



THE PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

The Maltese Association of Parents of State School Students (MAPSSS) has last January organised its first-ever elections for its parent-members to fill-in the vacant posts of its executive committee. There were thirty two nominations to fill-in eleven vacant posts, and since candidature was college-based (i.e. Parents could only contest in the College their children attend), this necessitated an election in eight out of the ten colleges in Malta and Gozo.

The idea about forming the association started late in 2012 by a small group of parents (who eventually became its founder-members) although it was eventually registered as a Voluntary Organisation in March of 2014 given that, during 2013, the discussions with the authorities had to be paused due to the general elections in order to allow the new administration to settle down. Primarily MAPSSS has been set-up to work towards the strengthening of the concept of parental participation in state schools and to be one of the stakeholders in the educational sector in Malta working alongside the main players in this area in the interest of students – our children. Our vision is to achieve national consensus on the fundamental policies and the strategic direction of such a sensitive and important sector in Malta.

Since its inception, MAPSSS has managed to fill in a vacuum that was long felt as now it is considered as the focal point the Ministry for Education and Employment and other stakeholders can refer to when it comes to parents and state school education.

As parents we understand that it is our duty to contribute to our children's education, that our children's education is not something external to us and that the success of our children in the educational sector can only come with an integrated approach where parents, policy makers and educational institutions are all working together to reach a common goal. Hence our motto "*further together*". Yes, working alongside each other we believe we can make a difference and that we can achieve more for our children in the long term. In fact, our logo, the coloured jigsaw puzzle, was chosen as we see MAPSSS as one of the integral components necessary in the local educational set-up.

International research has systematically proven that parental involvement is of paramount importance in education and this reality is recognised internationally. With MAPSSS we intend to do our part in the local scenario.

This presents MAPSSS with several challenges ahead of us. But we are all cognisant of the fact that we live in a globalised world and that our children need to fare well in their education in order to have a competitive edge. As parents, we need to be there for them. We also need to do it in an organised and efficient manner in order for our efforts as parents to be effective.

The recently-elected MAPSSS team augurs well for our association to grow stronger and to spread its work among the parent community in Malta and Gozo. However MAPSSS isn't only the committee members and cannot be successful without your contribution as a parent. As a parent of a student attending a state school, you are part of MAPSSS. You can surely somehow contribute in a way or another as a parent.

Please visit our website www.mapsss.org for further details about MAPSSS and join our Facebook group so that you keep up-to-date with what's going on at MAPSSS. We look very much forward to receiving your feedback.

Thank you in advance for your contribution,

Simon Scicluna,
MAPSSS

L-ASSOċJAZZJONI TAL-ĠENITURI

F'Jannar li għaddha, l-Assoċjazzjoni Maltija tal-ġenituri tat-Tfal li jattendu l-Iskejjel tal-Istat (magħrufa bl-Ingliz bħala the **Maltese Association of Parents of State School Students** jew **MAPSSS**) organizzat għall-ewwel darba l-elezzjonijiet għall-membri-ġenituri biex jimlew postijiet battala fuq il-Kumitat Eżekuttiv tal-Assoċjazzjoni. Kien hemm 32 nominazzjoni biex jimlew 11-il post. Il-ġenituri setgħu jikkontestaw biss fil-Kullegġ fejn jattendu uliedhom biex kemm jista' jkun ikun hemm firxa wiesa u rappreżentattiva tal-ġenituri. Dan wassal biex kellhom isiru elezzjonijiet fi tmien Kullegġi f'Malta u Għawdex minħabba illi f'dawn il-kullegġi kien hemm aktar minn kontestant wieħed.

L-idea li titwaqqaf l-Assoċjazzjoni tnisslet lejn tmiem is-sena 2012 minn grupp żgħir ta' ġenituri (li aktar tard saru l-membri fundaturi ta' din l-Assoċjazzjoni) iżda kien f'Marzu tal-2014 li l-Assoċjazzjoni għet registrata formalment bħala għaqda volunterja (NGO). Dan id-dewmien kien meħtieg minħabba illi matul l-2013 kien hawn l-Elezzjonijiet Ĝenerali u it-taħditiet mal-awtoritajiet konċernati fosthom il-Ministeru tal-Edukazzjoni kellhom jitwaqqfu għal xi żmien.

L-Assoċjazzjoni twaqqaf primarjament biex taħdem sabiex tissaħħaħ l-idea tal-partcipazzjoni tal-ġenituri fl-iskejjel tal-istat ħalli flimkien mal-awtoritajiet tal-Edukazzjoni u kull min hu mdaħħal fis-settur edukattiv issir ħidma kollettiva għall-ġid tal-istudenti – uliedna. Il-viżjoni tagħna hi li f'Malta jintlaħaq kunsens nazzjonali fuq il-principji fundamentali u direzzjoni ġenerali li dan is-settur daqshekk importanti għandu jkollu.

Sa mill-bidu tagħha, l-Assoċjazzjoni irnexxielha timla vojt li kien ilu jinhass. Dan għaliex kemm il-Ministeru tal-Edukazzjoni u Xogħol kif ukoll istituzzjonijiet oħra fil-qasam tal-edukazzjoni, illum il-ġurnata jqisu l-Assoċjazzjoni tagħna bħala punt ta' referenza fil-qasam fejn tidħol il-partcipazzjoni tal-ġenituri u l-edukazzjoni ingħenerali fl-iskejjel tal-istat.

Bħala ġenituri nifhmu li hu d-dover tagħna li nagħtu s-sehem kollu tagħna fl-edukazzjoni ta' uliedna. Nagħrfu ukoll il-fatt illi is-suċċess li jiksbu uliedna fl-edukazzjoni jista' jseħħi biss meta jkun hemm ftehim u ħidma shiħa u kollettiva bejn il-ġenituri, l-istituzzjonijiet edukattivi u bejn min ifassal il-politika. Għal din ir-raġuni għażilna l-motto '(Niksbu) *Aktar Flimkien'* għax nemmnu li meta naħdmu flimkien nistgħu nagħmlu differenza u jista' jinkiseb aktar ġid għal uliedna. Anke il-logo tagħna, erba' biċċiet kuluriti mdaħħla u magħquda flimkien, intgħażel biex juri l-ħtieġa li l-ħidma fil-qasam tal-edukazzjoni tat-tfal tagħna, għalkemm toriġina minn sorsi differenti, għandha tkun waħda kollettiva u integrata.

B'mod sistematiku, ir-riċerka internazzjonali turi kemm hu importanti li l-ġenituri jieħdu sehem attiv fl-edukazzjoni ta' uliedhom. Illi ħafna mit-tagħlim fil-fatt iseħħi barra mill-klassi u allura aħna bħala ġenituri għandna sehem importanti. Nafu li qed ngħixu f'dinja globalizzata u jeħtieg li wliedna jmorru tajjeb fl-edukazzjoni tagħhom biex ikunu jistgħu jiksbu il-potenzjal kollu tagħhom.

Dan iqiegħed quddiemna ħafna sfidi imma permezz tal-MAPSSS għandna l-ambizzjoni illi dan ikun jista' jintlaħaq aħjar fil-kuntest lokali. Bħala ġenituri aħna inħossu il-ħtieġa u d-dover illi inkunu ta' sostenn tanġibbli fl-edukazzjoni ta' uliedna. Imma dan jeħtieg isir b'mod organizzat u effiċċenti biex ikun tassep effettiv.

Il-Kumitat elett hu awgurju tajjeb biex l-Assoċjazzjoni tagħna tissaħħaħ u tifrex il-ħidma tagħha fost il-ġenituri f'Malta u Għawdex. Iżda l-Assoċjazzjoni tagħna mhix biss dawk il-membri eletti fuq il-Kumitat u ma tistax tikseb suċċess mingħajr is-sehem tiegħek bħala ġenitür. Żgur li inti bħala ġenitür tista', b'xi mod jew ieħor, tagħti s-sehem tiegħek.

Bħala ġenitür ta' student illi jattendi skola statali inti parti mill-MAPSSS. Tista' tara l-website tagħna www.mapsss.org għal aktar informazzjoni u tista' tingħaqad mal-grupp tagħna permezz tal-Facebook sabiex tkun taf x'qed isir fl-Assoċjazzjoni tiegħek. Nistennew bil-ħerqa li tikkomunika magħna.

Grazzi bil-quddiem tas-sehem tiegħek,

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