll holders and feature wall in girls toilet painted) plus various other small jobs.

Some jobs to do:

- Placing castors onto furniture.
- Shelves for bags in Jane’s locker room.
- Oval sprinkler system – Ross has to check and repair or fit new sprinklers. He hopes to get digger to run a channel near the gym to add two sprinkler heads to water this section of oval.
- Ross is constructing a cover for the air conditioner on Brenda and Meagan’s room.
- All of the gutters need to be cleaned; full of leaves and mud.
• Garden and grounds clean up is ongoing and Ross is working on this once a month to keep the school looking tidy.
• Electrical testing and tagging is due

Parents and families have been asked if they would like to donate to fund our orchard. Trees will be purchased and planted with a tag acknowledging the support of families who contribute. Direct Plants in Greenvale have donated two pear trees already.

John, Annette and I met with Toby from LAMPAS (lights/solar) to discuss a proposal to swap existing lighting to LED and further extend our solar panels.

**Reports**

We are currently working on a new reporting format and hope to have a draft available for parent comment prior to the end of this term. We have met with the Education Committee as well as all staff and we believe there is great consistency between parents and teacher as to what a report should look like.

Our aim is to produce a very meaningful report that provides parents with clear information about where their child is at, while also ensuring teachers’ efforts are focused on what is important to convey.

**Parent Opinion Survey**

As you know, each year schools conduct an opinion survey of 15 per cent of the school community. Parents are randomly selected to participate and the information is used to inform future school planning and improvement.

Responses are completely confidential and the survey is conducted anonymously. Surveys need to be returned to school by **Friday, 29th July 2016**.

Regards

Bryan Nolan
# Oak Park Primary School Finance Committee:

**DATE:** 19\(^{th}\) July 2016  
**TIME:** 4.00pm  

1. **In Attendance:** Tet Corso, Rory Sercombe, Annette D’Elia, Bryan Nolan  
2. **Apologies:**  
3. **Agenda Items:**

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<tr>
<th>TOPIC:</th>
<th>DISCUSSION/OUTCOME:</th>
<th>ACTION:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Budget Management Report</td>
<td>• The latest report indicates a surplus of $53 418.</td>
<td>Monitor</td>
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<td>Finance Reports</td>
<td>• The Finance Reports for June were reviewed on screen. Reports included:</td>
<td>Tet to put motion at school council meeting that reports be accepted</td>
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<td>Bank Reconciliation</td>
<td>Demonstrate how to access the documents via the website and explain each at next School Council meeting</td>
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<td>Bank Movements</td>
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<td>Balance Sheet</td>
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<td>Operating Statement</td>
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<td>Annual Sub Program</td>
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<td>Cash Flow</td>
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<td>Cash Receipts</td>
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<td>Cancelled Receipts</td>
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<td>Journal Reports</td>
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<td>Family Credit Notes</td>
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<td>Invoices Awaiting Payment</td>
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<td>OSHC Profit &amp; Loss</td>
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<td>Asset Additions</td>
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<td>Asset Disposals</td>
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<td>Purchasing Card Statement</td>
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<td>2016 Fees</td>
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<td></td>
<td>High Yield Investment Account balance $195 114.65</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Official Account balance $26 510.21</td>
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<td>Term Deposit balance $4 086.10</td>
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<td></td>
<td>$20 000 has been transferred to Bendigo bank Term Deposit account – this will be recorded on the July Reports.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>No transfers in June.</td>
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### School Banking for students
- Application forms have been delivered to the school and some parents have picked them up – not as many as had previously indicated interest at this stage.

### Asset Changes:
**Added:**
- Cooker $1 718.18
- Change Table $2 799

**Disposed:**
- 86 netbook computers
- WAP

### Fete
Discussed the importance of communicating to the community where proceeds from the Fete will be directed. Looked at some of the possibilities.

Further discussion with the PFA and School Council

Meeting finished 4.30pm
1. **In Attendance:** Jill Ridgwell, Joanne Roolker, Jessica Costanzo, Caroline Jory, Cherie Marnell
2. **Apologies:** Sally Morath
3. **Agenda Items:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jessica facilitated an information session which explained the SAMR model (Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, Redefinition). For more information: <a href="https://www.showbie.com/using-showbie-with-the-samr-model/">https://www.showbie.com/using-showbie-with-the-samr-model/</a></td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>The team were shown how some of the Apps are used by classroom teachers; e.g. Showbie. They also used a QR reader to access the ‘Challenge’ movie starring Bryan Nolan.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Parents thought that this session was extremely valuable and informative and should be offered to the wider community in forums such as Teckie Breakie sessions for parents.</td>
<td>Jessica Sally Jill</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>As in the previous year, the team would like to have another information session for parents on ‘Internet Safety’.</td>
<td>Jessica Sally Jill</td>
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Meeting finished 4:45pm
PARENT PAYMENTS

The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (the Act) provides for free instruction in the standard curriculum program to all students in government schools. Free instruction is the teaching staff, administration and the provision of facilities in connection with the instruction of the standard curriculum program, including reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities. The standard curriculum program refers to the eight key learning areas – English, Mathematics, Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences, the Arts, Languages, Health and Physical Education, and Technologies, and four capability areas – Critical and Creative thinking, Intercultural, Ethical and Personal and Social. The standard curriculum for years F-10 means the implementation of the Victorian Curriculum F-10.

The Department allocates funding to schools through the Student Resource Package (SRP). This includes funding for the standard curriculum program, including associated administration, equipment, facilities and operational costs. The Act also empowers school councils to charge parents for items that the school provides or makes available to the student. The items may be categorised as either Essential Student Learning Items or Optional Items. School council may also ask parents to make a voluntary financial contribution to the school for a stated purpose.

Parent payment categories

Schools can request payments from parents under three categories: Essential Student Learning Items, Optional Items or Voluntary Financial Contributions.

Each school determines whether an item, activity or service is an Essential Student Learning Item or an Optional Item within the context of their distinct learning and teaching program. Good governance practice will ensure school councils consider and are able to communicate the rationale for the classification of items, activities or services, requested and charged according to the three categories.

This table describes the three parent payment categories within which school councils can request payments from parents. The three categories are articulated in the that all schools must use when communicating their parent payment arrangements to their school community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essential student learning items</td>
<td>These are items, activities or services that the school deems essential to student learning in the standard curriculum. Where practical and appropriate, parents may choose to purchase items through the school or provide their own. Examples are:</td>
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<td>• items that the student takes temporary or permanent possession of such as text books, student stationery, book bags, Picture Exchange Communication Systems (PECS)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• materials for learning and teaching where the student consumes or takes possession of the finished articles (e.g. technology projects, workbooks, photography)</td>
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Category | Description
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 | • school uniform (where applicable)
 | • activities associated with instruction that all students are expected to attend, such as costs associated with excursions and work placements.

Note: If parents choose to provide equivalent materials themselves, this must be done in consultation with the school, and items should meet the specifications provided by the school. However, there are some items (e.g. food provisions for home economics) that, due to their nature, can only be provided by the school.

These are items or services that are **optional** and are offered in addition to the standard curriculum. Students may access these on a user pays basis. These items include:

- activities the student purchases (e.g. fees for extra-curricular programs or activities offered in addition to the standard curriculum such as instrumental music tuition; fees for guest speakers; optional camps and excursions; entry fees to school-based performances, productions and events)
- items the student purchases or hires (e.g. school magazines; class photos; formals/graduation functions; materials for extracurricular activities; student accident insurance)
- items and materials that are more expensive than required to meet the standard curriculum (e.g. use of silver in metal work instead of copper)

Parents, or anyone else, can be invited to make a **voluntary** contribution or donation to the school for the following purposes:

- contributions for a specific purpose identified by the school (e.g. equipment, materials or services) in addition to those funded through the SRP. This may include additional computers or student-related services. These contributions are **NOT** tax deductible.
- general voluntary financial contributions or donations to the school. These contributions or donations are **NOT** tax deductible. 
- donations to a building fund or library fund (if these funds have been endorsed by the Australian Taxation Office and have a Deductible Gift Recipients (DGR) status). Donations to these funds ARE tax deductible to the donor.
- any donations to special schools with a DGR status are also tax deductible to the donor.
**Access to education**

Students are not to be denied access to the standard curriculum program, refused instruction or disadvantaged on the basis of payments not being made for education items or services.

Where a child cannot participate in an essential activity or provide an essential student learning item, schools must consider the financial hardship circumstances of the student or make alternative arrangements that provides for the required knowledge and skills to be learned. This ensures that all children and young people learn the required content necessary to meet the achievement standards in the standard curriculum program.

**Cost to parents**

It is essential that when school councils consider the proposed requests for parent payment that cost is kept to a minimum and is affordable. It is important that:

- the school does not withhold access to enrolment or advancement to the next year level as a condition of payment for any of the three categories
- items students consume or take possession of are accurately costed
- payment requests for goods, services and other items provided by the school to students are broadly itemised within the appropriate category
- parents are advised that they have the option of purchasing equivalent Essential Student Learning items themselves, in consultation with the school. This does not include activities set by the school
- schools must ensure information on payment options is available, accessible and easily understood by parents, ensuring parents know what to expect and what supports they can access
- the status and details of any financial arrangements are kept confidential and only shared with relevant school personnel
- payment may be requested but not required prior to the commencement of the year in which the materials and services are to be used
- parents are provided with early notice of annual payment requests for school fees, that is, a minimum of six weeks’ notice prior to the end of the previous school year. This enables parents to plan and budget accordingly
- schools must provide reasonable notice for any other payment requests that arise during the school year, ensuring that parents have a clear understanding of the full financial contribution being sought
- parents experiencing hardship are not pursued for outstanding school payments from one year to the next
- the use of debt collectors of any type to obtain any outstanding funds owed to the school from parents is not permitted.
Support options for families

Principals and school councils need to be aware of, and exercise sensitivity to, the differing financial, cultural or social circumstances of individual students and their families. This must extend to the provision of interpreting and translation services in circumstances where this would be helpful.

Free interpreting and translation services are available through the Department to support schools in communicating written and verbal information in languages other than English. A range of support options are available for parents experiencing difficulty in paying for essential student learning items. An outline of the support options, that schools should make families aware includes:

- access to State Schools' Relief support via the Principal to assist with uniforms, shoes, textbooks, and stationery
- the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund, which is available for eligible families, to cover the costs of school trips, camps and sporting activities
- welfare and support agencies that have established partnership arrangements with schools to provide further assistance to students and their families.

Parents who experience difficulties providing or paying the school to provide essential student learning items should be supported to make an appointment with the Principal or the school’s nominated contact person to discuss alternative payment methods. Every effort must be made to support students and parents experiencing difficulty with payments.

School-level administrative processes

Initial payment requests and letters to parents for student materials and services charges must be accompanied by the following information:

- a description of each of the three parent payment categories
- the materials and activities that parents are being asked to pay for
- that parents are expected to provide Essential Student Learning Items for their children, and have the option of purchasing these through the school or through a local supplier, where appropriate
- the availability of alternative payment options and an invitation to contact the principal or nominated parent payment contact person, if the parent wishes to discuss the payments further

Schools must ensure that:

- administrative and financial processes are compliant with Departmental requirements such as CASES21 financial reporting
- prior to generating reminder notices to parents for unpaid items, discretion should be exercised with families where there may be hardship or financial difficulty
- invoices/statements for unpaid essential student learning items or optional items accepted by parents can be generated and distributed according to parent payment arrangements, but no more than monthly
- only the initial invitation for voluntary financial contributions and one reminder notice per year is sent to all parents
- receipts are issued to parents immediately upon payment and receipted on CASES21
- all documents relating to individual parent payments are stored confidentially in a secure location and accessible only to the principal, business manager and other nominated staff ensuring identifiable parent information is kept confidential.