

2021/2022 President's Report

Dear Parents and Friends,

It is a privilege to provide the second President's report for the Canberra Montessori School Parents and Friends' Association ("P&F").

Our P&F has been in operation for just over two years. We started in November 2019 with a small team of energetic parents and friends who worked hard to formulate and construct the administrative and operational functions needed to make the P&F a success.

Then along came the adversities and challenges of COVID, including a home-schooling stint that seemed to go on forever. Plans for face-to-face events and activities were again put on hold: and are still on hold as we navigate our way through this pandemic. Despite these challenges, and with a good dose of lateral thinking, the Committee was able to continue to deliver initiatives to the community.

The *Year of Living Mindfully*, brought to you in the comfort of your lounge room, had great reviews by parents and friends. Virtual Family Yoga during lockdown saw family homes and backyards turned into yoga studios as parents shared poses with their children. Who could forget the laughter and fun born from an end-of-term – virtual – Bollywood Dance Party. A fascinating exercise in Bollywood moves with many a child showing a parent how it was done. The Committee was also able to sneak in a Mother's Day event and a new parent morning tea before lockdown.

Even our annual mango fundraising event was fraught with challenges: unseasonal heat meant a bad mango season and road closures meant transport delays. Notwithstanding, the mangoes arrived, and we were able to raise \$903.00 for developing the School's sporting and loose-play grounds – an exciting future project for our children.

Last year, the Committee was thrilled to donate a healthy amount to the School to support the school readers' program. Many a parent has remarked how wonderful it is to have their child bring these books home. Thank you to all parents who were involved in these fundraising programs.

Last month, we were thrilled to provide parents with their first CMS P&F survey. It is hoped that this tool will capture the wants of many in our community. We will provide an analysis back to parents in term two of this year.

Our continual improvement mechanisms meant amendments to our Charter to better align procedures to our Objects. These amendments will be ratified at this year's AGM. We also restructured some positions to better support community needs. This paved way for the newly created position of Social Club Committee Member (yet to be filled) as well as class parent representatives. The Committee has sought feedback regarding these positions from parents via the survey mentioned above.

The P&F remains an active member of APFACTS (Association Parents and Friends of ACT Schools). This membership has provided parents with opportunities to attend online parenting sessions. Also, as part of this membership, several Committee Members attended an Engagement Workshop which provided valuable insight into the operations of a P&F.

I am delighted with what we have achieved this past year notwithstanding the challenges of COVID and home schooling: a period where I personally developed a deeper appreciation and respect for our dedicated and energised Class Directors and Class Assistants. On behalf of the P&F, thank you! And thank you to everyone who works within our School, and to the Board - your contributions make our environment a great one!

Finally, and importantly, I'd like to thank my fellow committee members: Rael Matthews, Eleanor Bettini, Lisa Green, Emma Matthews, Emma-Kate Potter, and Karin Ronning-Meagher for their tremendous contributions and untiring energy. The commitment, support, professionalism, kindness, and passion each of these people bring to the Committee is invaluable. Their resolve has been steadfast, and their camaraderie has made another challenging year so much easier. It has been a pleasure to work with each of them. Special mention to both our Secretary, Eleanor Bettini and our Treasurer, Lisa Green who assiduously undertake their regulated workloads.

Our P&F is a great asset. It is a conduit for socialising, having fun, raising funds to better our School, as well as a support for our community. I'd like to encourage parents and friends to get involved.

Thank you for your continual support.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'PS', with a stylized flourish underneath.

Petrea Simeon

President
Canberra Montessori School Parents and Friends' Association