**Minutes of the Parent Teacher Group (PTG) Committee Meeting**

**13 October 2015 in Room CON306**

*(PTG Meeting for School Staff and Parent Representatives)*

Minutes prepared by PTG Secretary, Vani Sharma

**Present:** Matthew Mills (Head of School), Andrew Gordon (Business Director), Michael Smith (Secondary Principal), Helen Thew (Assistant Principal Secondary School, Student Welfare), Jason Cooper (Assistant Principal Primary School), Genevieve Ahl (Services Manager), Michael Balo (Assistant Principal Extra Curricular Activities and Sports), Njah Khan (PTG Chairperson), Vani Sharma (PTG Secretary), Rocelyn Kielnhofer (PTG Treasurer), Thitinan (Koi) Kiatphaibool (PTG Thai Liasion), Malene Bloch Lundgaard (PTG Secondary Parent Representative), Rachael Cheung (PTG Primary Parent Representative), Bronwyn Ure (PTG Newcomers Representative), Susanne (PTG Activities Coordinator), Jan Briggs (PTG Communications Coordinator), Bradley Coulter (PTG Cross Campus Representative), Suzie Jhanji (PTG Activities Coordinator), Daphne Seiler (Fun Day Coordinator)

**Apologies** : Emma Golligher (Development, Alumni and Marketing Manager), James Penstone (Cross Campus Principal), Clare Sharp (Primary School Principal), Andrea Chaplin (Tiger Shop Manager),

Meeting commenced at 8.00am

**Minutes of the last meeting and Matters Arising**

Minutes of last two meetings and the AGM were approved.

**PTG Chairperson - Njah Khan**

* Njah raised the issue of the use of PTG Room again to be clarified. The final decision is that it is not for use of kids and nannies. Matt added that it has been brought to notice that some kids are being tutored in the PTG Room. This is not acceptable either in the PTG Room or in any other parts of the school. It has to be reiterated that there can no private tutoring on school premises at all. Njah again clarified if it was too harsh to say no kids waiting in the PTG Room with parent. Jason added that if primarily the room is for use for PTG business then it should not be used as a space to sit and wait or for filling time. There are a lot of other space to wait around in school. This point to be spread around by word of mouth and maybe a notice to say “Please be reminded that it is a space for parents and staff” would be appropriate.
* There was some clarification regarding PTG Room bookings. It has now been sorted out. The only way to book the room is by sending an email to ptg@patana.ac.th. There is no online booking system. We are in the process of making some signage to say “Meeting in Progress” so that there is no disturbance during meetings.
* There is some feedback on the new ECA four block system primarily from the Primary Section. The parents felt that the new block system was a bit challenging and confusing. One point raised was that it is not in line with the school term and hence having difficulty keeping track. Parents feel that they had just signed up for Block 1, which was not finished yet and they are already signing up for Block 2, which doesn’t start until November. Mike Balo responded that the main reason for the early sign up is to facilitate the billing system. So block 1 & 2 ECAs will be billed in Term1. We are still following the three term billing system so it is inevitable that one of the terms will have the billing for two blocks.
* Njah asked if it would be possible for a separate billing system for ECAs. Mike advised that it would not be possible because 92% of Patana kids participate in ECAs, so that would be so many more invoices for accounts to send out only for ECAs.
* Some parents also had a question that if they sign up for a particular ECA in Block 1, was there any guarantee that they could possibly get it again in Block 2. Mike responded that the reason the ECAs are not carried over is to give other child the opportunity to try that ECA. Only selective ECAs like choir, primary production, etc. is carried over so that all kids get an opportunity to try an ECA. Malene raised a question that if a child has done a particular ECA in block 1, is he/she automatically removed from the system to choose that ECA again in Block 2. Mike said it is not so and his team do look at the highly popular ECAs and try to manually put in new students. Matt suggested to have a look at the few highly popular ECAs and moderate it. Mike also added that if a child has only chosen one ECA, they are given a priority but it is a bit difficult with the popular ECAs.
* Brad brought up the ECA in K2 where only two ECAs are allowed. Some parents were enquiring if in Block 3 & 4, could they be increased to 3 as the kids can get an exposure to more ECAs. Mike Balo responded that it was a max of 2 per term but it was not applied for term 3 last year because the system didn’t work. Mike has discussed this with Clare Sharp to increase to 3 for Block 3 & 4. Primary teachers recommend 3 ECAs a week for Y1 & 2. If its increased to 4 in a week for Foundation Stage, then we are going over the limit of what we recommend for Y1 & 2. Brad had questions if there was a pre-selection for certain ECA's for younger years. Brad and Mike to further discuss this, probably include Clare in the discussion.
* Some parents have concerns there is an increase of outsourced staff travelling with our school teams. Mike clarified that we have always had external coaches travelling with our teams like Volleyball, Basketball, Badminton etc. The only difference now is we have extended it to our FOBISIA teams as well. We also have school staff travelling along with the external coaches. This year for FOBISIA, we have external coaches running the team. One of the feedback received from parents before is that we should have specialist coaches helping PE staff doing multi-sports events, especially athletics. At Patana, the PE staff are not paid extra for coaching after school hours, so at the end of the year they are working 3-4 months extra. These external coaches are training with the kids, so they are familiar with the kids. Mike reiterated that there are always Patana staff travelling with the teams along with the external coaches.
* Genevieve had to leave and nobody had any questions for her.
* The Parent Social Evening is on the 14th November. We will start actively advertising after the holidays.
* There has been an increase in members in the PTG FB page and the committee members are still actively promoting it at all coffee mornings, etc.
* An update on Tiger Shop that the Tiger Spirit Day went well. The Tiger Shop is open every morning now and the hours are advertised in the PTG pages and the PTG FB page.
* An effort to further the well being of our students, there has been a suggestion to host good luck/farewell breakfast for Y11 & Y13 on behalf of the PTG. The event was given the approval to go ahead by the committee.
* We could probably do something like this with the primary as well for PTG to be more involved. Njah to send some suggestions to Jason and discuss further.
* Malene brought up the issue of helping hands in secondary. Some kids are not really comfortable on being helping hands and some parents gave feedback that the kids were being assisted by other children rather than their helping hands. Helen clarified that every year there is a survey done and there is a huge amount of data collected to further improve on the system. Helping hands are already pre-selected when the new student joins school.

**Treasurer’s Report – Rocelyn Kielnhofer**

* Tiger Shop is doing well and Andrea has been excellent in managing the Tiger Shop. Discussion is on-going for getting new items and to order items for next term. Discussion is also on to smooth out the process with the school accounts dept.
* The expenses have been very minimal.
* As Njah mentioned, we have funds to allocate for the Y11 & Y13 breakfasts.
* Andrew asked that the treasurer’s report to include the Tiger Shop stock balance.

**Head of School - Matthew Mills**

* We currently have 2234 students in school. We are expecting an increase in Term 2.
* We have renewed 88 teacher contracts already out of 126. Matt/Mick/Clare/James to have discussion with teachers to assess contracts and to understand if they are staying on. At the moment we have 8 teachers from primary and about 8-9 teachers in secondary leaving at the end of the academic year.
* We had CBD guest Timothy Garrish, a retired UK detective from Scotland Yard and he specialises in Student Safeguard, covering the policy documentations in place, physical outlay of school, etc. He is meeting with a wide array of Patana staff and will be sharing his report with us soon.
* Malene said that there was a feedback from the secondary reps that the kids were not aware of the difference between fire alarms and lock-downs. Andrew added that if its an old student/parent in school its quite impossible for them not to know because there a few fire drills and lock down drills conducted throughout the academic year.
* Looking forward to International Day and a good term break. So far it has been a smooth Term 1A.
* The turn out for the FCD parent presentation was very poor. It is a very good resource on a very important topic, so we need to understand how to improve the turnout. Malene added that she has attended 5yrs back and thought it was a bit old-fashioned. A lot of things they said were just logical and not new information. Matt added that maybe if it is done in the morning it might have a better attendance. If we can get a better participation in the morning, then we should try that. There needs to be a feedback taken from parents to work this out.

**Business Director - Andrew Gordon**

* Every 5 years there is an academics review and adjustments are made accordingly.
* A survey for the well being of the organisation was conducted. This is basically data gathering to understand trends and move forward from there. All of the teaching staff and business staff are involved in this survey.
* Renovation project for next year – the first and second floor of humanities, the admin building and also the staff accommodation.
* The last bits of the science building will be completed by end of this month. There will be a bridge from science block to humanities.
* Putting in some water retention tanks in case of any flooding in future.

**Secondary Principal - Michael Smith**

* We have had presentations by FCD & Clive Leach.
* Y10 & Y11 coffee mornings are done.
* First parent conferences for Y7, almost 1500 appointments.
* Reports for Y10 and Y12 will be sent out this week, indicating the attainment target grades. Not a very detailed report and no comments written, just a snapshot of where the children currently are in their grades.
* Y11 Parent Conferences and Y8 coffee morning this week.
* Y13 parent conferences after the break followed by Y9 coffee morning and Y8 & Y9 parent conference.
* IB pre-art exhibition this week.
* KS3 music festival last week and we had choir artist in school over the weekend working with all the choir kids. We have also visited ISB twice for musical events.
* Thank you for the new-comers pizza lunch.
* Residentials are coming up after the half term break

**Assistant Principal Secondary School, Student Welfare - Helen Thew**

* Residential week is 16th Nov to 20th Nov, Y7/8/9/10/12 kids are off for residential. All hotels have been checked out by the year heads for health and safety and any matters arising have been dealt with.
* Y11 have their trial exams and its completion week for Y13.

**Assistant Principal Primary School - Jason Cooper**

* Thank you for Tiger Spirit Day.
* Primary three-way conferences coming up on Nov 4 & 5. Have met with new parents and explained the process to them.
* A new math resource in KS1, Numicon is being used. Experts coming from UK to train the KS1 staff, tailored specifically for what we need. We have met with their representative here in Bangkok and they would like to explore the possibility of us hosting an Asian Regional Conference Workshop in January.
* Digital Citizenship workshop well attended by parents and have received positive feedback. Follow up on E-safety and Digital literacy in December. Matt added that it would be highly recommended for parents to attend this workshop.
* Sports, we have had Aquathlon, Basketball, gymnastics over the weekend, football with Shrewsbury got washed out, class competitions and U11 cross country.
* Settling in reports are being sent out this week with comments on how kids are settling in.
* Njah wanted to clarify what is “Signing” in foundation. Jason replied that it is using signs to express feelings since foundation stage kids do not always have the language skills or vocabulary to express themselves. Parents will be called in for a workshop so that they understand these signs their kids are using to express feelings.

**PTG Cross Campus Representative – Bradley Coulter**

* A quick update on the grants. The Oscilloscopes and binoculars have been purchased and are being used.
* The sports grant for the climbing equipment had some shipment problems to come in from the UK, which has now been sorted.
* Community grant for an impoverished school to provide rice. James is trying to get support and involvement of students from KS2 and KS3, possibility of using the CAT clubs. James to further work it out with Clare/Jason along with Brad.
* Foundation stage decorations project, we are purchasing equipment towards the end of this year. The decorations will be up by end of Term2.
* Daphne added that it would nice to have a photo of the projects to put up on the FB page, with Fun Day coming up it would be nice to show how the funds raised by PTG are being used.

**PTG Thai Liasion – Thitinan (Koi) Kiatphaibool**

* For Fun Run, we raised the amount from 5000 to 7000. This year we have more families signing up and we will continue to promote this event in the Thai community.
* With International Day coming up, the Thai parents group have offered to help the smaller countries find resources.
* First week after break, we will be selling thai costumes in time for Loy Krathong.

**PTG Newcomers Representative – Bronwyn Ure**

* The pizza lunch for new students, invitations were sent to 140 students. We had ordered 52 pizzas from the pizza company. Pizzas arrived on time. There were 8 leftover pizzas, which were distributed in the senior studies. Scoozi is more popular than Pizza Company but they are more expensive. Boys tend to eat more than the girls so it would be helpful if we have a breakdown on number of boys and girls. We got a discount and we have member cards valid for 6 months, which can be used by the school for any upcoming events.
* In addition we also ordered ice cream and soft drink per child. The additional drinks were given back to school and the ice-cream was also sent to senior studies.

**International Day - Vani Sharma**

* Preparations are well underway. There are 61 countries in school, 12 countries for expo hall and 23 countries in food hall.
* We have two photo booths this year to expedite the photo sessions and get the parade moving faster.
* For next year, we are thinking of incorporating the theme into the curriculum so that the kids are more involved. Discussions to be held after International Day with the school staff.
* The theme this year is Landmarks.

**Development, Alumni and Marketing Manager - Emma Goligher (given by Njah)**

* The response to the Annual Fund appeal has been very positive with over THB 650,000 being raised to date.  Thank you to everyone who has donated to this.
* School photographs will take place in the week commencing 18th January for Primary and the following week for Secondary. The date scheduled for each class in Primary is distributed to parents in the Primary Year group newsletters the two weeks prior, however the times are not stated as unfortunately we do not have space for parents to go along at the same time as the class photograph.
* The following information has previously been communicated to class teachers / tutors, via the Secondary Daily Notices and is also displayed in the room.  We will ensure that staff and parents are reminded of this prior to this year’s photographs:
* **Teacher Guidelines for Primary School photographs**:

1. Usmile staff are happy to help comb children’s hair before the photograph however if children would prefer they don’t do this please just tell the appropriate staff member.
2. The first photograph taken is for use in visa and passport applications. Usmile staff will direct the children on how to stand for this photograph.
3. If any child does not want Usmile to suggest poses for the rest of their photographs they should make their teacher aware or the photographer.
4. Usmile are unable to download photographs onto USB sticks.
5. We are unable to Photoshop missing children / staff onto the class photographs due to the number of requests received for this.

* **Student Guidelines for Secondary School photographs:**

1. The first photograph taken is for use in visa and passport applications. Usmile staff will advise you how to stand for this photograph.
2. If you don’t want Usmile to suggest poses for the rest of your photographs please politely tell the staff.
3. If you have any corrections you would like made to the photograph before they are processed please tell the staff and they will make a note of them.
4. Usmile are unable to download photographs onto USB sticks.
5. We are unable to Photoshop missing children / staff onto the class photographs due to the number of requests received for this.

* If students have missed their school photograph we liaise with their class teacher (in Primary) and via the tutor and student directly (in Secondary) about when they can go to have this retaken. This could be over the two weeks USmile are in school or on the subsequent catch up day.
* We will release the times and dates when family / sibling / friend photos can be taken (normally after school) once the timetable for all the classes/tutor groups and departments have been set. If anyone wants one of these shots but is unable to make the advertised times / dates then they can contact me and I will try and help.

**Other Matters**

* Malene said there was a feedback as to why donuts were served at the Fun Run breakfast. There are many healthy options available too. The feedback has been passed on to the services department.

Meeting ended at 9.30am