

2016 Board Chairs Report

St Joseph's School Northam

The Board of St Joseph's School Northam is privileged to be able to contribute to our school community and it is my pleasure to present this report of Board activities for 2016.

This has been an exciting year. Our Year 11's commenced and have settled into senior high school well. We have been encouraged by the effort made by our students and teachers, and the growing interest in Year 11 & 12. This has been good to see as it supports our decision to move into senior school education. I congratulate Carmen, Caroline, Mark and secondary staff on the smooth transition into this next phase of our school.

This year has been our final year in our current strategic plan. This plan was ambitious and we have learnt the value of focusing on a smaller number of perhaps bigger issues, rather than a wide diversity. From Board's perspective our key achievements have been-

- Broadening of our education offering: this includes Years 11 & 12 and now the option of boarding;
- Supporting our staff through PD opportunities as we continue to look at ways that make the work environment a stimulating place;
- Appointment and retention of a school chaplaincy worker. Board has strongly supported this position and believe the role has made a major contribution to pastoral care at school;
- Supporting various upgrades of facilities, but most recently a new transportable classroom for the secondary campus.

During this year, Board has worked with the staff, via the Principal and the Leadership team, to collectively develop our next five year strategic plan. The Plan brings together a strong focus on literacy and numeracy and a focus on improving our understanding and 'living' the charisms of our founding orders. The Board has a significant role in the accountability aspects of the school strategy. Apart from continuing to closely monitor and assess our financial operations, we have suggested four priority areas for the Board in the new strategy:

- To consolidate the successful establishment Year 11 and 12;
- To further develop and commence implementation of a 20 year Capital Development Plan;
- To establish out of school care facilities;
- To place St Joseph's School as the 'school of choice' in the Avon region.

A key area for the school moving forward will be the provision of infrastructure to support our educational outcomes. We have commenced the development of a capital works plan during of our last strategic plan. The strong interest from parents seeking to enrol students at St Joseph's, including Year 11 & 12, has further emphasised this future need. We want ensure our school facilities support our staff and students as they engage in high quality education and this plan will provide the framework for school infrastructure in the near and long term.

Out of School Hours Care has come up as a potential area of need and something that the school might consider. Our role over the next couple of years will be to verify this need and then determine the best ways we could deliver out of school care.

Finally, we believe, our school offers great opportunities to its students, but we want to make sure the rest of the region also recognises this, so that our school continues to grow and provide a viable and sought after regional education option for parents.

Operationally, the Board has held a meeting every month between February and November this year with some additional meeting time to support the development of our new strategic plan. The Finance committee has also met prior each Board meeting. Thankyou to all our Board members who have contributed their time through the year, particularly given the extra load with the strat planning.

As the Treasurer will report, our finances are currently strong. A conservative approach to expenditure has given us the ability to support refurbishments and some capital investments this year, but will also provide the basis for supporting the major cost of the capital works that we will need in the future. I would like to thank Steve (Johnson) for his diligence in the financial management of our school.

We will be moving forward into 2016 without some of our current Board members and I thank them for their time with us. In particular, I would like to acknowledge and thank Leonie Knipe who has completed six years of service on our Board. She has supported various sub committees (ICT, Canteen) and provided a great perspective for Board discussions. Leonie, thank you for your input and time invested with our school. I would also like to thank Jennifer Taylor, our P&F rep on Board. Jennifer has hit the decks running, has been a great liaison with P&F and also had lots of input to a range of Board activities. Jennifer, we have enjoyed your discussion and wish you well in your new endeavours next year.

Thankyou to our Staff. You continue to nurture and educate our children and we value the efforts that you make as our children develop and grow. We had a number of staff move onto other things, I would like to acknowledge Julie Booth, our previous Head of Primary, who has reached a well-deserved retirement and Ryan Shelton our Religious Education Coordinator who will move onto a new role.

Finally to Carmen and her Leadership Team: Carmen, it was great to see a successful Principal Review and I congratulate you on your new contract with us. Leadership Team – through our planning, I have had the pleasure of sharing a number of meals and discussions with you this year. On behalf of Board, I thankyou for your contributions to the functions and the leadership of our school.

I wish you all a safe and blessed Christmas, make the time to relax, and I look forward to seeing you all in 2017.

Cec McConnell
Board Chair 2016