



Minutes of 39th Stranraer Academy Parent Council Meeting Thursday 10th March 2011

PRESENT: -

- Parent Members:** Emma Sutherland, Christine Fowles, Lesley McColm and Jo Cochrane.
Co-opted Member: Robert Downie
Head Teacher: Norman Dawson
Teacher Rep: Kelvin Butler
Clerk: Lorraine Heron
Council Member: Councillor Robert Higgins
Attending Parent: Peter Armitage

1	WELCOME AND APOLOGIES
	Jo welcomed everyone to the March meeting and apologies were put forward on behalf of Anne Boyd, Lynne Mawson, John Crawford, Neil Fyfe, James McQuistin, Rod Baxter, Helen-marie Bradley and Susan Boyd.
2	MINUTES OF LAST MEETING
	The minutes of the Feb meeting were approved and seconded by Emma Sutherland and Norman Dawson.
3	MATTERS ARISING
	S1 Reading Ages – Mr Dawson advised that a meeting is to take place with Alex Hughes and Jane Law to see what can be done to address the fact that a low reading age has been highlighted with a number of pupils in S1. This is a council wide issue and it will also be discussed with Primary staff at the next Cluster meeting.
4	STUDENT COUNCIL REPORT
	No report.
5	HEAD TEACHERS REPORT
	Mr Dawson reported on the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staffing/Absence – A new PE teacher has been appointed and will start as soon as disclosure checks are complete. A new RME teacher has also been appointed who will hopefully start in May. In the meantime interviews will be held to appoint a temp PT. Five staff have been successful in their request for voluntary retirement. This together with the fact that trainees (temp) staff will be leaving us in July means we will be recruiting teachers in Technical, Physics, and Modern Studies as well as advertising for a trainee in Social Subjects. 2. Plans For Next Session - The S3 option choice process is almost complete and it should be known soon know the number of sections required for each subject. After a straw poll of S4/5 pupils we are putting together a best fit option choice form for S5/6 which should be out shortly. Once we know our staffing commitments for the senior classes we will be able to allocate periods to S1/2 but figures will be confirmed at the next meeting. 3. Exclusions – 11 pupils have been excluded in the past month, 6 for assault, 2 for verbal abuse of staff, 2 for persistence disobedience and 1 for substance abuse. 4. Royal Wedding – The school will be closed on Fri 29th April. This will be confirmed to parents in the next newsletter which will be issued before the holidays. 5. Award Ceremony – Mr Warren has twice left messages for Major McDowall but as yet has had no response. Another suggestion if Major McDowall is unavailable is Eilidh Wiseman, also a former pupil, who is now the head of Employment Group at law firm Dundas and Wilson. <i>The members suggested a letter be sent to Major McDowall and if he doesn't respond, Mrs Wiseman be approached.</i> 6. Easter School – This will now run over two days, Mon/Tues, with most subjects covered. Around 18 staff will be in each day. 7. Young Technologist – 3 teams took part in the Rotary D&G inter-school competition with the S5/6 team winning their category. Teams from Stranraer, Douglas Ewart, Dalbeattie and Castle Douglas took part. 8. Under 18 Football – Amey have agreed to sponsor the Under 18 team in the Scottish Cup competition. They have drawn away against the Nicholson institute in Stornaway in the quarter finals. Amey have agreed to fund the coach. The school will pay the ferry and accommodation.

6	TEACHERS REPORT
	Mr Kelvin Butler explained how the new Awards system has been progressing. A working party has been formed to run this program which aims to promote positive behaviour within the school. Pupils have been involved in various activities during lunch hours, such as Football, Badminton, Dodge ball, Quiz and Wii competitions in order to gain points for their house. Points have also been awarded for those gaining merits from the Teachers and points deducted for Demerits. The winning house will be taken to the Ryan Centre for part of the day and take part in a number of activities there. A program has been devised with the Ryan Centre staff which may include swimming, circuits, football gym etc. and it is hoped the cost (£150- £200) will be met by fundraising throughout the year. As we are now coming to the end of the trial, a lot of meetings are to take place to discuss how to move forward. Feedback will be taken from everyone involved and all comments will be taken on board. Informal feedback already received has been very positive. It is hoped that it will be rolled out to the whole school next session. The members of the parent council expressed their thanks to Mr Bulter, the school prefects and all the staff who have been involved in the program and are appreciative of everyone who has given up their own time.
7	TREASURERS REPORT
	The Treasurers account has a balance of £714.93 and the fundraising account £1852.22.
8	SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
	The members discussed the School Improvement Plan. It outlines the improvements the school intends to make throughout the year in the following areas: Curriculum for Excellence, Raising Attainment, GIRFEC, House System and Transition from Primary to Secondary School.
9	FUND RAISING A/C – SPENDING POLICY
	At last month's meeting some pupils had asked the members for financial assistance. This highlighted the need to have some sort of policy in place in order to issue assistance in a fair way and not on a 'first come first served' basis. It was agreed that the fundraising committee would meet and discuss how we could do this and put a procedure in place to allow all pupils the chance to ask for financial assistance. It is hoped the Student council will also get involved.
10	CORRESPONDENCE
	No correspondence this month.
11	ANY OTHER BUSINESS
	A number of parents had made contact with Parent Council members regarding a workshop which had recently taken place with representatives from Glasgow University. Some S5 students were not aware that this visit was taking place and therefore were not able to take part. The parents felt strongly that not all S5 were given the opportunity to take part and their children all had particular interest in this University. It has also become apparent that S4 students were allowed to attend, possibly at the expense of the S5's who missed out. During discussions it was highlighted that parents have other concerns regarding the upper school. There seems to be a lack of advice available on things such as career advice, work experience and university/college applications as well as options for those pupils who do not intend to go in to further education. It was suggested that it would be helpful if a plan of some sort be made up to help everyone understand the timescales involved for making applications etc. as well as ensuring all students get the relevant information regarding visits and University/College open days.
12	DATE OF NEXT MEETING
	The next meeting will be held on Thurs 21 st April.