

**SCHOOL COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2021**

**Have you considered nominating for school council this year?**

Nominations are now open to all parents for Heathmont College Council and close on Friday 26 February 2021.

**What is a school council and what does it do?**

All government schools in Victoria have a school council. They are legally constituted bodies that are given powers to set the key directions of a school within state wide guidelines. In doing this, a school council is able to directly influence the quality of education that the school provides for its students.

**Who is on the school council?**

For most school councils, there are three possible categories of membership:

* A mandated elected Parent category – more than one third of the total members must be from this category. Department of Education and Training (DET) employees can be Parent members at their child’s school as long as they are not employed at the school.
* A mandated elected DET employee category – members of this category may make up no more than one-third of the total membership of school council. The principal of the school is automatically one of these members.
* A mandated elected Student category – members of this category are enrolled at the school and in Year 7 or above.
* An optional Community member category – members are co-opted by a decision of the council because of their special skills, interests or experiences. DET employees are not eligible to be Community members.

**Why is Parent membership so important?**

Parents on school councils provide important viewpoints and have valuable skills that can help shape the direction of the school. Those parents who become active on a school council find their involvement satisfying in itself and may also find that their children feel a greater sense of belonging.

**Why is Student membership so important?**

Students have a unique perspective on learning, teaching and schools. Having student members on school council allows students to have a say in the future direction of their school and ensures student input into decision making.

Student representation on secondary school councils will assist in the development of students’ skills, including leadership skills and communication skills.

**How can you become involved?**

The most obvious way is to vote in the elections, which are held in Term 1 each year. However, ballots are only held if more people nominate as candidates than there are positions vacant. In view of this, you might seriously consider:

* standing for election as a member of the school council
* encouraging another person to stand for election

**Do I need special experience to be on school council?**

No. What you do need is an interest in your child’s school and the desire to work in partnership with others to help shape the school’s future. The emphasis on council work is through its subcommittee and every member must be a participant in at least one group. These are:

* Finance
* Education
* Facilities

Each member brings their own valuable skills and knowledge to the role however, councillors may need to develop skills and acquire knowledge in areas that are unfamiliar to them in order to perform their duties as a councillor.

Student members are encouraged to acquire this knowledge by attending the Department’s free face-to-face Improving School Governance school council training to support them to undertake their role. Training is also available online.

**What do you need to do to stand for election?**

The Principal will issue a Notice of Election and call for nominations following the commencement of Term 1 each year. All school council elections must be completed by the end of March. If you decide to stand for election, you can arrange for someone to nominate you as a candidate or you can nominate yourself in the Parent category.

DET employees whose child is enrolled in a school in which they are not employed are eligible to nominate as parents for the school council at that school. Once the nomination form is completed, return it to the office within the time stated on the Notice of Election. You will receive a Nomination Form Receipt in the mail following the receipt of your completed nomination. Generally, if there are more nominations received than there are vacancies on council, a ballot will be conducted during the two weeks after the call for nominations has closed.

The new council takes effect immediately after the poll is declared and therefore comes into effect from Monday 15 March 2021 and the first meeting will take place on Tuesday 30 March 2021.

REMEMBER:

* Ask at the school for help if you would like to stand for election and are not sure what to do
* Consider standing for election to council this year
* Be sure to vote in the elections

Contact the Principal, Kerryn Sandford for further information on 9871 4888.

Regards

**Kerryn Sandford**

College Principal



**SCHOOL COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2021**

**Nominations are now open and close on Friday 26 February 2021 at 4:00pm**

We thank our outgoing parent representatives who have been a valued member of our School Council team – Daryl Perry, Henk Westerveld and Nicole McDonald.

We also thank our outgoing DET representatives for their continued support with School Council – Nina Ling and Jessica Elliott.

Finally, we would like to thank our outgoing student representatives Maddison Moorby and Ella Callaghan and trust that being part of the School Council team has been a rewarding experience.

As a result the council declares the following vacancies:

* 2 parent vacancies for 2021/2022 (2 year term)
* 1 DET vacancy for 2021/2022 (2 year term)
* 2 student vacancy for 2021/2022 (2 year term)

***Nomination forms can be requested from the Office.***

**Election Process and Timeline**

a) Notice of election and call for nominations Friday 12 February 2021

b) Closing date for nominations – 4:00pm close Friday 26 February 2021

c) Date by which the list of candidates and nominators will be Tuesday 2 March 2021 displayed

d) Date by which the ballot papers will be prepared and on or before

 distributed if required Friday 5 March 2021

e) Close of ballot – 2:00pm close Friday 12 March 2021

f) Vote count Monday 15 March 2021

g) Declaration of Poll Monday 15 March 2021

h) Special council meeting to co-opt Community members Monday 29 March 2021

(the Principal will preside)

1. First council meeting to elect office bearers Tuesday 30 March 2021
2. (the Principal will preside)