You will shortly receive a letter concerning Voluntary Contributions for 2011. We have put together some information to explain how this works and why it is important.

The Eastwood School P&C Association has two funds from which we are able to draw money to pay for school resources, activities, equipment and building projects which benefit your children. We will be asking you to provide financial support to our ongoing activities by making a contribution to these funds on the 30th March, 1st, 4th and 6th April (last two weeks of term). Below is some information on how you can do this. Please note, at our school, Voluntary Contributions are collected once a year only.

Q: How are Voluntary Contributions raised by P&C used differently to Spring Fair funds?

Voluntary Contributions are typically used to support recurring areas of expenditure that allows the school to replenish its classroom and curriculum resources, add to its support teacher resources, purchase prizes, assist with swimming lessons and undertake general maintenance of P&C-supplied assets and parts of the building/grounds. We also use a small amount of funds for things such as P&C insurance and audit costs which are administrative necessities.

On the other hand, Spring Fair money is generally used for larger scale ‘projects’. In the past, Spring Fair funds have been used to pay for play equipment in the grass area, returfing and maintenance of grass, covered outdoor learning areas (COLAs), the large roof covering over the netball courts and more recently the ‘softfall’ area outside the hall and the new sound system in the hall (the Spring Fair even helped pay for the hall many years ago!). This year, Spring Fair funds will be used to fund the School’s new “Engaging Learners” Technology project which will provide for more equipment and teacher training, mentoring and support in the classroom. As you can see, there are different types of expenditures that occur with money raised from parents and the community – all of it adds value to our children’s education at Eastwood Public School.

Q: Why do you need parent donations to the Building Account when we have received money through the Commonwealth Government’s BER project funding?

A: The BER funds were very limited in how they could be used. The Commonwealth Government’s $3M BER funding paid for the new building itself, painting for blocks A and C and the toilet upgrades. It also paid for the artificial turf around new building and in front of EBASCC. This funding enabled the school to invest in capital infrastructure such as new buildings and maintenance works that would be beyond the fundraising capabilities of the P&C Association. P&C Building Funds are used to pay for items such as air conditioning, interactive whiteboard installations, small painting works or possible new building-related items such as fans in the hall which are not necessarily covered by either the NSW or Commonwealth governments.
Q: The school seems to be in great shape, how important is my contribution?

A: The money raised will benefit all the children who attend Eastwood Public School and supplement the basic funds provided by the Department of Education and Training. Our school is fortunate to have such wonderful facilities – it is important to remember that, in many cases, these have resulted directly from these same voluntary contributions made by school families over the years. Your support is vital if these benefits are to continue and for us to create an even richer learning environment for all our children. It is our hope that all families will share the responsibility of making a voluntary contribution as all our children will enjoy the benefits.

Q: How do I make my contribution?

A: We understand that parents are busy so we’ll endeavour to make it as convenient as possible to make your annual contribution for 2011. Options include:

1. You or your child can deposit your contribution in the School Office Mail Box (cheque or credit card payments only). A receipt will be sent home shortly after.
2. You can make your contribution in person on Wednesday 30th March, Friday 1st April or Monday 4th April and Wednesday 6th April when volunteer parents will be available to collect your contribution between 8.40am and 9.45am. Cash, cheque, EFTPOS or credit cards are welcome and a receipt will be provided to you on the spot.

A letter will be distributed shortly outlining further details. The Eastwood School P&C Committee thank you in advance for your support.

Q: If I choose to only support one of the funds, which one would you suggest?

A: Whilst we encourage parents to contribute to both funds if possible, we appreciate that circumstances may mean that this does not suit all families. The General Fund is the fund most in need of your support as it provides for ongoing expenses and commitments. Although we have some plans for the Building Fund monies, we are more restricted in what we can do with this fund. However, whichever fund you choose, you can be sure that your child will benefit directly from the money raised.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

We understand that some parents, are not familiar with the concept of “Voluntary Contributions” which are collected in Australian public schools. We will be providing more information over the next few weeks but if you have any more questions, please feel free to:

- Ask us at our P&C meetings (third Wednesday of each month, 7.30pm – this Wednesday);
- Ask us at our monthly “P&C News and Helpers Morning Teas” (e.g. Friday 25th March 9.30am);
- Email us at pc@eastwood.nsw.edu.au or leave a note at the school office; or
- Speak to Mr Witney, Jo Harris (P&C President), Christine Lucas (Vice President), Dale Brodrick (P&C Treasurer) or other members of the P&C.