



School Advisory Council Annual Community Meeting Report 2024

Attachment #2

Welcome to the 2024 Annual General Meeting. It is my pleasure to present the 2024 annual School Advisory Council report. The report is intended to give you some insight into the areas we have focused on in 2024.

2024 SAC Members

The Sacred Heart School Advisory Council consists of members of our school community, the school leadership team and parish.

Our 2024 members were:

Chair:	Katie Fielding	Vice Chair:	Luke Gaynor
Secretary:	Fiona Clegg	Treasurer:	Cameron Symcox
Principal:	Mark Tenney		

As always, I want to start by recognising our wonderful staff who consistently deliver quality, caring education informed and supported by Catholic values. Our main aim as the Council is to collaborate with the school in ways which empower staff and support their best practices. We aim to ensure that our behind-the-scenes efforts make the staff feel that their ideas and hard work are valued and appreciated. Without you, we have nothing.

I would also like to acknowledge the members of the P&F who have continued to do their best to provide opportunities for the school community to connect, to have fun, and to raise funds for resources and experiences that often make a big difference in a small school like ours. This year, significant funds and effort were put into things like resourcing our new STEM lab, putting on the Quiz Night, and running the mother's and father's day events. All of these, and more, require planning and hard work – much of which happens late into the night and taking over weekends. Some might argue that these are all 'optional extras' which, whilst nice to have, aren't critical to the running of a school. I disagree; these are the sorts of things that make our school a community and we would all be the poorer without them.

Providing support and advice to the principal to ensure the positive functioning of the school continues to be the School Advisory Council's primary function. This year, we've welcomed Mark Tenney as our new principal. Mark has shown his commitment to school improvement and community building, spending many mornings sometimes in the cold and wet up by the Early Childhood Centre, welcoming families by name and getting to know every student personally. I know I have spoken about this in previous years' reports, but I really can't say it enough: it's this sort of personal connection with students and their families that sets our school apart. It really is one of the main reasons why Nick and I – and many other families - send our children here. The setting up of multiple lunch-time clubs and the choir has also been a big hit with the children. I assure you none of this goes unnoticed and I am certain that I can speak on behalf of everyone to say to you all that we are so grateful for the time and energy you've all put into these extra opportunities for our children.

Last year, the school participated in the CEWA review process which provided the school with important and useful feedback. The way that it has been taken on board and actioned has meant that we are starting to and will continue to see growth and improvement in our school. It won't always be easy, and it requires hard work, but I know we're up to the challenge. I look forward to the Council continuing to work with you all to keep looking ahead, building on our strengths to make Sacred Heart a clear school of choice for families in the Hills (and the flats, and beyond!).

We continue to work with CEWA staff to build our financial capacity. It is exciting to see that we had 18 new enrolments this year and the 3-Year-Old Kindy programs continues to be a shining light. At risk of sounding mercenary, every enrolment provides us with funds that allow us to remain single stream and to provide

students with the resources they need for quality education. The realities of life are that without healthy finances, we find ourselves in difficult positions and may be forced to make unpopular, and ultimately self-defeating decisions. In our role as the Council, we continue to work on this aspect of school governance alongside you all with a commitment to providing advice that takes into account our role as a school with financial responsibilities, as well as a community.

I would like to formally extend the Council's thanks to Nikki Bardwell and Cassandra Underwood for the work they do in the administration space. Without them, the school would crumble in days if not hours! Your support of the Council's work, this year particularly in terms of assisting a Firey to become a financier, is appreciated greatly.

I began by thanking the staff, and I'll end that way too. Thank you for all the hours spent planning great lessons and marking books; for calmly mediating between warring factions at recess and lunch; for endlessly finding lost hats and jumpers and water bottles and goggles; for celebrating the wins and helping us find perspective in the losses. Thank you for doing a job that most people would chuck in after a week, for never enough pay and certainly not enough gratitude. Thank you for giving me the opportunity again this year to try to repay that debt just a little bit by serving on the Council. I look forward to being part of it again next year.

Katie Fielding
2024 SAC Chair