

PTA AGM Minutes - 11th October 2017

Present : Claire Cox, Philip Keegan ,Shay Clarke , Jonathan Graham (Headmaster), Tristan Swan, Marie Brady, Philomena Gilmore, Shane Bennett, Patricia McKeague, Lorna Kane, Martin Betz, Cynthia Iso Idemudia, Rory McKeague (Deputy Principal), Fiona Smith, Colin Smith, Rosemary Mathews, Aisling Mitchell, Orla McMahan, Lorna Kane, Martin Betz, Helen O'Brien, Carolyn O Solanke, Sheila Finnamore, Pamela Kpaduwa, Alan Cox, Irene Goodwin, Kenny

Apologies: Des Halpenny

The meeting was opened with a welcome address from the chairperson, Claire Cox. She introduced the Headmaster as our guest speaker. He spoke for over twenty minutes on the new Junior Cycle Wellbeing programme, and what it will mean. He introduced leaflets to everyone which explained some of the changes in more detail. He explained how wellbeing will be an integral part of the new Junior Cycle with more focus on Guidance, Sports/PE, SPHE, and SELF

Previous Minutes: The minutes from last year were handed to all in attendance. They were proposed as being accurate by Claire Cox and seconded by Shane Bennett.

Correspondence: There was no relevant correspondence to share with the meeting.

Headmaster's Report: Mr Graham spoke on the different achievements of last year's students and the improvement on the Stats with regards to the state exams. He mentioned the importance of the prize day and how successful it was this year. The success of the school musical "The Adams Family". He touched on the success of the coding academy and the link with the DKIT. It is going from strength to strength every year. Sporting achievements were also highlighted especially with the girls' hockey. He touched on CSPE and the different projects involved. He felt that the importances of these projects were perhaps being underestimated.

Chairpersons Address: Claire explained how we have progressed with the communication efforts of the committee over the last year. We strive to make ourselves more contactable and relevant to the parents of the school. It is a constant struggle to encourage the parents of the school to engage with us. She highlighted the different functions of the PTA in detail, and how we really are an integral part of the school community. Claire thanked the outgoing committee and Philip Keegan and Philomena Gilmore as the Board of Management representatives.

Secretary's Report: Six meetings were held this past year. Again the improvements on how we communicate were highlighted. The new newsletter was introduced as well as our parent contact form all accessible on the school website. Our evening entitled *A Question of Sport* was a huge success. We hosted a Compass interactive meeting in November with Prof Donal O'Shea which was excellent. Once again our fundraising event of the Table Quiz was very successful. Our evening with Dr Maureen Griffin was also a huge success for all in attendance. Dr Griffin guided us through the dangers of the internet especially to our children. We all realized that we can easily become complacent to these dangers and that we need to take a more proactive role in our children's use of the internet. The mock interviews were facilitated by many of our parents volunteering to interview the TY students. Once again the school uniform sale proved to be a success and is seen as a great way to meet incoming parents. Claire had a number of meetings with the Students Council which she found to be an invaluable way of keeping in touch with the needs and desires of the student body. Claire touched on the very sad passing of Ms Valerie Meagher and reiterated the huge sense of loss experienced by the school community on her untimely death and parents were very pleased to see a prize in her name presented at prize day.

Treasurer's Report: Mr Shay Clarke guided us through the financial status of the committee detailing both the income and expenditure of the past year. In the end the account stands at €8844 in credit, down from €11450 at the beginning of the year. But obviously every cent spent was to the benefit of the students and all agreed it was well spent.

Compass Report: Mr Shane Bennett, our representative on this important national body gave a detailed report on its activities over the past year. DGS PTA facilitated a COMPASS interactive event on 19th Nov 2016 with Prof Donal O'Shea which was excellent. Shane attended regular meetings with Compass during the year as their PRO. Claire represented DGS at the AGM in KH in May. The value of having someone like Shane on the compass board was highlighted by Claire and the appreciation of the PTA was extended. As Shane's own son is finishing school next year he is actively looking for a volunteer to fill his shoes as he will be pulling back from his involvement in Compass. It was stressed that we require a committee member to attend Compass meetings as our representative only and get more involved with Compass only if the rep desires.

Nominations and Elections: We have two vacancies on the PTA this year. Claire thanked outgoing members Marie and Shay for all their hard work over the last few years. Lorna Kane was nominated onto the committee by Claire Cox and was seconded by Philip Keegan. Pamela Kpaduwa was nominated to the committee by Patricia Mckeague and seconded by Cynthia Iso Idemuda.

Fundraising: Claire discussed the idea of a photo competition in the school and how it could be used as a fundraiser for the PTA. There would be many possible offshoots in the form of Christmas cards, postcards, calendars etc.

AOB: A concerned parent raised the issue of the new school timetable and how it affects them especially in relation to public transport. The fact that their children were now hanging around after school waiting for buses was of concern. The headmaster understood their concerns but pointed out that there were a number of after school activities (particularly on Wednesday afternoons) that were available and he encouraged more engagement by the students. Unfortunately the new timetables were forced upon all schools by the Department of Education and they were designed to suit the majority of the school body. He understood that there were going to be some negative outcomes and he apologized for that.

Mr Graham then spoke on the new regulations/policies being introduced by the school management on the acceptable use of Phones/Tablets. He highlighted the need for a clearer set of ground rules needed on the use of such devices and pointed out that there have been a number of negative incidents on the school campus in relation to such devices. He pointed out that the PTA had been actively involved in the drawing up of the policies and he thanked them for their input.

He concluded by thanking the PTA for all that they do within the school community. The meeting was then closed at 8.50pm by Claire with thanks to all who attended

DGS PTA Committee members 2017 – 2018

Claire Cox – Chairperson , Philip Keegan, Philomena Gilmore, Shane Bennett, Des Halpenny, Carolyn Solanke, Cynthia Iso Idemuda, Pamela Kpaduwa, Lorna Kane, Orla McMahan,Liz O'Reilly, Rosemary Mathews.