

CBP GRANT SUCCESS: P&C ASSOCIATIONS SHARE THEIR STORIES

**Our P&Cs
At Work**

The session on *Writing To Succeed: Top Tips On Writing Successful Grant Applications* was a highlight of the P&C Federation's 2022 conference. P&C Federation's **Patrick Doumani** presents this summary of presentations by P&C Association representatives from **Concord High School** and **Canterbury Girls High School** on their P&C Associations' experiences and tips when applying for Community Building Partnership (CBP) grants.



Concord High School's toilets (pictured left, before the upgrade) dated from the 1980s and had clear maintenance issues. New toilet facilities (right) were built with funding from a Community Building Partnership program grant, secured by the school's P&C Association.

Photos supplied by Concord High School P&C Association

CONCORD HIGH SCHOOL P&C ASSOCIATION

School toilet block upgrade: \$150,000 CBP grant

In 2021, Sydney's Concord High School P&C Association secured \$150,000 from the Community Building Partnership (CBP) program, which it used to partially fund an upgrade to the school toilet block.

The P&C Association applied for this grant after investigating what the students needed, and discovering that:

- An additional 16 toilets were required to cater for the number of female students.
- Outdoor seating needed to be increased by 50%.

A priority was the school toilet block, which dated from the 1980s, and had clear maintenance issues.

The P&C Association investigated the possibility of using grant money to cover some of the costs of the toilet block upgrade by asking the local Federal and State Members of Parliament to recommend appropriate grant programs. The local council also carried a motion to support the school.

The P&C Association also spent \$15,000 to commission an architect to prepare the refurbishment plans. All this helped secure the \$150,000 grant. Thanks to this grant, the toilets have been wholly modernised. Separate non-CBP funding was used to totally revamp some outside seating areas at the school.

CANTERBURY GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL P&C ASSOCIATION

Outdoor amphitheatre sound and lighting installation: \$20,000 CBP grant;
meeting/storage room upgrade to student wellbeing space: \$20,000 CBP grant

Canterbury Girls High School P&C Association has had a number of successful Community Building Partnership (CBP) program grants.

In 2020, it applied for a CBP grant to add sound and lights to the school's outdoor amphitheatre. The catalyst was the COVID-19 pandemic, when it became clear the existing indoor multi-purpose hall could not accommodate the physical distancing guidance, and the amphitheatre became the alternative venue. (The amphitheatre was built with funding

TOP TIPS WHEN APPLYING FOR GRANTS

- Find out what the shortfalls are at your school. This could involve evaluating the number of toilets, water bubblers, seating, bins etc available to students. (NB: P&C Associations should not have to raise funds to cover general school maintenance or Work Health and Safety issues).
- Reach out to all sides and levels of politics to find out what grants are available – this involves checking with your State and Federal MPs, signing up to their mailing lists to receive notifications, and checking with your local council.
- Check what grants may be available from other community groups (eg, cultural, art, religious, sports) or local business chambers.
- Insist the student voice is sought and incorporated in any project designs and decisions.
- Read the terms and conditions of each grant very carefully.
- Have a holistic plan. This includes breaking down the project into manageable chunks, seeking quotes to assess the likely cost and determining if it fits with P&C Association objectives.
- Have a strong partnership involving the P&C Association's Executive, school principal, and any other key staff, as well as the NSW Department of Education's Asset Management Unit, for the project you have in mind.
- Ensure any proposed projects align with your P&C Association's vision and purpose.
- Consider co-funding, which is often viewed favourably by grant bodies.
- Maintain a clear record (such as a shared Google Drive) for applications and documents, such as invoices, needed to accurately report on the funded activities and the expenditure of the grant.

Supplied by Concord High School P&C Association and Canterbury Girls High School P&C Association

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Canterbury Girls High School P&C Association received \$20,000 from the CBP program to add sound and lighting to its outdoor amphitheatre (top left and right) and \$20,000 to transform a meeting/storage room (above left) into a student wellbeing space (above right). Photos supplied by Canterbury Girls High School P&C Association

from a previous CBP grant, also applied for by the P&C Association).

For the amphitheatre upgrade, the P&C Association applied for \$30,000 and received \$20,000. The total cost of the project was \$50,000 and the remainder of the cost was covered by the school. The success of the application was helped by the fact that the amphitheatre and hall are also well used by the community, including local dance schools and primary schools.

Although there were various delays caused by (among other things) COVID-19 restrictions, a change of project scope and weather, the project was completed two days before the 30 June 2022 deadline. In 2021, Canterbury Girls High School P&C Association successfully applied for another CBP grant worth

\$20,000 to convert an old school meeting and storage room into a student wellbeing space. Students can use this space for various support meetings. External groups can also book this space for student services – for example, the school has partnered with NSW Health to trial a high school nurse service. The room is also used by other community groups such as Headspace, the Raise Foundation Youth Mentoring Program and other groups. It is further used for myriad other purposes such as student councillor and conflict resolution sessions.

The project involved transforming the room into a more inviting, engaging and relaxing space, which included replacing the seats with couches and installing more plants and modular furniture.