

Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

TCSPFF Manual

A Guide for Parents & Friends Associations



"There are no labours too great for loving hearts"
St. Augustine



PRAYER OF ST. AUGUSTINE

“DIRECT WE BESEECH YOU, O LORD
ALL OUR ACTIONS BY YOUR HOLY INSPIRATION
AND CARRY THEM OUT BY YOUR GRACIOUS ASSISTANCE
SO THAT EVERY PRAYER AND GOOD WORK OF OURS
MAY BEGIN ALWAYS BY YOU
AND THROUGH YOU BE HAPPILY ENDED
THROUGH CHRIST OUR LORD, AMEN

YOU HAVE MADE US FOR YOURSELF, O LORD
AND OUR HEARTS ARE RESTLESS UNTIL THEY REST IN YOU.’





Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

Contents

- Introduction
- TCSPFF Vision & Mission
- About Us
- History
- Why Affiliate?
- School Funding—Australian Government
- Guidelines For P&F Executive
- Effective Schools
- Getting Involved
- Parents as Partners
- Valuing Your Community
- Constitution
- Roles Of P&F Office Bearers
- A Typical Agenda
- Typical Order of a Meeting
- How to Make Meetings Work
- Meeting Procedures
- Reports
- Effective Meeting Tips
- Annual General Meeting
- A Checklist For Assessing P&F Meetings
- Some Fund Raising Suggestions
- Grievance Policy
- Suggested Prayers and Reflections



Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

Introduction

The Federation is often asked what it does?

Perhaps the questions that should be asked is, What role should Parents have in their children's education? Where do they fit and what role do they have in the school community?

Other requests made to the Federation include; How to attract new parents, particularly to school Parents & Friends executive positions and how these people seek advice and support in their roles and responsibilities?

For many years the Knights of the Southern Cross provided a training package for school P & F's. In 2003, the Federation adopted the Knights process when they were no longer able to continue with this service. This information has always been available on the Federation's website, however a motion to the 2006 Annual Conference requested the development of a more complete package that would provide assistance to school P & F's.

The Federation, when developing this package saw an opportunity to take an even broader approach.

This manual contains an explanation of where the Federation, and specifically parents, sit in the Catholic Education Community. It includes details of how the involvement of parents has resulted in gaining support from Governments for our schools.

It also provides information on the roles of individual parents, P & F associations and those who take on the specific leadership roles, including President, Secretary and Treasurer.

The manual will be continuously improved. Your feedback is critical in this process.

Please keep this manual in a secure, but accessible place.



Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

The Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents and Friends Federation represents the parents of about 15,000 students who attend the 37 Catholic schools in Tasmania. It liaises with Catholic Church authorities, peak education bodies and the Tasmanian Government and its instrumentalities to maintain and protect the interests of Catholic school students and their families.

Vision

OUR VISION IS THAT PARENTS OF CHILDREN IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS BE FULL PARTNERS IN DELIVERING QUALITY CATHOLIC EDUCATION.

Mission

The Federation is a collaborative and representative organisation dedicated to promoting and supporting accessible, quality education for all children in Catholic schools by:

- sharing responsibility for learning and living gospel values
- assisting our school communities to identify, provide and maintain the human, material and capital resources necessary for the effective and efficient delivery of Catholic education
- building an environment where parents can be empowered to take an active role as the primary educators of their children
- actively encouraging our school communities to reach out with love, respect and tolerance through balancing the needs and expectations of all

Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

About Us

The Federation and Canon Law

The **Federation** acts under the auspices of the **Archbishop of Hobart**. In accordance with his desire for Catholic Schools in Tasmania to give witness to its most important role as an agency of the Catholic Church in Tasmania **the Archbishop** has endorsed the establishment of a **Federation of Parents and Friends**:

- (i) to promote the mission of catholic schools;
- and
- (ii) to foster a true spirit of community.

As prescribed under **Canon Law 321-329** the **Federation** is seen as a "Private Association of the Christian Faithful".

Canon 328 requires such Associations "to take care that their associations co-operate with other associations of the Christian Faithful where it is expedient and willingly assist various Christian works, especially those in the same territory".

Canon 793.1

Parents and those who take their place are bound by the obligation and possess the right of educating their offspring. Catholic parents also have the duty and right of choosing those means and institutions through which they can provide more suitably for the Catholic education of their children, according to local circumstances.

793-2

Parents also have the right to that assistance, to be furnished by civil society, which they need to secure the Catholic education of their children.

794-1

The duty and right of educating belongs in a special way to the Church, to which has been divinely entrusted the mission of assisting persons so that they are able to reach the fullness of the Christian life.

794-2.

Pastors of souls have the duty of arranging everything so that all the faithful have a Catholic education.



Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

795

Since true education must strive for complete formation of the human person that looks to his or her final end as well as to the common good of societies, children and youth are to be nurtured in such a way that they are able to develop their physical, moral, and intellectual talents harmoniously, acquire a more perfect sense of responsibility and right use of freedom, and are formed to participate actively in social life.”

796-1.

Among the means to foster education, the Christian faithful are to hold schools in esteem; schools are the principal assistance to parents in fulfilling the function of education.

796-2.

Parents must cooperate closely with the teachers of the schools to which they entrust their children to be educated; moreover, teachers in fulfilling their duty are to collaborate very closely with parents, who are to be heard willingly and for whom associations or meetings are to be established and highly esteemed.

797

Parents must possess a true freedom in choosing schools therefore, the Christian faithful must be concerned that civil society recognizes this freedom for parents and even supports it with subsidies; distributive justice is to be observed.”



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The Federation:

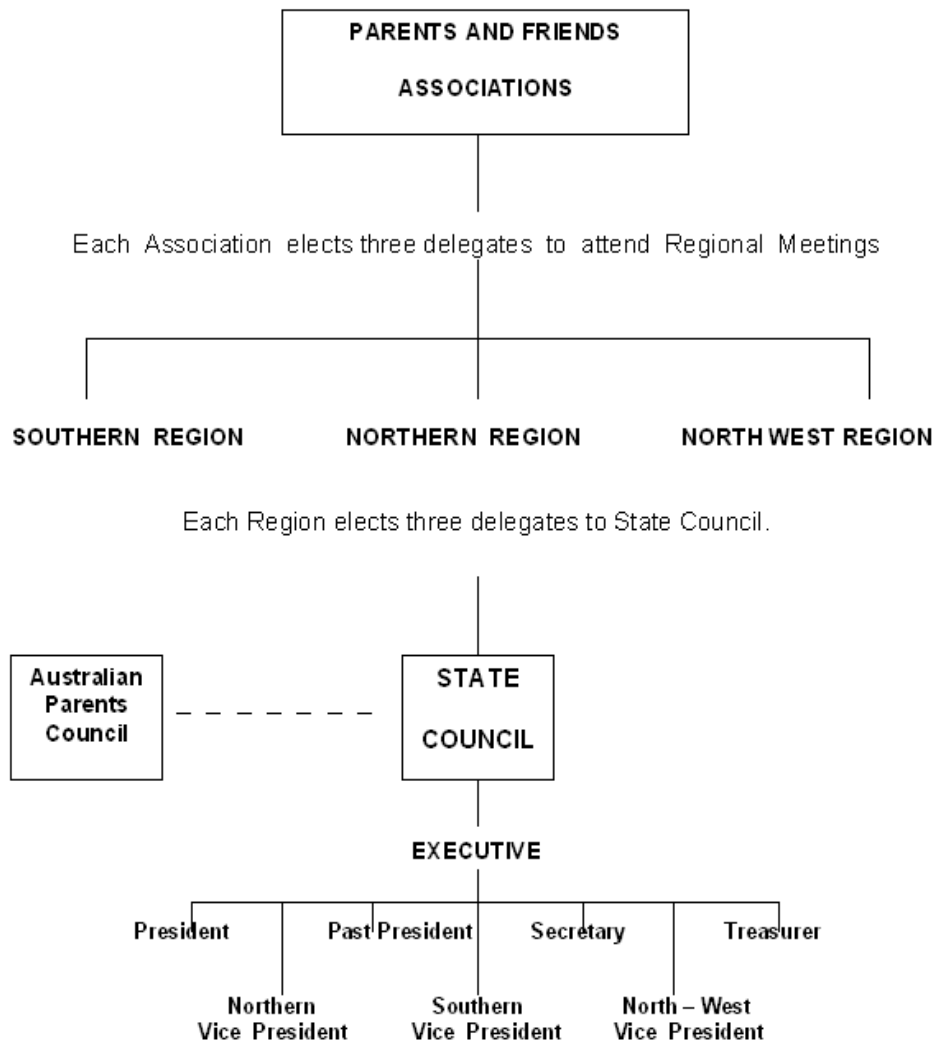
- Is a voluntary organization,
- Operates as a collective and inclusive organization across its three tiers of affiliated school Parents & Friends Associations, Regional bodies and State Council,
- Recognizes that parents have various gifts and skills to offer their school communities and each other,
Provides opportunities for personal and collective growth.

The objectives of the Federation are:

- To encourage parents to fully participate in their children's education,
- Promotion of education generally across the government and non-government sectors,
- Furtherance of Catholic education,
- The advancement of the common interest of Catholic schools,
- To actively advocate for parents and students,
- To respond to the needs of School communities,
- Promote inclusive and genuine consultative processes at all levels of schooling and associated policy making & political processes,
- Provide development opportunities for parents & affiliated School P & F associations,
- Encourage and support collaborative relationships between Parents and Teachers.

Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

STRUCTURE



Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

State Council

State Council consists of:

- i) a President, Secretary and Treasurer elected at the Annual General Meeting,
- ii) the Immediate Past President,
- iii) one delegate each nominated by the Knights of the Southern Cross and the Catholic Women's League,
- iv) one Vice-President and two ordinary members from each of the three regions elected at the regions Annual General Meeting,
- v) up to three persons, appointed by Council, whose skills are considered to be needed by the federation, and who are not otherwise eligible for membership of the Council.

State Council

- operates in a spirit of unity, cooperative mutual support to enable office bearers to achieve the Federation's objectives,
 - is responsible for the preparation, publication and distribution of the Federation's newsletters and other documents,
 - develops and monitors appropriate personnel practices including Workplace Occupational Health & Safety and Equal Opportunity principles,
 - is responsive to the needs & priorities of School communities as expressed by affiliated School Parents & Friends Associations,
 - members will be proactive in establishing effective communication strategies throughout the three levels of the Federation,
 - values its relationship with other organizations within the Catholic Community & their potential to contribute to Catholic Education,
 - supports & collaborate with the Tasmanian Catholic Education Commission & Catholic Education Office in their missions whilst representing an independent Parent perspective,
- may utilize the services of person(s) who are suitably registered to undertake tasks as required.



Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

Executive

The Executive shall consist of the President, the Immediate Past President, three Vice-Presidents, the Secretary and the Treasurer, who between meetings of the Council shall have delegated power to take action for the good conduct of the affairs of the Federation.

Regions

The Regional Associations are the direct representational link between affiliated School Parents & Friends Associations and the State Council. They therefore have key roles in developing and promoting a sense of community between School P & F Associations. Outside of the Annual Conference of the Federation the regional associations are the means by which affiliated school parents and friends associations provide direction, guidance and feedback to State Council.

Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

REGIONS - STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Australia is a world leader in the area of networking between school parents and friends' organisations, both at State and Federal levels. All Tasmanian Catholic School Parents and Friends Associations have the potential to contribute to the maintenance of these networks, and to participate in political and educational policy making processes through their affiliation with the Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents and Friends Federation (TCSPFF) at the State level and through its affiliation with the Australian Parents Council (APC) at the national level. (Tasmanian Catholic Education Commission's "Relationships for Mutual Support" document).

The Regional Associations are the direct organisational link between School Associations and the State Council of the TCSPFF. They therefore have key roles in developing and promoting a sense of community between school Associations. Outside of the Annual Conference of the TCSPFF the regional associations are the means by which school Associations provide direction, guidance and feedback to State Council. At the same time they provide State Council with a primary means of liaising with individual school Associations.

The purposes of the Regional Association are therefore to promote and defend the principles of Catholic education by:

- providing a forum for the sharing of knowledge and information of common interest between the Catholic schools in their region;
 - assisting school Associations to promote recognition of the important role that parents play in the education of their children;
 - providing representation to State Council of the TCSPFF;
 - acting as a conduit for the exchange of information between school associations and State Council of the TCSPFF;
 - hosting the Annual Conference of the TCSPFF on a rotating basis with the other two regional associations; and
- facilitating opportunities for the development of members of the executives of school . P&F Associations in their region.

To enable the achievement of these purposes each Regional Association will:

- meet at least once in each school term;
- annually elect a Chairperson, Secretary and three Regional Delegates to

State Council of the TCSPFF (normally, the Chairperson will be available to be one of the region's delegates) and fill other such offices as from time to time may be required to fulfil its purposes;

- where possible, provide representation on TCSPFF State Council delegations to and meetings with politicians and education authorities;
- in recognition and acknowledgment of its Catholic identity commence each meeting with a period of prayer and/or reflection; and
- operate in a spirit of collaboration and common purpose.



Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

History

How Catholic Schools developed in Australia

The first Catholic Schools were established in Sydney and Melbourne in the late 1820s and early 1830s. They were commenced by the Church to protect the faith of the Catholic children in the colony and run by lay people – mostly parents.

The first schools received some assistance from the Government until the Education Acts of the 1870s. These Acts founded the state school system – they introduced free, secular and compulsory education into Australia.

The response of the Bishops was to develop a Catholic school system with the help of personnel from religious orders and the support of Catholic parents. The majority of religious were from overseas countries. The Catholic school system received no assistance from Government from the 1870s until the 1960s. The self-sacrifice of religious and lay people laid the foundation for the strong Catholic education system of today.

After World War II, increased student numbers, declining numbers of religious teachers and the beginning of the lay teacher era put great pressure on Catholic Schools. There was an urgent need for Government assistance.



Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

Parents and Friends Lobby

In the 1950s parents and friends organisations were formed and the national organization for non-government school parents, the Australian Parents Council (APC), was a result of the Goulburn School closure.

The main goal of the parent network was to persuade Governments, both Commonwealth and State, that there was justice and economic wisdom in financially supporting non-government schools.

A Catholic Schools Parents and Friends organisation for Tasmania

On 22nd November 1959, delegates representing seventeen Catholic schools across Tasmania met at St. Patrick's College, Prospect, for the purpose of establishing a Parents and Friends Association. The Constitution for the "Federation of Parents and Friends of Catholic Schools of Tasmania" was adopted and office bearers elected.

In February 1960 the late Archbishop Sir Guilford Young became the first Patron. The Federation's newsletter, "Triangle" was first published in 1965. It was used very effectively to communicate the case for State Aid.

Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

Why Affiliate with the TCSPFF?

The Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents and Friends Federation are often asked the question, "What are the benefits of being affiliated with the TCSPFF?"

The Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents and Friends Federation represent the parents of about 15,000 students who attend 37 Catholic schools in Tasmania. It liaises with Catholic Church authorities, peak education bodies and the Tasmanian Government and its instrumentalities to maintain and protect the interests of Catholic school students and their families. On the Australian national education scene, the Federation is affiliated with the Australian Parents Council, which is the National Federation of organizations representing parents of non-government school children.

On 22nd November, 1959, delegates representing 17 Catholic schools across Tasmania met at St. Patrick's College, Prospect, for the purpose of establishing a Parents and Friends Association. The early Federation Council encouraged Parents and Friends to present their legitimate claims for public funding to their local Member of Parliament through their individual parent members. The appeal was always for justice and equity for the parent and child. The Federation coordinated and presented its requests to government and opposition leaders.

The Catholic school system received no funding assistance from the 1870's until the 1960's.

In February 1960 the late Archbishop Sir Guilford Young became the first Patron and Canon Law was adopted.

The Federation's newsletter "Triangle" was first published in 1965. It was used very powerfully and effectively to communicate the case for State Aid.

The first Catholic Education Commission in Australia was established in 1971, to administer and account for the public funds obtained through the labours of parents over many years for their children.

It is accepted today that State and Federal Governments provide funding for children in non-government schools, but families shouldn't take this for granted. It must be remembered that what has already been gained to date must not be diminished but continually improved.

Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

Benefits of Affiliating

Some of the ways in which Parents and Friends Associations benefit from Affiliation with the Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents and Friends Federation are:

- Support and Advice for Associations
- Annual Conference and Seminar Presentations
- Regular Newsletters and Circulars of Events
- Facilitation of Idea-sharing between parents and P&F Associations
- A friendly voice on the other end of the telephone when parents or Associations are experiencing difficulties at school.
- Current information on Educational, Funding and other issues circulated to P&F's
- Research re Public Funding of all school children and constant lobbying for improved Funding for Catholic School Students.
- Coordination of responses to Governments
- Interaction, co-operation and joint policy development with Non-Government school Parents around Australia via the Australian Parents Council (APC).
- Access to information sharing with other parent bodies.
- Federation Handbook for Associations with suggestions as a guide to help.



Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

- Representation of Parent's views to both State and Federal Governments and other Education authorities through input to many Committees and Commissions.

Parents unselfishly give hundreds of hours of their time to represent children and families of Catholic Schools so that they will be given a "fair hearing or go".

Parents and Friends Associations are important "grass-root" organisations. They provide parents with an independent forum within their children's school where they can interact with other parents and discuss educational, funding and related issues.

Any member of an Affiliated Parents and Friends Association can nominate for election to the Federation Council at the Annual General Meeting.

An Affiliation fee is charged for each child enrolled at school. This enables the Federation to operate an office, receive secretarial and IT assistance, travel and general meeting costs and affiliation with the Australian Parents Council.

An annual grant from the State Government significantly reduces the financial impact on parents.

If you would like to know more about the Federation, members are warmly welcomed at our regional meetings, the times, dates and other information regarding our Structure, Constitution etc can be viewed or downloaded from our website: <http://tascatholicparentsandfriends.net>

Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS and FRIENDS EXECUTIVE

The School Parents and Friends Association

Introduction

Parents and Friends Associations act under the auspices of the Archbishop of Hobart. In accordance with his desire for Catholic Schools in Tasmania to give witness to its most important role as an agency of the Catholic Church in Tasmania the Archbishop has endorsed the establishment of Parents and Friends Associations:

- (i) to promote the mission of catholic schools;
- and
- (ii) to foster a true spirit of community.

In that spirit Canon Law 796 lays the foundation for the relationship between parents and friends and the Catholic school, it states,

"Among the means of advancing education, Christ's faithful are to consider schools as of great importance, since they are the principal means of helping parents to fulfill their role in education.

There must be the closest cooperation between parents and the teachers to whom they entrust their children to be educated. In fulfilling their task, teachers are to collaborate closely with the parents and willingly listen to them; associations and meetings of parents are to be set up and held in high esteem..."

Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

Objectives

(Extract from Relationships document Sample Constitution)

- 3.1 The objectives of the Association shall be those which accord with the content of the documents "The Catholic School" (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, Rome (1977)) and "The Code of Canon Law (1983)".

In particular, the Association will participate in the optimum spiritual, intellectual, social and physical development of the pupils in the school by:

- (a) fostering a distinctive Christian environment in the school;
 - (b) developing maximum co-operation between parents and school staff;
 - (c) utilising those structures which are established to promote the principles of Catholic education;
 - (d) providing a vehicle for information sharing and participation of parents, in a spirit of collaboration and common purpose;
 - (e) identifying gifts and talents within the parent community and making them available to meet the spiritual, educational, social and material needs of the school; and
 - (f) work to promote and defend government support for Catholic education and promote recognition of the important role that parents play in the education of their children by affiliating with, and participating in the activities of the Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation.
- 3.2 The Association shall not:
- have, nor shall it seek to have, any direct control over the management and administration of the school;
 - (b) affiliate with any political party or body; nor
 - (c) affiliate with any association whose objectives are in conflict with the objectives stated in Clause 3.1.



Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

Effective Schools

Effective Schools are those where:

- There is a strong focus on teaching and learning
- There is meaningful and positive leadership
- The school community has a shared vision for the school
- The classroom and school environment are conducive to learning
- There are high expectations of students
- Positive reinforcement is used
- Performance is monitored regularly
- Students have rights and responsibilities
- The School is a place of learning for all

PARENTS ARE INVOLVED

Australian Government Department of Education, Science and
Training (DEST)
Schooling Issues Digest, 2004/1

Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

Getting Involved in Your Child's Schooling

Being involved in your child's schooling adds richness to their experience and sends a clear message that their education is important to you.

Your child will do much better in school if you are actively involved in their education and if you are as informed as possible about the education system.

How to be involved

You can choose how you become involved, based on your own particular interests, availability and skills. Here are some suggestions:

- talk with your child – ask “how was school today?”
 - regularly read with your child at home
 - check you child's homework every night and ask them questions about it
 - limit tv viewing on school nights
 - regularly discuss your child's progress with their teacher
 - visit your child's classroom
 - volunteer for parent help – you can help in the classroom with activities such as reading
 - volunteer to help out with school activities such as open days, working bees, school fairs, the canteen and excursions
 - read the school newsletter
 - join the school's parent group
 - go along to a p&f meeting
 - if they have one, check your school's website regularly
 - attend school social occasions
- become an advocate for education

The best way to keep up with what is happening in your school is through the newsletter. Check with your school to find out how often the newsletter is produced and how it will be sent home. It may be possible to receive it via email – ask your school.

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Parents and Schools A partnership in education

Parents are partners in schooling by virtue of their role as the central provider / carer and the role they play in their children's learning and development.

Parents have the right to be involved in all aspects of education of their children, at home, at school and at the system level.

There are many ways in which parents can be involved. These include:

- supporting learning at home
- helping in the classroom and with a variety of school programs such as craft, sport, excursions
- helping in the school canteen or school library
- assisting with fundraising
- attending interviews with teachers about their children's progress
- participating in discussions with other parents about school programs and policies
- becoming an executive member of the P&F Association
- becoming a member of the school board
- representing the parents of your school at P&F Federation regional and state meetings
- Representing the wider parent community on State and National committees and advisory groups

Parent participation is a democratic right. It contributes significantly to better outcomes for all students. It enables the school system and individual schools to respond more effectively to community values, aspirations and needs. It enhances the strength and vibrancy of the education system and, most importantly, it builds a stronger school community.



Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

- assisting with fundraising
- attending parent / teacher interviews about your child's progress
- becoming a member of the P&F Association
- becoming a member of the school board
- representing the parents of your school at P&F Federation regional and state meetings
- Representing the wider parent community on State and National committees and advisory groups

Parents have a democratic right to participate in their child's education. It contributes significantly to better outcomes for all students. It enables the school system and individual schools to respond more effectively to community values and needs. It enhances the strength and vibrancy of the education system and builds a stronger school community.



Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

Valuing Your Community

Schools benefit from the support of their P&F's. It creates social interaction and a forum to discuss and debate school issues.

Being involved in the P&F can have several advantages:

- meeting the parents of your children's friends
- getting to know the principal and teachers
- understanding more about what happens at school
- acquiring new skills
- demonstrating a positive attitude to schooling to your child

How can you encourage parents to become involved in the P&F Association?

There should be an ongoing process of encouraging members to be actively involved in their association. If parents are reluctant to become involved, find out why. Members should be a vital part of the organisation – decisions should not be left to just a few.

Some of the following ideas may help you to increase members:

- alternate meeting times
- providing childcare
- allowing for social interaction
- running meetings well
- present interesting speakers and topics
- ensure parents know what is being discussed by advertising in the weekly newsletter / flyer



Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

We realise that not everyone has the time to come to P&F meetings. Parents support their children's school in many ways and these must be recognised and valued.

They include:

- assisting in the canteen, uniform shop or library
- helping with classroom activities
- Being involved in raising the awareness of matters of concern regarding occupational, health and safety issues.
- offering to carry out maintenance for school equipment providing expertise in particular areas and so on.

Participation in P&F's must always be seen as an invitation, not as an obligation. Parents, as well as having the right to volunteer, also have the right not to. Acknowledge the fact that all parents have an interest in their children's education and continue to encourage them to take part in a variety of school activities. The more comfortable and confident parents feel in the school environment, the more likely they are to contribute to their children's learning experiences.



Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

Constitution

Constitutions are adopted to facilitate the smooth running of an organisation.

Constitutions are helpful if difficulties arise which can be resolved by having a document to refer to.

The TCSPFF's Constitution can be viewed / downloaded from the Federation's website at
<http://tascatholicparentsandfriends.net/>

Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

President / Chairperson

Duties and Responsibilities

1. Provides Leadership. As a leader, be a role model by listening, showing interest, appreciation and confidence in members. Admit mistakes.
2. Chairs all meetings.
3. Acts as a spokesperson for the association.
4. Must ensure that the decisions made are consistent with the objectives of the organisation and in accordance with the constitution.
5. Ensure adequate and efficient communication exists between the members of the association and the school.
6. Develops a working relationship with the Secretary and other members of the executive.
7. Ensure meetings follow the agenda and run on time.
8. Report to P&F meetings about the activities of the P&F.
9. Follow up on actions from the previous meeting.
10. Make sure as many opinions as possible are expressed.
11. Ensure speakers are not interrupted.
12. Sign the minutes of the previous meeting once they have been accepted as a true and accurate record of that meeting.
13. Encourage parents to participate.



Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

Vice President

Duties and Responsibilities

1. Provides Leadership.
2. Chairs meetings where the President is absent.
3. Is familiar with the operation of the P&F.
4. Has the knowledge of the duties of the President.
5. Has a working understanding of the constitution, rules and procedures.
6. Works with the President by sharing tasks to achieve the goals of the association.

Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

Secretary

Duties and Responsibilities

1. Develop a working relationship with the Chairperson of the Committee
2. List all incoming and outgoing correspondence
3. Communicate with Chairperson on any urgent correspondence as soon as possible after listing
4. Meetings—assist Chairperson in smooth running of meetings
5. Notice of meeting to attendees (allow at least 2 weeks prior to meeting date)
6. Agenda to attendees (one week before the meeting)
7. Advise Chairperson of any visitors and list apologies
8. Organise information for the introduction of any guest speaker
9. Have spare copies of agenda and minutes of previous meeting on hand for the meeting
10. Supply a prayer for meetings
11. Note all motions and resolutions. Proposer's name, Seconder's name and motion lost / carried
12. List attendees
13. Prepare minutes as soon as possible after the meeting
14. Prepare correspondence as soon as possible after the meeting
15. Action on motion / resolutions as soon as possible
16. Distribute minutes as soon as possible after the meeting
17. Maintain and updated file folder of minutes of P&F meetings and all records and correspondence
18. Ensure that approved minutes are signed by the Chairperson

Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

Treasurer

Duties and Responsibilities

The Treasurer is responsible and accountable to the P&F Association for all monies held in P&F accounts.

The Treasurer's job is one of the most important in ensuring the smooth running of the P&F. Basically, all that is necessary is to record transactions regularly, to balance them with the bank statement monthly and to present statements to the P&F association for approval throughout the year.

Some key responsibilities of the P&F Treasurer are:

- Recording all transactions accurately
- Keeping the cash books
- Issue receipts for all money received
- Pay all accounts as authorised by the meeting or as required
- Ensure all monies are held / stored securely.
- Bank all money regularly
- Prepare a financial report for each meeting and an annual financial report for the Annual General Meeting
- Ensure the association's financial records meet audit requirements and are presented at the Annual General Meeting
- Arrange for monthly bank statements and reconcile deposit and cheque books with the statements

Authority to sign cheques:

The requirement for the signing of cheques should be set out in the constitution of the association and should be strictly adhered to.



Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

Regional Delegate

Duties and Responsibilities

1. Attend the regional meetings of the Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents and Friends Federation.
2. Represent the views / concerns of your P&F at these meetings.
3. Report back to your P&F association on the meetings and issues that may affect the education of your children.
4. Attend state conferences and seminars to information share. If unable to attend, elect a representative from your P&F to attend. There is no limit in numbers attending, all are welcome.

Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

A Typical Agenda

Meeting of _____ to be held _____ on _____

- 1. Opening Prayer**
- 2. Apologies**
- 3. Minutes of Meeting held (Date of previous meeting)**
- 4. Business Arising from Minutes (Previous Meeting)**
- 5. Correspondence**
- 6. Business Arising from Correspondence**
- 7. Finance (Treasurers Report)**
- 8. Committee Report**
- 9. General Business**
- 10. Next Meeting**
- 11. Closure—Prayer**



Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

Typical Order Of Meeting

The order of the meeting follows the Agenda which has been drawn up by the Chairperson or Secretary.

The Chairperson declares the meeting open, welcomes all present and calls for any apologies and any additional items for the agenda.

Apologies

An apology should usually be given to the Secretary before the meeting. Your apology shows that you are interested in the Committee. The Secretary records the names of all present at the meeting.

Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting may be read. Members are asked if the minutes are a true record of the previous meeting. The Chairperson will call for a motion to accept them as a true record.

Business arising from the Minutes

Any topic which needs to be discussed from the last meeting is discussed at this time. Any actions since the last meeting will be also be reported at this time.

Correspondence

The Secretary will list or mention any incoming letters which need to be drawn to the attention of the Committee. Any outgoing letters are also mentioned (these may need to be confirmed (approved) by the meeting)

Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

How to Make Meetings Work

Meetings are held to encourage group discussion and make decisions. Meetings do not have to be formal, styles can vary from traditional to open and relaxed. Responsibility needs to be taken that the committee functions well, that decisions are made successfully and followed through.

Formal voting is a quick way of following a meeting's agenda but it may run the risk of alienating those who lose the vote and thereby damage the group's sense of unity.

Consensus on the other hand is agreement reached through a process of gathering viewpoints and through discussion and negotiation. The goal of consensus is to reach a final decision that everyone feels comfortable with although the group decision may not be unanimous. You may need a vote at the end to formally record the decision, especially financial ones as the auditor will require this. While consensus is often more difficult and takes more time, it is the ideal way for a participatory group to make decisions.

Finally, consider the needs of everyone who comes to the meeting. To make it work well, everyone should:

- focus on issues not on personalities
- confine the discussion to the topic
- listen to all member's points of view
- avoid speaking at great length
- avoid using jargon
- feel free to ask for explanations
- allow only one person to speak at a time
- avoid private conversations while someone else is speaking
- start on time and finish on time



Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

All decisions must be transparent and shared.

An area where major problems occur are when members are excluded from debating and voting on issues.

When the executive / committee are making all of the decisions without involving the members, parents and friends very rapidly lose interest in supporting the P&F and attending meetings.

There needs to be active involvement by all as well as true democracy for a P&F association to remain vital and alive.

It is important to have a general meeting once a month or at least once per term at which all present can have input and vote.

Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

Meeting Procedures

For your association to run democratically, meetings should be regular and properly convened. They may be run formally or informally, but decisions and agreements must be formally recorded with movers and seconders and all who wish to speak may be allowed to have the chance to do so.

Agenda

The agenda is prepared in advance of the meeting. While there should be a meeting agenda, members of your P&F may change the order of the items by placing urgent business ahead of reports. The agenda as well as the minutes from the previous meeting must be available before the meeting to allow members enough time to know and consider the items to be discussed. Following the meeting, the minutes should be written up by the Secretary and distributed for all to see. An action list drawn up is helpful for people to follow and be reminded of business that needs attending to.

Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

Meeting Procedures continued

Chairing the Meeting:

The chairperson must make sure members have been advised of the meeting time and location well in advance and that an agenda has been prepared and sent. The chairperson must ensure that the meetings commence and finish with a prayer. The chairperson presides over the meeting to ensure that proceedings are conducted in a proper and orderly manner and to guide the meeting towards achieving its aims. In order to do this the chairperson has the power to:

- Ensure procedures are followed
- Decide who can speak and in what order
- Ensure sufficient discussion on matters have taken place and
- Reject motions if insufficient notice has been given or if the motions are phrased in objectionable or ambiguous language.

The Chairperson should:

- Know and follow the constitution
- Ensure a quorum of members are present
- Ensure meetings start and end on time
- Follow the agenda
- Sign the confirmed minutes of the previous meeting
- Give all members the opportunity to speak
- Ensure that the discussion is addressed through the chair
- Sum up the debate without personal bias to ensure motions and amendments are clearly understood before the vote is taken

The Chairperson should not:

- Impose personal views
- Influence the debate
- Dominate the meeting
- Chair the meeting without preparing for it beforehand.

Remember the chairperson is a member of the team and not the “Boss”.

Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

Effective Meeting Tips

1. **Develop, distribute and circulate an agenda and any other documents / items prior to the meeting so members will be prepared, feel involved and be up to date.**
2. **Choose an appropriate meeting time.**
3. **Arrange the room so that members face each other.**
4. **Choose a location suitable to your groups size. Small rooms can get stuffy and create tension. A larger room is more comfortable and encourages individual expression.**
5. **Use visual aides for interest.**
6. **Greet members and make them feel welcome. Even late members when appropriate.**
7. **Serve light refreshments, they are good icebreakers and make your members feel special and comfortable.**
8. **Start on time and end on time.**
9. **Stick to the agenda.**
10. **Encourage group discussion to get all points of view and ideas. You will have better quality decisions as well as highly motivated members, they will feel that attending meetings is worth while.**
11. **Encourage feedback. Ideas, activities and commitment to the organisation improve when members see their impact on the decision making process.**
12. **Keep conversation focused on the topic.**
13. **Summarise agreements reached.**
14. **End the meeting on a unifying or positive note.**
15. **Set a date, time and place for the next meeting.**
16. **Give recognition and appreciation to jobs well done and attendance of members.**

Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

Reports

Treasurer's Report:

The Treasurer may give a monthly report of the financial status of the Association, which may include any accounts which need approval before being paid.

Principal's Report / Board Report:

The Principal / School Leader may give a report of key issues. The P&F representative on the Board / Governing Body may also report back to the committee on the previous Board meeting.

Other Reports:

The Federation Regional Delegate or a Sub Committee Delegate would report at this point in the meeting. It may also be that a member has attended a special meeting or seminar and should report on this to the Committee.

General Business

Topics of interest to the group are usually discussed under this section. The Chairperson may take motions on any relevant topics which require action. Possible guest speakers for future meetings may also form part of this section.

Next Meeting

The next meeting date and venue for meeting will be decided or confirmed. The Chairperson declares the meeting closed once all matters of the meeting are dealt with.

Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

The Annual General Meeting

Why do you need to hold an annual General Meeting?

An annual General meeting is held to elect Office Bearers, present annual reports or attend to matters that are required to be decided at an AGM.

When should you hold the AGM?

Your constitution probably states that the time and place should be determined by a General Meeting of the P&F. Some schools hold their AGM towards the end of the school year in November as parents are then more familiar with the P&F and its activities and it allows for some planning to take place for the next year.

How much notice do you need to give of the date of the AGM?

The standard P&F Constitution requires that the notice of the date of the AGM be given in writing (school newsletter is acceptable) no less than seven days prior to the proposed meeting, one month is preferable.

What is dealt with at the AGM?

The Executive Committee, as described in your P&F constitution, is elected at each Annual General Meeting.

The Treasurer must present an audited copy of the annual statement of receipts and expenditure.

The Outgoing President as well as any Sub-Committees should present written reports of the past years activities.

An Auditor with appropriate qualifications should be appointed for the coming year.

What is an Executive Committee?

The Executive Committee are those who take on the specific responsibilities of President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer.



Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

How should the Annual Reports be presented?

Annual Reports should be printed and distributed before the AGM and a verbal summary presented at the meeting.

How can you encourage more people to Stand for positions?

All members should feel welcome and encouraged to participate throughout the year. They should be aware of what is involved in the various roles of office. If members are reluctant to take on office-bearers positions, find out why. Do the current office-bearers have too heavy a workload? Can some of the tasks be delegated to other members? To encourage more parents, some schools prefer not to have the AGM coincide with the first P&F meeting of the school year. The first meeting could provide an opportunity for planning the year's events and for social interaction.

Is there a limit to the time someone can remain in Office?

Your constitution will specify any time limits that may apply, otherwise, retiring committee members are eligible to stand for election.

Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

A Checklist for Assessing P&F Meetings

There are many ways to work together as a group. There is no right or wrong, the best meeting procedure (what works for the group) should be agreed upon by a majority of the members. Use the checklist below to start discussion about your P&F Meeting procedures.

Introducing people

Our Association has some “getting to know you” activities at the start of the year. YES / NO

Our Association has a method of introducing new members which quickly makes them feel at home. YES / NO

Our Association allows time during meetings for people to get to know each other socially. YES / NO

Our Association provides tea / coffee during the evening. YES / NO

Information Sharing

Members can put forward their opinions anonymously through a suggestion box. YES / NO

Our Association explains the issues and tries to avoid jargon. YES / NO

Our Association sets a regular time at each meeting for questions. YES / NO

Problem Solving

Our Association has used these techniques to help with problem solving:

- Breaking into small groups. YES / NO
- Brainstorming. YES / NO
- Short statements from each member with no discussion. YES / NO
- Circulating the topics for discussion beforehand. YES / NO

Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

Decision-making and who does what

Our Association has made sure that every member knows what sort of decision making process we use and how it works. YES / NO

Our Association has discussed the decision making processes and is happy with the way we make our decisions. YES / NO

When a decision is made, our Association notes who will carry it out and when. YES / NO

Decisions our Association make are carried out and reported back. YES / NO

CONSENSUS - DO YOU REALLY HAVE IT?

Are some people unable to speak because others talk a lot?

Do some members feel overwhelmed by the more powerful in the group?

Do people in the Association agree simply to get things over and done with?

Do people agree because they don't really understand the issue?

Do people agree because they're afraid to "rock the boat"?

Do people agree because they feel intimidated by those of authority attending?

Does consensus in our meeting mean that some people don't have their say???

Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

Some Fun(d) Raising Suggestions

Events

- Fun Run, Walk-a-thon, Bike-a-thon, Dance-a-thon.
- Fairs and Fetes.
- Food from around the world.
- Trivia / Quiz Nights.
- A night at the movies.
- Auctions.
- Disco's.
- Car Wash.
- Ten Pin Bowling.
- Indoor Climbing.
- Raffles.
- Fashion Parade.
- School Art Exhibition.
- Progressive Dinner.

Special Days

Non Food:

- Coin Line.
- Theme Days. Eg: free dress, crazy day, wacky legs day, 60's, 70's or 80's day, Jeans day, PJ day, crazy hair day.

Food:

- Sausage Sizzle.
- BBQ veggie day.
- Smoothie / Milk Shake day.
- Pancake day.
- Pasta day.
- Juice bar day.
- Soup and Sandwich day.
- Cake Stall.



Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

Fundraising Items

- School Cook Book.
- School made Calendars.
- Cards.
- Stickers.
- Bulbs.
- Portrait Photo's.
- School Catering for community events.

For more ideas try the Fund Raising Directory.
www.fundraisingdirectory.com.au

Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation

Grievance Policy

The [Schools Registration Board](#) (the Board) was established under the [Education Act 1994 \(the Act\)](#) to ensure that non-government schools comply with standards for education approved by the Minister for Education. The Act requires that all non-government schools operating in Tasmania must be registered by the Schools Registration Board.

Under this legislation, all non-government schools are required to have a grievance policy in place.

3.10 Grievance Process

Section 53 – (1) (fd) the proposed grievance process

The standard requires schools to provide a process for dealing with grievances.

The process must be **published, available to and widely known in the school community.**

The processes must provide clear procedures for:

- members of staff
- students
- parents or carers/guardians
- the general community

To follow in the case of a grievance against any member/s of the school community complainants must be provided with the process document at the time of notifying of a possible grievance.

The documented process must:

- allow for mediation, and
- recognise the right of aggrieved parties to have ultimate recourse to resolution through legal processes

The Board recommends that schools include the possibility of resolution through mutually acceptable conciliation procedures before recourse to arbitration or other legal processes.

For further information go to:

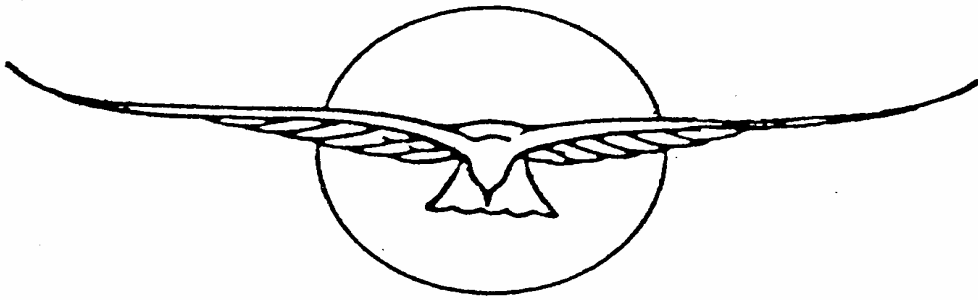
<http://www.srb.tas.gov.au/standards/grievance.htm>

Let Us Pray Together

Creator of all things,
true source of light and wisdom,
give us a sharp sense of
understanding
a retentive memory,
and the ability to grasp things
correctly and fundamentally.
Grant us the talent of being exact
in our explanations,
and the ability to express ourselves
with thoroughness and charm,
Point out the beginning,
direct the progress,
and help in the completion;
through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT



*Be present with us, O Holy Spirit,
for it is in your name
that we are specially gathered together.*

*Come to help us in our affairs
and be pleased to enter into our deliberations.*

*Instruct us in what we should do.
Let it be you, first of all,
who inspires our suggestions.*

*May you who love justice
let us not offend against justice or charity.*

Grant also that we may act intelligently.

*Keep us by the gift of your grace
in harmony with your will
so that we may act as one with you.*

Amen.

Reflection

It will take people:
Prophet people who dare to lay bare the fallacies that choke
and bind us
even if we cannot hear their words nor dream their dreams;
Parent people who look with love at the work of their creation
and refuse
to leave their children only a heritage of destruction;
Nurture people who grow plants and feed birds
and love what is green, fresh and growing;
Healing people whose hands touch others into life and well
being
struggling always against the forces of death;
Poet people who call us beyond where we are
pointing to the lastingness of life;
Fun people whose role through time has been to nurture,
to empower others,
to make grow,
to make new again.
Soul people whose eyes are clear and open,
inviting trust and the kind of bonding that draws us together;
Justice people who cry out against the oppressors of people,
The destroyers of the earth;
Little people who don't know themselves as special
but who are in truth the salt of the earth
feeding and clothing and housing the human family
from one end of day to the next.

It will take people;
Spirit people
fired with a holy madness
who believe our world can be transformed
into a place of joy and hope and love.

Jane Blewett

It will take people, P&F people, who do make a difference!

Concluding Prayer:

Lord, as we part and go our separate ways
It is our prayer that you will give us,
Each in our own way,
The passion for living and loving,
The courage for daring and hoping,
The freedom for growing and changing,
The capacity for giving and receiving,
The humility for learning,
The strength for enduring,
The trust for believing,
And may your grace and your peace,
Which is not the absence of conflict,
But the presence of all that makes life whole,
Be with us and go with us.

Amen.

Please Note:

The information in this manual is a guide **only** and contains suggestions, samples and ideas to help you with your Parent Organisation.