

2016 Board Report

Good evening everyone. It is my honour to present the 2016 School Board Report.

In 2016 we welcomed several new board members, Jason Gauci, Colin Wood, Ashley Lansley, Dave Dubbelboer and Leigh Scott and are grateful for the diversity of skills and perspectives they bring to the board.

The School Board's role is to ensure that the school remains financially viable and that reserves are well managed, so that they can be used to uphold the quality of our school, our educational responsibilities and our assets.

Given our role in maintaining the financial stability of the school, we knew we had a challenge for 2016 as our budget was forecasting a deficit, which Jason will cover in the treasurer's report.

Smaller class sizes and a deficit budget made it apparent to the board that 2016 needed to be a year of focusing on increasing student numbers. Increasing student numbers would allow us to continue building a vibrant, supportive school community leading to additional funding to ensure a sustainable financial future for our school.

With the growth of our school the focus, we conducted a survey of the parent's experiences of our school.

We wanted to know what SHS parents value most about their children's education, how parents feel about whether SHS is performing against their expectations and how parents think we can improve, in line with the school's Strategic Plan.

The survey was also designed to give us important information about how we can better market the school in the community.

We had a very encouraging response rate; a total of 43 parents responded to the survey (approx 40% of all families at SHS), which is considerably above the average response rates to surveys in the education sector.

To summarise the findings, parents told us:

They valued the following most about their child's education

1. Quality of teaching
2. Affordability of fees
3. Educational attainment

When rating the school's performance against parents' expectations SHS performed best in relation to

- Class size
- Values-based education
- Fees and school facilities (equal third)

Encouragingly more than 83% of parents said they would either be 'extremely likely' or 'very likely' to recommend SHS to other parents.

Preferred methods of communication from the school to parents were email and SMS.

Parents felt areas for improvement / focus in the coming year should be better community engagement; increasing enrolments; improving literacy, sports and investing in new equipment

The findings of the survey will help the Board keep track of school performance against parents' expectations and we, the Board, will work on areas highlighted for improvement in the coming year.

Importantly, the findings will also inform marketing activity as SHS has a strategic objective to grow enrolments and increase awareness of the school in the community as the single stream primary school of choice in the Mundaring Area.

The development of marketing plan received considerable attention for the remainder of the year with the focus for next year on the implementation of that plan.

With the focus on raising the community's awareness of the school, the school attended numerous markets and open days along with the Darlington arts festival. We also held a very successful Market Day. We continued with newspaper ads and school open days, including the opening of the early childhood nature playground.

In the 2015 year the school developed a strategic plan for the 4 years 2016 to 2019. The Board in 2016 began a process of systematically reviewing that plan and measuring and reporting on our performance against the goals identified within the plan. We will be working in 2017 to refine and continue this process.

2015 also saw the development of the maintenance plan. 2016 saw the ongoing monitoring of maintenance issues, of which there was nothing significant to report. 2017 will see the board formalising the maintenance plan and its implementation.

We look forward to welcoming Frances Haji-Ali to the position of principal of Sacred Heart for 2017 and working with her to continue progress on the areas mentioned previously. In addition the Board will be:

- Implementing the introduction of modernized uniform
- Reviewing the school's IT infrastructure, in particular the computer lab, and planning its upgrade

I would like to thank the P&F for their efforts over the last year. Your ability to secure grants was nothing less than amazing and the resulting improvements to the school and student and parent experience are invaluable. The Board looks forward to continuing to work with the P&F to build a welcoming, vibrant, supportive school community that upholds the Sacred Heart values of compassion, courage, forgiveness, humility, respect for human dignity and service to others.

I would like to thank the parish for their support and commitment to our school, and in particular Wendy Hooper the Board's parish representative who ensures the lines of communication are always open.

I would also like to thank the teachers & staff of our school. Your dedication to our students and community are the very foundations of this school.

Thank you also to George. Your leadership this year has been invaluable to our whole of school community. We hope you have a wonderful year's break, but not too wonderful as we definitely want to see you back here for 2018.

And lastly, I would like to thank my fellow Board members for all of your efforts over the last year. I look forward to working with you next year.

In closing, on behalf of the board, I wish you all a wonderful, joyous Christmas and relaxing safe summer holiday. We look forward to working with you all to continue our journey to learn, to care and to give.