

# HOLY ROSARY ANNUAL SCHOOL COMMUNITY MEETING WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 16, 2016

## ANNUAL SCHOOL PRIORITIES REPORT - PRINCIPAL

Welcome everyone and thank you for attending tonight's meeting, HELD IN THE YEAR OF THE 800<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF ST DOMINIC. I appreciate the opportunity to report to you on what has been a good year. I would like to begin by thanking all of the people in our community that have been so supportive. People have given generously of their time and expertise in many ways and all of that has made a very real difference.

My report this year does not focus on statistics as they are available elsewhere.

I would like to thank Our Lady of the Rosary parish for their continued support of the children of Holy Rosary in the form of liturgical and sacramental celebrations. The parish-based sacramental model works very well here. We thank parish administrator Kaye Shervington, as well as our staff involved in a successful sacramental year.

I would like to express my thanks to Father Peter for his commitment to our school community. It is no small task to proclaim to nearly 500 children and their parents, as well as to our staff. Father Peter's regular class visits are highly valued by our children and their teachers. Father Peter's daily 9.00am masses are a great opportunity for all of our classes to attend the Liturgy in its pure, and simple form. These are important moments on their faith journey and we thank you very much for your support of the children in these capacities. We understand that you will be joined soon by an assistant parish priest from the east, which is good news for you and good news for us! We look forward to getting to know him. We are also pleased to note that the process to build the new presbytery and parish centre is in train which is very exciting. We wish you every success with this enterprise. You will both have somewhere to live!!

As a Catholic parish community school, our school is here because of God, and it is here for children. The spiritual, sacramental and faith dimension is therefore central to our existence. In light of that I would like to express my appreciation to Pat Winton who in his capacity as Assistant Principal Religious Education contributed to leading and supporting the faith life of our community this year. Thank you Pat.

To Brother Stephen, Assistant Principal Pastoral Care whose role is such a diverse one in this community, working with parents, teachers and children in a range of programmes your support is greatly appreciated by this community – thank you Stephen.

To Geordie Thuijs, Assistant Principal Administration who joined us just this year, your energy, drive and commitment sees this school community engage ever more deeply with the process of whole school improvement. Your work in this space has been exceptional. I am delighted that you have joined us.

Geordie, Pat and Stephen are exceptional people and I am so grateful to you for your support and expertise. Everything that you have done this year to aid in the improvement of student outcomes, on every level, has been excellent. Your faith, your vision, your capacity, your good-humour, your patience with me means a lot.

Thanks to the people around here who do a lot of feeding and clothing – Leanna, whose huge list of canteen volunteers is unparalleled – and so is the food! Your upbeat attitude proclaims to so many Leanna. I just don't think that there is a tuckshop anywhere like yours! Thank you very much.

Susanne has transformed the uniform shop. And for the better. It is a very busy and organised place! Thank you Susanne!

Thanks to our admin staff – Bek, Kerry, Laurie, Mel and Michele who embrace many roles in the administration of our school. This is no mean feat! Thank you all very much.

Academically our literacy and numeracy initiatives continue to be sharpened through both professional development and through our professional learning community meetings. Our inclusion for 2016 as one of fifteen Catholic Schools involved in the Principals as Numeracy Leaders (PANLs) project complements our priorities and will continue through 2017. This is a school improvement focus which is well researched, and backed by Edith Cowan University's Fogarty Learning Centre.

Our renewed focus in 2016 on the effective and responsible use of ICT has moved remarkably quickly, with a high standard of improvement evident at every turn. We have moved at a cracking pace and I thank Caroline Mullins and Geordie, supported by a great IT team, for leading the charge. I feel certain that progress will continue unabated next year.

A professional development focus on enrichment and extension of our students within the classroom continues to be an important area for 2017 as we further refine our skills in differentiating instruction to increase the level of engagement of our students. Kathy Tanham is involved in this journey and we thank her for the gracious way in which she supports the children in our care.

At a faith level, and I believe, the most important level, 2017 sees the continued embedding of 'Making Jesus Real' or MJR as it is better known. MJR has gained traction at Holy Rosary and is unequivocally Christ centred, who is child centred. In schools where MJR truly is real, the effect on all members of the school community is profound.

We have continued to enjoy much success in the sporting arena with a lot to celebrate – Rob Flexman runs an excellent programme, but Rob would be the first to admit that without the support of the many staff involved and the many parents involved it would not be what it is. Thank you Rob and thank you everyone who has been involved.

Our choirs who performed in the Catholic Schools Performing Arts Festival, as well as the many children involved in individual items all did a wonderful job of representing their school and are to be congratulated. Music is evident across our school from Three Year Old Kindy through to Year Six and the programme will continue to evolve next year. So to Michelle, and to Kate this term, our sincere appreciation.

The profile of the Science learning area is strong here and I thank Tanya Skinner for ensuring that it continues to grow and change. Tanya is faithful to the inquiry-based model of science education and children are challenged by and interested in this subject.

Italian remains the language of choice for 2017. Anna Prestianni is our teacher of Italian and Anna we look forward to seeing you continue to develop this role next year – thank you.

Holly Butson has truly made the library resource area her own. Holly I think you were made for that role. Under your leadership the library is a thriving and friendly space – fantastic job Holly!

To the Siena team, I thank each of you very much for exceptional work supporting extraordinary children. The school is the richer for your commitment and support.

I would now like to acknowledge members of our team who leave us at the end of the year.

To Kate O'Neil, who has been in the position of music teacher this term, thank you for making music such fun for our children. Kate we have loved having you here this term, and we wish you every success at St Denis in Joondanna.

Mrs Kate Lovell leaves us to start a new adventure at St John Bosco School south of the river. This is a brand new school and being part of a new and growing community will be a great experience. Thank you for your work here over the last three years. We are most grateful to you.

Elisa Letizia after two years moves both schools and systems! Elisa you have been a delight to work with and we will miss your quiet, strong, capable approach to your work, and wish you well for a wonderful future. Thank you!

Mrs Gilly Joubert leaves Kindy after fourteen fantastic years! Gilly has moved a long way south! Your lovely attitude and way with the children will never be forgotten Gilly, and we wish you every happiness and every success for the future. We know that the school that has you in it is going to be all the richer for your presence.

To every one of our team leaving we thank you, and we say that we will miss you. On behalf of our community I would like to express our appreciation for the significant contribution that you have made to the children in our care. Some of you have been here for a short time, others for much longer but your focus has never wavered - the children are at the centre of the picture and every contribution to their faith, well-being and development that you have made will always remain with them.

We also have a new staff member joining us: Mrs Edel Waldron who joins us as a classroom teacher. I can assure you that she is delighted to be joining this community. The school is well resourced, with beautiful children and with good, capable, collaborative staff, who are well supported by the admin team and by parents and guardians. This school has an excellent reputation and is attracting quality staff for all of those important reasons.

Our staff and class lists are made available on Friday. The lists will be on the classroom doors at 8.30am. Please note that classes 1C (Trish) and 2D (Sonia) will be swapping rooms so don't get confused! It is important to note that Friday's information about staffing and classes 2016 is made public in good faith. Due to circumstances beyond our control, things sometimes do change over the holidays, but the information, which will be shared on Friday reflects the situation as we know it.

I would like to thank the members of our School Board, led so capably, by Jonathon Woolfrey. Jonathon has been influential in encouraging Board thinking to look more to the long term visioning for the school, and we have enjoyed the journey. Thanks Jonathon. I appreciate the great job Ross Tolley has undertaken as Board Treasurer. This is an important responsibility of the School Board and his expertise has been invaluable.

It has been a big year for the Board with representation on staff appointment panels, financial decision making and much discussion about the future of the school. We are fortunate to have people so supportive of the aims of the school who are prepared to serve the community in this way.

Simon Devlin has done a fantastic job as P&F President this year. His good humoured approach to almost everything has made the meetings both interesting and enjoyable. His recruiting skills have extended to getting his father Peter on board as the Treasurer – impressive! Every P&F meeting has been an opportunity to discuss matters of real significance, and witness the support that exists for the direction the school is taking. The extensive work of the P&F – and it has been huge this year - to support the education of the children – and the parents – through underwriting the purchase of resources, arranging expert information sessions, extending the Preprimary playground and doing a lot of the preparatory work for the senior playground by way of examples – is invaluable. The role of the P&F is to build community, to support the school in its initiatives and to empower parents in their role. All these are critical to a successful school, and I believe that our P&F gets that and experiences a lot of success accordingly. To all of you – thank you so much. The conversation about where to focus P&F energies next year is well in hand, and it sounds like another great year ahead.

And overall, our parents have provided terrific support for what we do in the school. We couldn't do what we do, without you. From the Pastoral Care, in times of great sadness when families have needed our support, to class duty, assisting on excursions, in art classes, listening to children read, banking, coaching, building and extending playgrounds – it is a long list!

We have a lot to be thankful for. Our children have been involved in wonderful spiritual, sporting, cultural and academic pursuits, and have thrived. I believe that we have worked hard to continue to effectively implement our school priorities. A good Catholic education in these times is really interesting and diverse, with wonderful opportunities made available to children by their dedicated teachers and assistants.

But in it all, there is no substitute for quality of teaching and learning, and most of all, the quality of relationships. To that end I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the energetic, committed team of teachers and support staff we have at Holy Rosary who have done so much to ensure that the education made available to children is both rich and varied.

In conclusion in the Dominican tradition it is all about Truth, Love and Knowledge and I thank everyone involved in making Holy Rosary the place that it is, where we work together to support the children in our care to embody that vision. Thank you very much.

Mark de Kluyver

November 2016