



## Annual General Meeting 2024 for FreeSchools World Literacy Australia

### FreeSchools World Literacy Australia

ABN 13 233 167 644; Reg No = A0050403N

DATE commencing: Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2024 TIME: 9:00 am  
DATE completion: Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 TIME: 9:00 pm

INTERNET VENUE: FreeSchools Literacy Australia email network  
[fswl-australia@googlegroups.com](mailto:fswl-australia@googlegroups.com)

Member pre-registration is essential to participate and vote

### Minutes of the Meeting

#### 1. Rollcall of members present and apologies.

There were 9 participants in attendance (\*Committee member, \*\*New 2024 member)

Merindi Belarski\*  
Graeme Chapman\*  
Robert Coenraads\*  
Marion Lesaffre\*  
Phillip Marriott\*  
Melissa Schellekens\*  
Delphine Swadling\*  
Kathleen Swadling\*  
Sister Crescence

#### 2. Welcome and background briefing by the Chairperson/President.

Dear Committee and Friends,

Welcome to our 2023 AGM this Saturday morning 27th of January. Our meeting will run for a few weeks throughout February and March, thereby allowing all of the Committee Members ample time to participate.

This year I will call each of you personally to thank you for your ongoing support of India's poor children during 2023. You should be proud to know that last year we sent a total of \$6,235 in donations to India.

Sister Crescence acknowledged receipt of these funds on 10<sup>th</sup> January, as follows:

We are in receipt of your kind fund INR- 339500.00 thanks a lot for it. I was badly in need of this money. You have asked me the progress of 5 girls: They are doing very well in studies. As soon as I will get the required details from them, I shall send it to you. My love to you, and both daughters. Wish you all the best for this year.

### 3. Minutes of previous year's Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2023

Motion: That the minutes of the 2023 AGM be accepted by the Committee.

Move: Graeme Chapman      Second: Kathleen Swadling      Carried

### 4. President's Report. As circulated to membership

I am proud to announce that Australian donors have raised a total of \$118,147 towards our educational efforts since FreeSchools World Literacy's humble beginnings in the year 2000 as a single-classroom evening school for the poor children of Motihari village—a concept developed by our in-country partner, Sister Crescence, with help from founding supporter Mark Bloomfield.

Over the past two decades the outcomes have been life-changing for thousands of children otherwise unable to attain an education, with the benefit of that knowledge flowing from the students to their families and to the local community.

*Welcoming new members of the FreeSchools World Literacy Management Committee:  
Melissa Schellekens—Public Officer and Secretary, and Phillip Marriott—Committee Member*

It is with great pleasure that I announce the addition of two new members to our Committee of Management.

Melissa Schellekens replaces Ian Esmore as our Public Officer and Secretary. She holds a Bachelor of Science (Hons) from the University of Melbourne, a Masters of Applied Positive Psychology (University of East London) and a Doctorate in Educational Psychology from the Australian Catholic University). Melissa is currently a Researcher and Lecturer at Deakin University, Melbourne.

Phillip Marriott is an electrician and owns a Security Technician Business. He is a Board member of Urantia Association International and Study Group Chairperson (elect).

#### *Our Schools*

In Bihar State, we have 1148 students being taught by 27 teachers at 23 FreeSchools World Literacy funded centres.

A total of \$6,245 was raised during the 2023 calendar year for the FreeSchools centres in Bihar, India, thanks to our dedicated group of regular donors<sup>1</sup> including Melissa Alldis, Bernie & Merindi Belarski, Warrick & Lorna Brady, Chelsea McLean, Bob Mills, Kenneth & Elizabeth Morley, Glenda Smith and the Gresford Book Club, Che Stapleton, Kathleen & Trevor Swadling, Andrew & Delphine Swadling, the Coenraads Family's Francis C. Nieves Memorial Fund, and the Forest Kirk Men's Fellowship, Women's Fellowship and Kidz Club. This will be used for FreeSchools teachers' salaries and scholarships for the five girls we are sponsoring. FreeSchools World Literacy annual registration fees of \$59.20 were donated and paid directly by Secretary Melissa Schellekens.

FreeSchools World Literacy maintains high-quality audited annual accounts and reportage presented to Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) standard and which have been audited by accountant Bob Mills.

Finally, I would especially like to thank the FreeSchools World Literacy Committee of Management, many of whom have been members and donors since the Committee's inception.

## 5. Treasurer's Report.

I have the pleasure of submitting the FreeSchools World Literacy Financial Report and Audited Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2023 as part of full FreeSchools World Literacy Annual Report for 2023. The accounts are an unbroken record dating back to the beginnings of FSWL in 2001 and are presented in ACFID standard format.

### FreeSchools World Literacy - Australia

#### TABLE OF CASH MOVEMENTS FOR DESIGNATED PURPOSES

Cash movements for year ended	Designated Project	Cash available at beginning of year	Cash raised during year	Cash disbursed during year	Cash available at year end
	<b>2023 Bihar, India</b>	<b>\$ 30.00</b>	<b>\$ 6,245.00</b>	<b>\$ 6,255.00</b>	<b>\$ 20.00</b>
	<b>2023 Interest</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>		<b>\$ -</b>
<b>TOTAL 2023</b>		<b>\$ 30.00</b>	<b>\$ 6,245.00</b>	<b>\$ 6,255.00</b>	<b>\$ 20.00</b>

Statement:

1. FreeSchools World Literacy is reliant on donations for its overseas projects and is financially healthy. During 2023 FreeSchools raised \$6,245 and disbursed \$6. Cash dispersed includes transfer of funds to India \$6,235 on 29/12/2023 for teachers' salaries and 2023 scholarships (\$700) plus \$20 international transfer fees for 2023 donations

2. These funds were disbursed in their entirety to FreeSchools project in Bihar, India where they were used to pay salaries of teachers working at the FreeSchools according to the disbursement letter. This works out to be an average cost of about \$20 per year per child being educated and we consider this application of donor funds to be highly effective in providing an education to disadvantaged children.

3. Although currently not a financial member of ACFID, FreeSchools World Literacy remains fully committed to full adherence to the ACFID Code of Conduct.

4. Complaints can be lodged against FreeSchools World Literacy with the President of the Organization, Dr Robert Coenraads, or any of the other members of the FreeSchools World Literacy Committee of Management, whose full contact details are provided in this report.

6. Complaints about a breach of the Code of Conduct can be made directly to Code Manager of the ACFID Code of Conduct Committee, by completing a complaint form on their website <http://www.acfid.asn.au/code-of-conduct/files/complaint-form>, and attaching all relevant information.

Motion: That the President's report and audited accounts be received and accepted as read as part of the FreeSchools World Literacy Annual Report for 2022.

Move: Kathleen Swadling

Second: Graeme Chapman

Carried

## 6. Election of Committee of Management and Nomination of Public Officer

The 2023 FreeSchools World Literacy Committee of Management indicated their willingness to re-stand for office during 2024. The Committee members were elected as follows:

ROBERT COENRAADS. Move: Kathleen Swadling	nominated as President FSWL Second: Graeme Chapman	Carried:
MELISSA SCHELLEKENS. Move: Robert Coenraads	nominated as Secretary/ Public Officer FSWL Second: Kathleen Swadling	Carried:
MERINDI BELARSKI. Move: Robert Coenraads	nominated as Treasurer FSWL Second: Melissa Schellekens	Carried:
BERNIE BELARSKI . Move: Robert Coenraads	nominated as Committee Member FSWL Second: Melissa Schellekens	Carried:
GRAEME CHAPMAN . Move: Robert Coenraads	nominated as Committee Member FSWL Second: Melissa Schellekens	Carried:
MARION LESAFFRE . Move: Robert Coenraads	nominated as Committee Member FSWL Second: Melissa Schellekens	Carried:
PHILLIP MARRIOTT . Move: Robert Coenraads	nominated as Committee Member FSWL Second: Melissa Schellekens	Carried:
DELPHINE SWADLING . Move: Robert Coenraads	nominated as Committee Member FSWL Second: Melissa Schellekens	Carried:
KATHLEEN SWADLING. Move: Robert Coenraads	nominated as Committee Member FSWL Second: Melissa Schellekens	Carried:

## 7. Chairperson to confirm appointments.

President Robert Coenraads confirmed the appointments to the Committee of Management as listed in Item 6.

## 8. Confirm schedule of membership fees

It is a formality that the Committee decide upon membership fees at each AGM.

Previously we have elected to have no membership fees, thereby enabling each member of the Committee and Friends to contribute as they are able to the operations of FreeSchools World Literacy throughout the course of 2024.

A number of our members make a monthly donation while others serve through contributing their time, for example helping manage our website, or with lodgement of our annual reports.

This provides a much more flexible approach where members serve according to their individual motivations, abilities and strengths, as opposed to an arbitrarily-imposed set contribution.

I believe we should continue to operate as we have successfully been doing to date, and I MOVE that the schedule of membership fees remain at \$0 for 2024.

Move: Robert Coenraads      Second: Kathleen Swadling      Carried

It was confirmed that FSWL Australia will have NIL membership fees for 2024.

## 9. General Business:

ROBERT COENRAADS –

Under this item, I would like to note in these Minutes the following votes of formal thanks:

1. I have sent a letter and Certificate of Thanks to Bob Mills CPA for auditing our annual accounts to the standard of the ACFID Code.

2. I would like to formally thank Committee Member Graeme Chapman of Architectural Art <http://www.archart.com.au/> for uploading the 2023 FSWL Annual Report and these Minutes to the FreeSchools Australian Web page which can be found at the following addresses:

**[www.freeschools.org.au](http://www.freeschools.org.au)**

**[www.robertcoenraads.com.au/freeschools.htm](http://www.robertcoenraads.com.au/freeschools.htm)**

3. I would like to formally thank Public Officer/Secretary Melissa Schellekens for submitting our 2023 Annual Report and Minutes of the 2024 Annual General Meeting to Consumer Affairs, Victoria as part of our statutory requirements.

These volunteer efforts in support of FreeSchools World Literacy are as real to us as any monetary donation, as we would otherwise have to pay with valuable donor funds for these services.

During the year 2022-2023 annual reports on the Indian FreeSchools Program and the Bridge Course prepared by Sister Crescence and Nitesh Kumar. These reports were sent to the FSWL Committee of Management and Friends.

## 10. Set date and time for next Annual General Meeting. Close meeting

The 2022 AGM was closed at 9:00 pm Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

The next Annual General Meeting of FSWL will commence in February 2025.

The Committee is thanked for its involvement in the AGM

END OF MINUTES