SCHOOL COUNCIL

What is school council and what does it do?
All government schools in Victoria have a school council. They are legally formed bodies that are given powers to set the key directions of a school within centrally provided 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?
There are three possible categories of membership

- A mandated elected parent category – Because parents have such an important part to play in schools, there is an elected parent member category. Parent members must comprise more than one-third of council's total membership. DEECD employees are eligible to be parent members at their child's school, as long as they do not work at the particular school.

- A mandated elected DEECD employee category – Members of this category may make up no more than one third of the total membership of school council. As the Executive Officer, the principal of the school is automatically one of these members.

- An optional community member category – Its members are coopted by the decision of the council because of their special skills, interests or experience, for example parent club representative, student representatives, an accountant.

DEECD 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 parent 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.

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