

Chair's Report – Jonathon Woolfrey

Holy Rosary School

Annual Community Meeting

22 November, 2017

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you on behalf of the Board of Holy Rosary School.

It has been a busy year for the Board, with a number of important issues occupying our attention, and I will take the opportunity to update you on those this afternoon.

Early in the year, the School Board participated in the Principal Review Process of Mr Mark de Kluyver, which resulted in the Archbishop of Perth offering Mark an additional 5-year term as Principal of HRS. Congratulations Mark! We were pleased to receive positive feedback that came from the process, whilst identifying some areas for improvement, including as a School Board.

We have seen the transition of a new Parish Priest. We farewelled Fr. Peter Nguyen, who was a strong contributor to our Board this year, in what was an exciting year for the Parish. We also welcomed Fr. Peter Huang, who has already had such a wonderful start with his engagement with our children. As a school, we strongly value our relationship with the Parish.

A lot of our attention as a Board this year was in setting up the physical environs for the School, for the immediate term, and for well into the future. To this end, we are dealing with one of the more complex situations that would face a Primary School.

Our School was built in 1954, and is on a particularly difficult site, notwithstanding its beautiful location. It also shares land with the Newman Siena Centre to our west, which brings with it additional complications. As you may be aware from some of the strong advocacy we required for our school oval to remain ours, the fact that our library, upper school classrooms etc aren't on our title etc, have required some significant discussions.

We are also fully cognisant about what is happening around us. Doubleview Primary School is being completely rebuilt, Hale School has nearly finished a

new Primary School with expanded years, Woodlands Primary School has numerous amenities, as well as the other challenges within our surrounds.

To this end, we have been in regular and constant dialogue with Catholic Education, about working together to deal with the complexities of our site/s, and improving the school so that it thrives for the next 10 years and beyond. Part of this discussion has included taking over some or all of the adjacent Newman Siena site, and looking at other best-value options to improve our school. We have had tens of meetings with a variety of stakeholders, and given the complexity of the situation, the Board is keen to get some momentum here as soon as possible. Part of this might mean that we focus on smaller projects within our existing constraints, whilst we continue to pursue a longer-term vision for our school. We look forward to updating you on the progress of this shortly.

We also work towards this end with other challenges in the road ahead. As a Parish School, and a Faith Community, we acknowledge the hurt that the recent Royal Commission has had on our broader community, and operate under this context.

From a broader school funding perspective, we also are aware of some of the challenges Catholic schools, and particularly our school, faces in the immediate future.

Whilst Treasurer, Ross Tolley, will go through this in more detail, the fact that we are within a high Socio-Economic Status area is starting to make an impact on our funding position, and also effects our actions as a board.

Notwithstanding some of these circumstances and challenges, our Board acknowledges that the Holy Rosary School community is a wonderful place to be, and the educational foundations for our children are strong.

The School Board, went through the current School Improvement Framework with Mr D and Mr T recently. We plan to continue this before the end of this year, and work towards putting in place a new strategic plan, that draws together the strengths of the Board, the School Leadership and staff, and the HRS Community, to deliver a new strategic plan in 2018 that positions the school as the thriving school it is, and will continue to be.

It truly is an exciting time.

Finally, I would like to finish by thanking the hard-working members of our Board, who give their time freely. This goes well beyond giving up a couple of hours each month.

Firstly, Mark de Kluyver and Geordie Thjuis. Both gentlemen are here until after 9pm on the nights of Board meetings. They're at every other meeting required to progress our plans. They support our board in all possible ways that we request.

Ross Tolley, as Treasurer, brings a unique expertise, and again goes well beyond. I doubt there is anyone outside of those who work in Catholic education who understands school funding as well as he does given the work he has put in.

Debs Noblett, our Board Secretary, who plays a vital role in the continuity of our board, its actions and its members. Her role in our Board governance is vital.

Rohan Mascarenhas and his legal background has been invaluable in considering the planning implications of our decisions.

Kathy Blitz-Cokis, is vital to the board, not only with her professional expertise, but her experience as a mum of children in our school, and her and Debs should be acknowledged for their contribution from that perspective.

Mark Nolan, who attends (at least) 2 meetings a month with his dual role on the Board and the P&F. He contributes with skill, energy and his passion for the school is contagious.

Finally, and on behalf of the Board, I would also like to acknowledge the efforts of the staff at the school, the Teachers, the Teacher Assistants, our Librarian, the School Administrative staff, and everyone else who makes our school community what it is. We understand that the real action in this school occurs in the classroom, and like others within the School, the Board is clear that its role is to support those wonderful learning opportunities our children have in the classroom.

We have a wonderful school, with a wonderful community, and I look forward to our journey ahead.

Thank you.