SCHOOL COUNCIL NEWS

The School Council has met twice this term on 18 April and 30 May 2016.

Change in Council membership

Following the Council elections in March, Sarah Percy and Laurel Zaicek were elected as parent representatives and Gary Lake and Leesa Behrens as staff representatives. We welcome Sarah and Gary as new members and look forward to Laurel and Leesa continuing in their roles.

On behalf of the Council I would like to thank the retiring Council members Barbara Maenhaut and Adam Knights for their hard work and outstanding contributions over the first two years of the Council’s operation.

At the April meeting, the first meeting of the newly constituted Council, Richard Jolly was elected as Chair and Simon Cashion as secretary for 2016. The current Council members are:

- Richard Jolly (Chair)
- Simon Cashion (Secretary)
- Damian Johnson (Principal)
- Ray Osborne (P&C President)
- Leesa Behrens (Staff Representative)
- Robyn Cool (Staff Representative)
- Robynne Hay (Staff Representative)
- Gary Lake (Staff Representative)
- Sarah Percy (Parent Representative)
- Laurel Zaicek (Parent Representative)

Strategic planning

The Council has commenced the process of preparing a new Strategic Plan for Ironside State School for 2017-2020. This will incorporate the vision for the school in 2020 and the key objectives and strategies to achieve that vision. There will be a process of consultation with the school community in terms 3 and 4 to ensure that a broad range of views are considered in the development of the plan, with a view to finalising the plan by the end of 2016. To start this process, a short survey will be sent out to parents and staff, the responses to which will assist the Council in formulating draft vision and goals. This was referred to in the Principal’s Report in last week’s newsletter.

Enrolment management

The Council has noted the continual increase in student numbers and the inability of the school infrastructure to cope with those numbers. The number of students is now attending Ironside State School is 1030. Our official capacity is 965. In particular, we are concerned about the ability to provide safe play spaces for our children under these circumstances.

The Council has considered the terms of the School’s Enrolment Management Plan. This plan governs how the school is to manage enrolments when it is at or near capacity, in order to prioritise enrolment places for students within the catchment area. To achieve this objective the Council has agreed to seek amendment of the plan to remove the enrolment entitlement of siblings of current students if they live outside the catchment area, from next year. This means that for any family who
first enrols at Ironside in 2017 or later, if they subsequently move out of the catchment area any younger sibling will not be automatically entitled to enrol, and would be considered to be an out of catchment enrolment. However this would not apply to any families who are currently enrolled at Ironside, i.e. siblings of any students who are currently enrolled will still be automatically eligible to be enrolled as if they resided in the catchment.

The Council considers this to be a reasonable way of beginning to address the increasing numbers by limiting enrolments as far as possible to within the catchment. A family who first enrols at Ironside in 2017 or subsequent years will do so with knowledge of this policy, so that this can be considered in their enrolment decision. The change to the Plan will be submitted to the Department of Education for approval.

In addition, the Council agreed that more substantial evidence would be required by the Administration Team to establish principal place of residence in the catchment for enrolment applications. These evidentiary requirements are consistent with the terms of the Enrolment Management Plan. We will work with Mr Johnson and the School Administration Team to finalise the details of these requirements.

At the same time the Council will continue to engage with the Department of Education to address the long term strategy for dealing with population growth in the catchment area and how the Department proposes to deal with these continually increasing student numbers. The Council will reinforce our concerns with the Department and seek practical solutions to this difficult issue.

If you have any questions or comments about this or any other issue, please email the Council at ISSCouncil@ironsidess.eq.edu.au.

Richard Jolly
Chair, Ironside State School Council