

HOLY ROSARY ANNUAL SCHOOL COMMUNITY MEETING 5PM TUESDAY NOVEMBER 20, 2018

ANNUAL SCHOOL PRIORITIES REPORT - PRINCIPAL

Welcome everyone and thank you for attending tonight's meeting. It is great to see some new faces here! I appreciate the opportunity to report to you on what has been a good year.

I want to thank 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 real difference.

My report does not focus on statistics as they are available Everywhere else. Rather, it provides me with an opportunity to report on some of the things which have taken place this year, and to thank a whole lot of people who made these and many other great times a reality.

I would like to thank Our Lady of the Rosary parish for their support of the children of Holy Rosary in the form of liturgical and sacramental celebrations. The parish-based sacramental model here is a very strong one, and has been particularly successful this year. We thank parish administrator Kaye Shervington, as well as our staff involved for their great work and support of our children.

We have so enjoyed and appreciated the interest in our school shown to us by Father Peter and Father Chinh. We have already had conversations about next year, and about the possibility of having that priestly presence in our school, with regular visits from yourselves to talk to our children. We look forward to that.

I have worked in a number of schools and parishes, and I am grateful that we are a part of a Dominican parish with a strong charism, led by great priests. The blessing of the new presbytery was a great occasion! What an achievement.

To Geordie Thuijs, Assistant Principal your energy, loyalty, drive and commitment and sense of fun sees this school community engage ever more deeply and effectively with the process of whole school improvement. By that I mean, improving everywhere! Your work in this space has been highly regarded and appreciated – thank you.

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 kindness and your upbeat attitude proclaims to so many Leanna. I just don't think that there is a tuckshop anywhere like yours! Something tells me that the canteen party on the night of November 28th is going to be a big one!

Lydia Della Saul does an outstanding job of managing our uniform shop. No fuss, organised and straight down the line - a fantastic approach! Thank you Lydia.

Thanks to our admin staff – Laurie, Tracy and Michele who embrace many responsibilities in the administration of our school. Tracy, we are delighted that you joined our community this year. Your financial expertise and your kind and gentle nature are appreciated by all of us. Together you make a great team - strong, capable, reliable, fun, kind and efficient. It is just awesome!

Academically our literacy and numeracy initiatives continue to be Focused upon through both professional development and through our professional learning community meetings. Under the Principals as Numeracy Leaders (PANLS) project we have continued our focus on the effective use of Numeracy Dedicated Time, developing the mental maths skills of our children, and revised the use of mathematical vocabulary across the school to ensure consistency. The work done in this area will continue to be embedded over time. Our literacy focus on the consistent and effective use of Literacy Dedicated Time, which includes embracing the Bright Path project that focuses on the teaching and learning of writing skills, are paying real dividends, as evidenced by the visit from the WA Curriculum's Maureen Lorimer, Director of New Initiatives to examine the good work in action at our school.

The focus on improving communication continues. The new newsletter, Blogs, P&F Facebook, Seesaw – all have been introduced in such a way as to have a major influence on the quality, the method and the frequency of information and feedback to parents and guardians, so that as far as possible, people do know what is going on, and why and how. This has involved a lot of work on the part of staff and parents. We are now in the process of streamlining communication channels to improve their effectiveness. Thank you all.

Our continued focus this year on the effective and responsible use of technologies in class 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 technology committee, for leading the charge.

A professional development focus on enrichment and extension of our students within the classroom continues to be an important emphasis as we further refine our skills in differentiating instruction to increase the level of engagement of our students. Geordie Thuijs, Brother Stephen and Sonia Thomas have also led the revitalised and extended enrichment programme which has reaped big benefits for the children involved. Thank you for this initiative which has become stronger and stronger!

Kathy Tanham is involved in this school improvement journey and has implemented the Levelled Literacy Intervention programme very successfully. Children show real improvement, and the teacher assistants who work alongside Kathy to implement the programme speak excitedly of the achievements of the children in their groups.

At a faith level, 2018 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 substantial and significant. I really do believe that we are becoming one of them. We have completed our review of the Guidelines for Religious Education. With system approval and Support, we linked the great resources from our Dominican tradition, Making Jesus Real, Caritas and Catholic Earthcare for example, to the outcomes in the Guidelines.

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 and parents involved. It would not be the programme that it is. Rob has made it his business to seek and secure opportunities for our children to do different and challenging things - tennis and the triathlons for example. Thank you Rob and thank you everyone who has been involved.

Music continues to evolve at Holy Rosary and I thank Michelle Kirwan for keeping an open mind and embracing the different and delightful opportunities which come our way. Many of our children were involved in individual items in the annual Catholic Schools Performing Arts Festival, with some outstanding results. Musica Viva, a study for this year in jazz, formed a whole school focus during terms one and two culminating in workshops with Adam Hall and the Velvet Players. It was a wonderful experience for the children, and by her own admission, for Michelle. Liturgical singing is coming of age. We are doing this more regularly in the undercover area, and many parents and grandparents collecting their children have indicated their enjoyment in watching this activity. Michelle again has been open to changes, with more live music and more

music which proclaims to children, and this is borne out in the way in which they engage with it. Most recently, the Buddy Concert where buddies combined to present terrific musical items, was a fabulous idea of Michelle's which the children really engaged with. Our school choir goes from strength to strength under Michelle's leadership. Numbers have grown and they sound wonderful. Long may it continue - thank you Michelle.

Edudance continued this year, moving in to the music agenda, and again, it was such exceptionally good fun as well as being a major exercise in building the co-ordination and team skills of the children. This will continue next year, building on the skills taught this year. We look forward to it!

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, a great year – thank you!

The profile of the Science learning area is changing, and I thank Tanya Skinner for reimagining the way in which this great subject is taught. It is both important and engaging. Thank you very much Tanya.

Likewise Anna Prestianni has embraced new and engaging ways of teaching Italian which has been very well received in the junior primary. Thank you Anna.

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! Holly's role broadens next year and I will refer to that later on in this report.

To the Siena team, an eventful year. Deb Tanham retired after 20 great years of running it, and our teacher Liz Laverock stepped into that role. Liz I think it was made for you! Your commitment, dedication and sense of humour make Siena fun! To Liz, Renate, Robyn and to all of our Siena Assistants, I thank each of you very much for your deep commitment to the education and well-being of our Siena children. They are remarkable, and so are you!

I would now like to acknowledge members of our team who leave us at the end of the year. Brother Stephen, here two days per week this year, will complete his move to Notre Dame School. Stephen has been a member of our leadership team for nearly 10 years and has brought to the school a unique set of skills, wise counsel and a thoughtful approach. Stephen we thank you for your commitment over this time to the pastoral and leadership dimensions of our community and wish you continued success and satisfaction at Notre Dame.

Jen Beale who has been on maternity leave for some years, has resigned, but her boys attend our school so we will still see plenty of her! We thank Jen very much for her commitment to Holy Rosary.

From our Siena team, Michelle Broomfield, on long service leave from her position in the Siena team, will not be returning. Michelle has decided on a completely different career path, and is now working as a prestart consultant with Content Living. Michelle we thank you very much for the great work you have done in our school.

Lauren Boland who took over Liz Laverock's position in Year Five for a semester while Liz moved to lead the Siena Centre, leaves us. Lauren took over teaching our Year Five gang at very short notice and has done very well indeed! Thanks very much Lauren, it has been a pleasure to work with you again. We will miss you.

Sylvia Ryan, who supports some of our junior primary teachers, leaves us - but just for twelve months! Sylvia is taking accrued leave, and Sylvia we hope that you enjoy every minute of it!

Jen Rudyard will continue in Kununurra next year, and will be Acting Assistant Principal for first term at St Joseph's. Jen is a most talented teacher and it is clear that she is motivated and happy in the Kimberley. We wish her well!

To every one of our colleagues and friends leaving, 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 your 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.

And to our staff for 2019.

Aleana Brennan, currently Assistant Principal at City Beach, joins us next year as Assistant Principal working alongside Geordie. She is very excited to be joining us and certainly we are looking forward to having her join our community. She is confident, capable and personable and will be an asset to our community.

Holly Butson's role broadens next year. Many of you will be aware that Holly has an extensive background in social work and youth work. To that end Holly has enthusiastically agreed to increasing her hours and adding the role of Pastoral Worker - Student well-being - to her profile in our school. Holly will be involved in student leadership, and running programmes for our students under this umbrella. Holly we are excited about the opportunities for next year!

Our school has a very good reputation. There are a lot of good things happening here, and this is attracting high calibre staff, for which we can all be thankful. I would like to thank Sue Griffin who has done so much in such a short time to get Holy Rosary 'out there' and in to people's consciousness when deciding on which school to send their children to.

We want our children to have the best education – in all of its facets – that we can give them. Holy Rosary is attracting interest from leading educators in system and state because of the success with which initiatives that make a difference, are being implemented here. That success can only become real when our staff are on the same page and understand the what, the why and the how when it comes to change. I thank them for their understanding of the need for change and the way in which it is understood and embraced.

Our staff and class lists are made available on Friday morning. It is important to note that Friday's information about staffing and classes for 2019 is made public in good faith. Sometimes, due to circumstances beyond our control, circumstances change over the break, 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 key in encouraging Board thinking to look more to the long term visioning for the school, culminating the Holy Rosary Strategic Plan which is close to fruition. Peta Berry stepped in as Treasurer this year, and has been just great. Her insight and support have been most valuable in these changing times. It has been

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

Similarly Mark Nolan has done a great job as HRC President this year and has had enthusiastic support from many. Mark has encouraged our parents to look at and do things differently. There has been a lot of interest in that approach. A lot of great work has been undertaken by the HRC, for which we are very grateful. Every HRC 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 HRC – and it has been huge this year - to support the education of the children – and the parents – through fundraising, running community events, underwriting the purchase of resources, arranging expert information sessions, and underwriting and building the amazing reimaged Preprimary playground to name just some.

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 support, to class rosters, tuckshop duty, making playdough, assisting on excursions, in art classes, listening to children read, banking, coaching, building – it is a long list! Significantly, the number of parents, whose youngest child in Preprimary who were involved in the Preprimary playground, and thereby having just one term to play there, says a lot about parents investing in the school for future generations. This is great spirit, and is of inestimable value.

The role of the HRC is to build community, to support the school in its initiatives and to empower parents in their role. All these are central to being a successful school, and I believe that our HRC gets that and experiences a lot of success accordingly.

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.

The Dominican tradition is about Truth, Love and Knowledge and I thank everyone at Holy Rosary for embracing that, and making it the place that it is today.

Thank you very much.

Mark de Kluyver

November 2018