Rose Bay Secondary College School Council Meeting of 9 March, 2010

Minutes

Present: Jim Linton, Denise Lofts, Louise Hawkins, Chris Hughes, Steven Hayes, Gaby Munro, Judy Koerber, Irene Ulman, Jeromaia Detto, Cassie Watson

Apologies: Evelyn Mike

Meeting commenced: 7.00pm

Introduction

Following the election of School Council members at the P&C AGM of 9 February 2010, the School Council elected Steve Hayes as President of the Council and Irene Ulman as its Secretary.

Minutes of the School Council Meeting of 16 February were adopted with amendments.

Jim Linton thanked those present and proceeded to item 1 of the meeting’s agenda, the College CCTV policy.

1. College CCTV policy; discussion regarding the policy and the ethical issues involved.

Jim tabled three documents for discussion: “Rose Bay Secondary College CCTV Surveillance Policy”, “Legal Issues Bulletin” No 41 of the NSW Department of Education and Training and “Summary of Legal Issues Bulleting 41 and the NSW DIR Code of practice as it applies at Rose Bay Secondary College”

Jim clarified that CCTV is already functioning at the college. It is necessary for security reasons and as an aid to duty of care supervision of students. There is a need to monitor school grounds during and after school hours. However there is no CCTV policy and he seeks the Council’s assistance in formulating the policy.

Jim outlined where the cameras are currently positioned (as described in the “Draft Rose Bay Secondary College CCTV Surveillance Policy”). He explained that the only people with access to CCTV material are the Principal and his two Deputies. Though the Principal can see at the CCTV screen if he so wishes, in reality the cameras are not monitored throughout the day. Some of the chief concerns are theft and vandalism. Other security/ duty of care issues are bullying and harassment.

There was discussion about how the school staff might regard the use of CCTV. For instance, the cameras could pick up justifiable behavior by teachers but the images could be misinterpreted. It was agreed the footage would only accessed if there is an event.

There was discussion about whether CCTV should be used to monitor students’ leaving campus without permission. Members preferred that the material be accessed if there is a need to verify a complaint against a student, eg. by a neighbour.

The notion of security was discussed; members felt that most events could fall into either security or duty of care categories and those would need to be outlined in the policy.

The importance of signage was discussed. Currently students are notified about the presence of CCTV cameras. But in addition to being a tool to identify culprits and deter bad behaviour it might be possible to use CCTV in teaching students to understand their rights and the implications of being on camera.
Louise Hawkins said that the A Block area is constantly vandalised with graffiti and suggested two more cameras be installed. Jim pointed out that he would only consider installing new cameras after putting the matter before the School Council. Council agreed there was a good case for two additional cameras.

Availability of the filed archive was discussed; who, if anyone, apart from the Principal and Deputies should be given access to CCTV material in a dispute? The Draft Policy suggests that if a teacher is captured on camera, he or she have the right to see the files. Should students and parents have the same right? Denise Lofts suggested it might be possible if the practice was supported by a policy, she was not in favour of this. Members felt it was best to retain the current practice not to provide CCTV material to parents. As it is are normally viewed at the time of contacting police, it was agreed that parents can request the material via police.

In the case of a complaint against a teacher, the Principal makes a report to EPAC and if the teacher requests the evidence, it is provided.

Jim agreed to edit the draft document and circulate it among School Council members. It will then put to RBSC staff and following that to the Teachers’ Federation.

2. Values and Vision process

Jim tabled the document “Vision, Values and Education” by Denise Archie of The Gen Team. He also provided further detail about the project which was originally conceived in response to the recommendation in the NSW Department of Education and Training School Review Report (2007) that the RBSC develop a shared vision/goals/purpose.

Jim explained that his intention is to have students drive this process and he has requested Denise Archie to work with students, teachers and parents, to develop values and vision that students feel they own. It will be treated as a leadership program (students will receive a certificate of leadership) and be counted as community work as part of the Duke of Edinburgh program. Eventually it may become a school elective.

The process involves long-term student commitment, initially from year 10 volunteers. There will be workshops, surveys, induction programs and a coaching program that will engage the whole school and the school community. Today year 10 students met for the first time and there is a lot of enthusiasm; 20 student volunteers were sought but at the moment the number is 35.

Jim detailed the various stages of the process.

There was a discussion and it was generally felt it had merit. Questions were about how the vision process fits into the already stretched school resources while other recommendations in the DET School Review Report need to be worked on as well. Jim suggested that all other review recommendations had in fact been dealt with and proposed to do a presentation for parents on the status of the DET Review recommendations. It was agreed this presentation will take place at the next P&C meeting on 4 May.

The meeting concluded at 9.00pm