

# Boarding Parents' Association (BPA - Scotch College)

## BPA Meeting Minutes

**Date:** July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**Venue:** Errington Retreat

**Chair:** Eliza Leake

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1. The Chair opened the meeting at 5:08pm, welcomed attendees, and accepted apologies.

### **Present:**

Staff: Scott Marsh (Principal), Tim Byrnes (Dean of Boarding), Andrew Wilson (Council of Scotch College), Pino Cutinelli, Scott Montgomery (Exec Director OSCA), Claire Jones, Andrew Argent.

Parents: Matt Cameron (Secretary, BPA (temporary)), Tom McDonell, Eliza Leake, Vicky Kemp, Avelle Derham, Michelle Malony, Belinda & Alistair Scott, Cindy Bryson, Jacqui & Mick Evans, David & Aldana Boesley, Sam Gross, Cam Clarke. (Others present, but not documented on notebook)

**Apologies:** Melissa Cameron, Rowena Ash, Tamarra Nixon, Karina Nugent, Inky & Ben Barwick, Fiona Wettenhall, Donna & Derick Meggitt, Michael Malony, Elizabeth McDonell, Rachel Edwards, Will Derham, Felicity & Richard Wilton, Pule & Tinyiko Seane, Bill & Nicole Bunting, Gina Cattalini & Kristian Morris, Charlotte Tu'i'ile'ila, Sue Pretty, Claire & Johnny Grieg, Mick & Pauline Holding, Georgie & Adam Teare, Ben & Antoinette Roberts, Peta & Brad Cooper .

2. The Chair turned the meeting to Scott Marsh:

- Scott touched on the grounds, road works progression, and offered apologies on behalf of Tim Byrnes for not getting the fireplace in the Errington Retreat running.
- Quality of teacher has a significant impact on learning outcomes and finding time to invest in teachers given the increasing risk & compliance and related administration burden (especially given the additional requirement that the boys doing either service or cadets once per week).
- Ultimately, the changes (to the timetable) are with the aim of improving boys' learning outcomes, media reporting notwithstanding.
- In senior school, time has been added to teaching of core subjects (Maths, English & Science), and other VCE subjects, and reduced non-core (e.g. PE in Y12).
- Next year professional development program will be focused and uplifted, and 2026 will see the uplift of the Service program.
- Boys will have compulsory activities (i.e. not allowed to roam the streets).
- Options for the Thursday afternoon for Y11 and Y12 slot include tutoring, study, catch-up.
- This is new for Scotch, although has been in place for several years in other independent schools.
- New Director of Boarding opening has seen a high level of interest, and search has been narrowed to a final applicant, and will start at the commencement of next academic year.

The Chair then invited questions of Scott Marsh from attendees:

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- Q1 (Tom McDonnell): Services of Wednesday afternoon (from 2026), and focused activity on Thursday afternoon (1:40pm) ?
- A1: Yes. Dr Marsh outlined a range of options, which would include inviting suggestions from parents.
- Q2 (Tom McDonnell): what changes to service program are contemplated?
- A2: some options include Y9 cadets, boys going to nursing homes, helping in a local primary school reading program.
- A2.1: timetable changing to a 10-day timetable from a 6-day timetable, one of the reasons for which includes week-over-week consistency (but not as great for Music, say), and ability to attract and retain the highest quality staff.
- Q3: reports that staff attrition is a problem?
- A3: media reports that staff “were leaving in droves” – there have been 3 retirements, but beyond that there has not been any attrition. Some parents have expressed disappointment that other parents have sought out the media to express their dissatisfaction.
- Q4: any significant increase in costs in consequence of the changes?
- A4: next year is full impact of payroll tax (\$3.6 million), the full impact of which will try to be absorbed. Cost of living is also having an impact, but not as big an impact as the payroll tax.

Dr Marsh is looking forward to a good term, calling out the Boarder’s Revue this term.

### 3. The Chair then introduced Scott Montgomery (Executive Director of OSCA) to the meeting:

- Scott expressed his delight in accepting an invitation to address the BPA from Tim Byrnes last term, and introduced himself as class of 1985, and gave an overview of his family’s connection with Scotch:
  - Grandfather was Scotch class of 1922, Father was class of 1960, and his son was class of 2019.
  - Two daughters, one at MLC, and one at Carey. Two brothers also attended Scotch.
- Invested in Scotch on a day-to-day basis, and coaches Y9 Gladiators football program.
- Five years ago, he took on the role as coach/mentor/co-ordinator for the Tennis firsts.
- Motivated by the experience the boys get, and their paying it forward in terms of ambassadorship when they leave school.
- OSCA building inspiration was a storage of memorabilia, awards and trophies and other items of value.
- OSCA team includes Caroline Taylor (Events Manager), Michelle Shea (part time events), Jacob Hooke (Old Boys Secretary), and other volunteers.
- Scott reports to OSCA Council of 12, of which Andrew Wilson used to be a member.
- What does OSCA do? (i) One of the most important (although largely unheralded) is the governance role. Schools is run by School Council, OSCA Council and Foundation, and runs best when those 3 groups are operating harmoniously. OSCA nominates 5 of the 17 roles on the School Council; (ii) keeping Alumni connected to the school – (x) 27 Old Boys clubs and

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societies with which OSCA is actively connected; (y) organise 40-50 events a year including major reunions; (z) branch events – travelling domestically and internationally (e.g. Singapore a few weeks ago with Scott Marsh). Hong Kong, London, New York are other international locations. Other events include the OSCA annual dinner, Father/mother & sons events, mentoring program, valedictory dinner (780 parents and boys). There's also the OSCA Podcast on Spotify, which is run by the young alumni.

- YOBS – now an active group, run by Jacob Hooke.

The Chair then invited questions of Scott Montgomery from attendees:

- Q1 (Andrew Wilson): added that “it’s about lifelong connection”.
- A1: agreed.

4. The Chair invited Tim Byrnes (Dean of Boarding) to address attendees:

- Compulsory dancing classes for Y10 start next week (with MLC) - boys are required to dress up (chinos, collared shorts, shoes).
- Lindy Rose (matron of A-Rob) has resigned, and the process of recruiting a replacement is underway.
- Wederburn Cup, and a couple of socials coming up this term.
  - Q1: how can parents use the Errington Retreat, noting that it has been locked when parents have been on the Hill during weekends?
  - A1: organising keypad entry or ability to unlock the building. Otherwise, prior notice should work as the staff can then ensure the doors will be unlocked.

5. General Business (Chair):

- Thank-you to Andrew Wilson for attending.
- Cocktail party was a success (50-60 pax), raising \$7,300 of which \$1,000 wet on the bar that evening.
- Will (or has) fund(ed) equipment and amenities including air-friers, mountain bikes, general sports equipment, coffee machines and things still required for final fit out of Errington Retreat.
- Now have \$13k in BPA account of which \$6k has been allocated to boys (see bullet above).
- Family (Athletics) Day: weekend of September 13-15
- Valedictory dinner for Hill Y12 boys: 13 September. Y12 parents will a WhatsApp communication (not an official School event).
- Lyn Clark and Kate Marriot, are going to organise the pancake stand.
- All communication is going to come through Torch going forward (events page, BPA dinner, and dinner after family day)

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- Next term is AGM (vice-president role is open, as is swap shop rep, and 2 additional School House reps).
6. The Chair thanked attendees [post meeting note: next meeting will be on Monday, July 17th at 5pm], and closed the Meeting at 6:10pm.