Sacred Heart Parish Education Board Report

Annual General Meeting – 4th December 2013

It is my pleasure to present to you the Parish Education Board Report for the 2013 school year.

The Sacred Heart Parish Education is constituted as an advisory body to Father Michael, as parish priest, and to Judy Martin, and next year, Julie David, as principal, (more on that later) on matters concerning the development of the school and the education and welfare of the students. The Board met 4 times this year, the first being at a seminar school governance.

Some of the other matters that were discussed at our meetings this year included:

- Grounds development, an example is the fantastic adventure garden next to the small playground, and refurbishment of the Oval, utilizing artificial turf;
- The seemingly never ending issue of the shade structure over the large adventure playground;
- Educational resources and methods to better support the core activity of the school, including ICT and the introduction of an iPad per student for each of years 5 and 6s;
- The appointment of a new principal; and
- Stewardship of school finances.

I understand the Annual Finance Report for the 2013 year will be published on the school’s web-site once the Annual Financial Statement and Audit have been completed, most likely in March 2014, however, what I call a ‘helicopter view’ may be appropriate.

Consistent with previous years, the school operates with a budget of approximately $3.0m in both recurrent, or year –to-year, income and capital income, with about 2/3rds of that total being provided by Federal and State government grants to meet, principally, recurrent funding.

The Catholic Education office requires Catholic Primary Schools to maintain cash reserves at the end of each year of between 10 to 15% of recurrent income. Given the delay experienced in the construction of the aforementioned shade structure, which had been budgeted for in this year, Sacred Heart’s reserves are expected to be slightly above this range. Expenditure on expected projects next year should bring the School’s reserves back within the range noted above for next year.

At the end of this school year, the school will have outstanding borrowings of just over $1.16m.

In summary, the School’s financial position is sound.
On behalf of the Board, I’d like to thank Judy and the team of teachers, administration and other staff for their dedication, care and teaching of our children. Personal experience tells me that many (it may be utopian to think all) of our children also appreciate this.

The Parents’ Association should also be thanked for their wonderful work in both fundraising and friend-raising. Well done to Amanda, the committee, and those many parents who volunteered their time and effort in supporting the school and its wider community.

Three members retire at the end of this year.

Antoinette Barnet and Damian O’Brien, parent representatives, retire at the completion of their 2 year terms. Notwithstanding numerous other commitments, they have contributed much to our discussions and they will be missed.

The one referred to me earlier this week as “Our Beloved Leader”, Judy Martin retires after a distinguished term leading the school and its community. I suspect, Judy, you don’t want too much made of this at this stage, and I understand a more formal presentation will be made at the End of Year Mass, however on behalf of the Board, and personally, I would like to thank you for the great leadership you have shown, your compassion and determination to support the students, and your feistiness in defending the school and all who sail within her. I for one will certainly miss your openness, advice and vision.

As mentioned above, Julie David will of course be joining next year.

We also welcome Rebecca Fillipin as a parent representative to the Board next year. I understand there is one further vacancy. Involvement in the Parish Education Board is rewarding, so if you would like to assist in guiding education in our Parish in the future, I invite you to nominate.

Finally, I’d like to mention the continuing members of the Board who are:

- Parent Representatives - Vikki Plant and Alex McMullen;
- P. A. representative Amanda Towe;
- Teacher representative – Gerry Ferrari;
- Principal’s nominee – Lyn Regan, who also stepped into those giant shoes left by Jan Hendry and has acted as Board secretary and minute taker with aplomb,
- School Accountant, Elizabeth Foster; and
- and of course, Father Michael as Parish Priest.

Thank you all for your considered input, counsel and advice.

Thank You.