

## **St. Mac Dara's Community College Parents Association AGM 14.11.2023**

Time: 19.30

TEAMS Meeting

Parents Association members in attendance

School represented by Principal Mr. Ward

### **Welcome from Chairperson**

#### **Update from Chairperson**

Thanks to Naomi as she has resigned from position of Chair but is remaining on committee.

Thanks to Mairead who left after a long service.

Welcome to Chris and Marie as new members.

Thanks to the events team for their help throughout the year.

Apologies from our secretary Caitriona who cannot attend this evening.

Call out if anyone would like to get involved with committee or events team and our email address given in the chat.

Explanation of our role as group of parents involved in a forum between parents and the school.

Participation in monthly meetings with Mr. Ward, update on events at the school, review of policies.

Fundraising support – annual quiz has returned.

Support at events – Open Day, First Year welcome night, Awards Night, Graduation

Attended Green Flag raising ceremony and wish to support Green initiatives so donated a voucher for Woodies to the Green Flag Committee.

#### **Treasurer's Report**

Colin shared his spreadsheet and went through balances and spending.

Colin expressed some ideas we had to make donations to the school.

Potential to support sustainability projects, sponsor the renovation of a Courtyard after the design competition is completed, perhaps updating some classrooms or equipment.

Closing balance was €3,397.97

#### **Principal's Report**

Mr. Ward spoke of the passing of Mr. Donnelly and the recent passing of Mr. O'Shea.

Retirement of Mr. Cassidy and appointment of Ms. Gibson as Deputy Principal in his stead.

Mr. Burke is acting Deputy Principal in place of Ms. Clune who has welcomed twins.

First Year placements oversubscribed and waiting list in place.

5 TY classes now and hoping to open it up to all students in third year.

TY have enjoyed various outings so far – Ploughing Championship, Bonding Trip.

CAT Assessment taken place for 1<sup>st</sup> Years.

After study classes resumed.

Canteen open.

Prefects appointed.

Outdoor classroom in use.

The calendar will be updated to take into account Christmas exams for all years.

5<sup>th</sup> Year Open Evening and 6<sup>th</sup> Year CAO options evening have been held.

Green Flag raising ceremony taken place.

Another section of the corridor has been updated.

Science labs upgrade planned and upgrade to the Timeout room.

Student Ownership programme and review of Ethos.

Various Teams within the school – SNA Team, Wellbeing .

Leaving Certificate results – two students with maximum points and one awarded the Naughton Foundation Award.

Junior Certificate results.

Library open and thanks to Ms. Denny for her contribution with this.

Autism Awareness Programme rolled out and OMG Groups meet.

Green School Committee – Bicycle racks, water saving, composting, beekeeping, chicken coop.

Trips planned – Glasgow, Italy (5<sup>th</sup> year) and Madrid (TY).

Transport to sporting events a huge cost – students sometimes walk to close away venues.

Information on the cost of Mocks will be given to parents. The Department does not pay for these so the cost must be borne by the parents unfortunately.

Department of Education will assist with energy costs in the school.

Mr. Ward outlined the various teams and clubs within the school.

### **Questions:**

Re Mock Exams date – end of January

Career guidance – one full time career counsellor and one part time. Start in 3<sup>rd</sup> year with set guidance classes.

Discussion re challenge of AI with assignments. AI can help with structure but work must be all students own.

Question re plagiarism – senior cycle – some subjects have more project work and assignments and are sent to examiners.

Question re going digital iPad/Tablet only – no plans to go in this direction.

Question re banning of phones – policy in place if see or hear phone it is taken off student until next day. No plans to ban them. Assemblies deal with phone usage and appropriate use of apps (Snapchat, Whatsapp, Instagram etc)

Colin shared link in chat re cyber safety.

Question re extracurricular – Mr Burke is point of contact and announcements made throughout the day.

Question re VShare and explanation that available in app form. 'Points' a good system for rewarding behaviour.

Question re book exchange – idea for Parents Association to run this along with uniform swap.

Poor take-up on 24-hour insurance so Mr. Ward will sent out a reminder. Sarah shared that the request for payment will be in parent's online payment portal.

Various email addresses shared in the chat:

[parentassociation@stmacdaras.ie](mailto:parentassociation@stmacdaras.ie)

[info@stmacdaras.ie](mailto:info@stmacdaras.ie)

[parentemail@stmacdaras.ie](mailto:parentemail@stmacdaras.ie)

**Meeting closed at 20.17pm**