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ST PATRICK'S COLLEGE  
TOWNSVILLE

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# Parent Partnership Panel

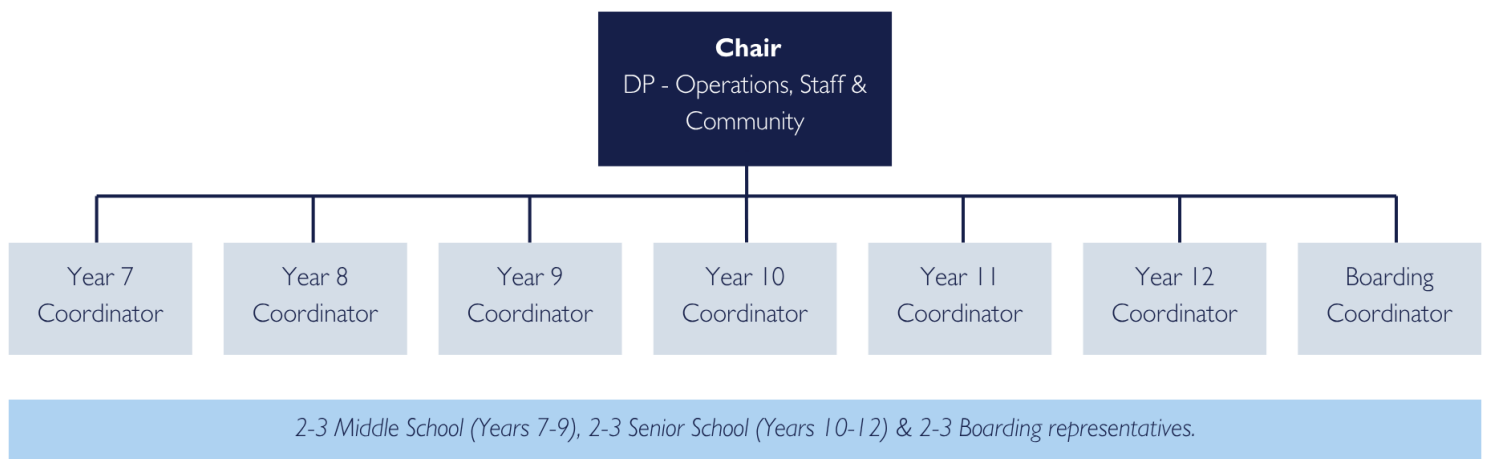
## Charter

## 1.0 Rationale

St Patrick's College Townsville recognises that parents/guardians are the first educators of their children. The Parent Partnership Panel exists to strengthen the relationship between families and the College, creating opportunities for collaboration, consultation and community building in support of the growth, wellbeing and learning of every student.

Guided by the Mercy tradition, the Panel seeks to foster meaningful partnerships that support the College's mission, values and strategic priorities while providing a forum for respectful dialogue and shared understanding.

## 2.0 Parent Partnership Panel Structure



### 2.1 Functions of the Parent Partnership Panel

The function of the Parent Partnership Panel is to:

- Foster community interest in educational matters in support of the College's strategic objectives and student outcomes
- Share perspectives that assist the College in its planning and decision-making
- Build connection across parent groups, and connections with College stakeholders (including staff)
- Provide respectful and constructive feedback to the College in relation to issues of importance to parents (within the scope of the Charter)
- Provide practical support in the organisation and execution of College events, including fundraising events, student events and parent events.

### 2.2 Role of the Year Level Coordinator

The Panel will include one Year Level Coordinator representing each year level from Years 7 to 12. The Year Level Coordinator plays a key role in:

- Facilitating connection between families and supporting opportunities for parent engagement throughout the year

- Disseminating important information and messages within year level friendship groups
- Liaising with the Director of Engagement, Marketing & Communications to ensure the College is aware of student accomplishments within a year level, and is able to promote those accomplishments across social media and other platforms (where appropriate)
- Liaise with other parents inside the year level, to represent their constructive feedback about parent events, including but not limited to: the focus of information evenings, the utility of academic conferences, preferences for social events.
- Liaise with other parents inside their year level to represent their constructive feedback on emerging issues for which the College is seeking insight.

### **2.3 The Role of Representatives**

The role of Panel representatives is to provide additional insight on emerging issues for which the College is seeking feedback, whilst also supporting year level coordinators and events, as required.

### **2.4 Total Volume of Membership**

The total number of members on the Parent Partnership Panel will be limited to 20 to ensure the group remains of a workable and effective size. Membership may be rotated over time so that responsibility is shared more broadly across the parent community and does not become too onerous for any one small group of people.

### **2.5 Becoming a Member**

Expressions of Interest for vacant positions will be invited by the Deputy Principal: Operations, Staff and Community during Term 4 of the preceding year. Parents and carers wishing to join the Parent Partnership Panel are asked to submit a brief written application outlining their interest in the role, relevant skills and experience, and how they hope to contribute to the life of the College community. Applicants are encouraged to share their connections and involvement within the College, and their commitment to supporting positive partnerships between families and the College.

All members of the Parent Partnership Panel are required to hold a current Blue Card and demonstrate a commitment to the safety, wellbeing and protection of all children and young people.

The selection process will be coordinated by the Deputy Principal - Operations, Staff & Community, with discernment based around:

- Alignment with College values and standards, including demonstrated compliance with College policies and procedures
- Demonstrated pattern of constructive and respectful engagement
- Depth and breadth of connection within the College community
- A commitment to supporting positive partnerships between families and the College
- The ability to represent the interests of the broader College community rather than individual concerns
- Willingness and capacity to contribute positively to College initiatives and activities

## **2.6 Length of Tenure**

Parent representatives are asked to serve for a concurrent two-year period. Initially, to ensure continuity, some members may be asked to serve a concurrent three-year period to ensure continuity of representation.

An annual Expression of Interest (EOI) process will be conducted during Term 4 for the following year.

As part of the transition process:

- Families will be introduced to the initiative during the October Year 7 Parent Information Evening.
- Representatives will participate in an application and selection process.

## **2.7 Typical Meeting Length and Format**

- Meetings will take place in Terms 1, 2, 3 and 4 and will be no more than 90 minutes in length.
- The venue for meetings will be dependent on the size of the Parent Partnership Panel and advised in advance of each meeting.
- Agendas will be resolved in the meeting prior, with additions to the list, at the discretion of the Deputy Principal: Operations, Staff and Community.
- Meetings will commence with a Welcome to Country, followed by a prayer.
- A member of the College or Senior Leadership Team, will deliver information on a matter of strategic importance to the College. Presentations will be delivered with the aim of either providing parents with necessary information to understand College decision making or discernment, or seeking parent feedback on a matter prior to making a final decision.
- Following the presentation and discussion phase, remaining items on the agenda will be discussed, with matters carrying over to the next meeting, should time be insufficient.
- Members of the Panel Partnership Panel and free to raise agenda items for the next meeting with the Deputy Principal: Operations, Staff and Community but final discernment about the priority of matters for discussion will remain with the Deputy Principal.

### **3.0 Matters Outside the Scope of the Panel**

To ensure the Parent Partnership Panel remains focused on its purpose, discussion and feedback will be centred on the College's strategic priorities, approved engagement initiatives, and items listed on the meeting agenda.

The Panel is not the appropriate forum for the following matters, which should be addressed through the relevant College processes:

- Matters relating to individual parents or families
- Concerns about individual staff members or specific student matters
- Operational or administrative issues, including but not limited to assessment results, staffing appointments, staff remuneration, disciplinary decisions, or fee structures

Where such matters arise, families are encouraged to follow the College's established communication channels so they can be appropriately and respectfully addressed.

### **4.0 Governance**

The Parent Partnership Panel will work in partnership with the College Leadership Team to ensure good governance and application of this charter. All members of the panel are expected to:

- Uphold College values, mission and policy
- Adhere to all aspects of the College's Communication Policy – engaging in respectful communication at all times.
- Be transparent in their feedback, whilst also being aware of the need for discretion in relation to some matters.
- Be constructive, improvement and solutions focussed in their feedback, showing an ability to appreciate context and nuance.
- Be driven by 'the common good' representing the interest of a wide range of students and parents, and not just their own perspectives.

The Parent Partnership Panel acts primarily as an advisory group, or to provide support practical support for College initiatives, including fund raising. Members of the Parent Partnership Panel do not have delegated authority to make decisions, enter into contracts, allocate funds or make representations on behalf of the College, unless specifically authorised to do so, and in receipt of a Principal signed 'Permission to Fundraise' form.

While the College will actively seek feedback, it reserves the right to make decisions.

#### **4.1 Record Keeping**

In keeping with good governance, minutes of all sessions of the Parent Partnership Panel will be kept. The responsibility for this will sit with the Deputy Principal: Operations, Staff and Community, but could be delegated to the Director of Engagement, Marketing and Communications.

Meeting records will be kept and available to all parents, on the Parent Partnership Panel Tile, on the Parent LMS Dashboard. Meetings should start with an endorsement of the minutes by representatives.

## **4.2 Communication Protocols**

In most instances, communication will be conducted through the Parent Partnership Panel Tile, on the College LMS Parent Dashboard. This will enable all members of the parent community, as well as members of the Parent Partnership Panel, to access:

- Minutes
- Agendas
- Information notifications
- Invitations to events
- Invitations to surveys

Parents will receive notifications via the College App, to access new information on the LMS TILE.

When communicating with other parents about College initiatives, it is an expectation that Parent Partnership Panel members:

- Faithfully represent College messages, providing appropriate context for decisions
- Faithfully represent interactions with other parents to the College
- Ensure adherence to the College's Communication Policy, engaging in discussions respectfully
- Ensure appropriate discretion

## **4.3 Finances**

Fund raising may form part of the work of the Parent Partnership Panel from time to time. All fund raising is undertaken on a voluntary basis. All members of the Parent Partnership Panel are expected to adhere to College policies, notably: Revenue Raising Policy, Donor Policy, Permission to Fundraise Protocol.

All monies raised by the Parent Partnership Panel are owned by the College and will be deposited directly into College accounts. Distribution of funding will be in keeping with strategic priorities and the identified targets of the Revenue Raising Policy, unless otherwise agreed between the Parent Partnership Panel and the College Leadership Team.

Prior to making decisions in relation to fund raising, all members of the Parent Partnership Panel are required to disclose conflicts of interest.

At the end of each year, fundraising reports will be available to the Parent Partnership Panel and the College Board, in keeping with principles of transparent governance.

## **4.4 Amendments to the Charter**

This Charter may be amended in the Term 4 Parent Partnership Panel meeting, where there is sufficient support from members and with the consensus of the College Leadership Team. All amendments will be shared with the broader parent community, in the College's newsletter publication.

## **4.5 Dissolution of the Charter**

The College reserves the right to dissolve the Parent Partnership Panel where:

- There is a pattern of routine low attendance, such that there are fewer parents than year levels (6).

Or

- With the agreement of 75% of the members of the Parent Partnership Panel, in attendance.

## **5.0 Code of Conduct for Members of the Parent Partnership Panel**

This Code of Conduct clarifies the expected standards of all members of the Parent Partnership Panel, including members of the College Leadership Team.

- The Code is intended to promote the highest standards of ethical behaviour and maintain a strong and constructive partnership between parents and the College. Members are required to:
  - Act in the best interest of the whole school community at all times
  - Act in accordance with this Charter and all College policies
  - Act with integrity and with respect to the College's values and mission
  - Remain objective and avoid personal bias
  - Represent all members of the College community faithfully
  - Engage the school community in developing and effecting school priorities, policies and decisions in a manner that is consultative, respectful and fair
  - Declare conflicts of interest and not misuse membership of the Panel to advance personal interests
  - Listen to and tolerate the views of others, even if those views and opinions differ from their own
  - Treat official information with care and use it only for the purpose for which it was collected or authorised
  - Respect confidentiality and information privacy (about the College, community members, staff or students) at all times and not disclose confidential information
  - Seek to achieve excellence in educational outcomes for all students at the College
  - Provide feedback which is constructive and strategic in focus or within the remit of the Partnership Panel