



MOUNT HAWTHORN PRIMARY SCHOOL P&C
PO Box 251 Mount Hawthorn WA 6016

Dear Parents and Citizens of Mount Hawthorn

The role of the P&C is to represent the views of parents and citizens within the Mount Hawthorn school community. More often than not we find ourselves focusing on school social events (for both kids and parents) and fundraising opportunities. We work closely with the school to determine where best we can spend these funds.

Within the P&C there are several sub-committees. One of these sub-committees, the Grounds Committee (GC), is made up of people with vast amounts of expertise and experience in landscaping, horticulture, engineering and project management. The GC has been instrumental in delivering large projects on the school grounds such as the oval rejuvenation (stage 1 & 2), as well as smaller projects like busy bees to plant out garden beds. There is a great deal of knowledge and passion within the GC and I, as President, am comfortable that there is sufficient expertise within this group to make decisions that will positively affect the school. That is, I've never had reason to question the decisions of the GC.

In 2018 the Department of Education will commence construction of a two-storey building in the Pre-primary area. The school will lose the two existing old classrooms but will gain seven new classrooms. Details of the new build have been sent out via the school newsletter. To make way for the new build, a Port Jackson Fig tree that currently stands in the Pre-primary area will either need to be removed or relocated. The GC has strongly advocated for the tree to be relocated within the school grounds. The cost to relocate the tree will be circa \$50k.

A request was put forward by the GC to the P&C Executive Members for a loan of \$8k to commence preparation works for the movement of the tree. The GC would then fund raise to pay back the P&C the \$8k as well as raising funds to cover the remainder of the move. As President of the P&C I must remain impartial and therefore I consulted the members to gauge the general 'feel' in the community. I did my best to give the facts as I understood them and I tried to offer no opinion or bias. The feedback I received from the majority of members was along the lines of "It's a shame but it's hard to justify spending \$50k to move it", or "It's not the right tree in that area", or "It may be a safety issue if the tree drops branches". There was also a response that we should do all that we can to save the tree. The majority of responses were opposed to saving the tree and this was the information that I presented to the GC.

In response, the GC suggested that if they could raise the money themselves (and therefore not be a burden on the P&C community) whilst also addressing the safety issue as best they could, could we support them?

Based on this I determined that the stance of the P&C regarding the tree would be thus:

"The P&C have no objection to the tree being moved with the following conditions:

1) The move is entirely self-funded. That is, no funds are sought from or provided by the P&C. The P&C will not seek to raise funds to move the tree.

2) Any fundraising is done either under the name of the individuals or Trees4Vincent and not 'P&C Grounds Committee'."

The above requests to exclude any mention of 'P&C' were to assure parents at the school that their voluntary P&C contributions were not going towards relocating the tree.

The P&C work closely with the school and consider ourselves fortunate that we have such a strong, caring school community and administration. The Principal has always had the best interests of the school at heart and we enjoy a harmonious and proactive relationship with the Principal, Administration and Board. Whilst we have stated our position in regards to the fig tree we understand that there is a bigger picture and we will defer to and abide by the decision of the school.

Scott Yelland

President

Mount Hawthorn Primary School P&C