

ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL
ACM
20th NOVEMBER 2017
CHAIR REPORT

Welcome everyone to the 2017 Annual Community Meeting of St Joseph's School. On behalf of the School Board, I would like to thank you all for attending, and for showing your continued support.

This has been yet another successful year for the students, school, staff and community. The year began with an unexpected start, as we learnt that Peter Yensch, would be unable to commence the school year. We were grateful for all staff, who were able to accept different roles within the school, in particular Kaye-Savage Morton, who took on an Acting Principal Role. The school year was able to commence smoothly and Term 1 was met with minimal disruption.

As the use of Technologies and social media continue to grow both within and outside the school, the board believed Cyber Safety to be of high importance. The board sought Paul Litherland from Cyber Safety, to present a talk on Cyber issues. All staff and parents, and the senior children, had the opportunity to attend Paul's informative talk. The feedback from everyone was very positive, and hopefully we have the opportunity to have Paul return for future presentations.

Continuing with the technology, the board deliberated and researched for replacement laptops for both year 6 classes. After much discussion, the decision was approved to purchase new laptops, and these will be available for the year 6's beginning in 2018. The board also approved a WIFI upgrade, which has been completed. The school website was discussed and it was decided that it needed to be improved. The new website is now operational, and I personally believe it is fantastic.

The introduction of the St Norbert's College sibling discount, has been one that has been met with appreciation. The bond between St Norbert's and St Joseph's has always been strong, and this year St Norbert's introduced the sibling discount. This allows discounted fees for 2nd and 3rd siblings, regardless of which two schools the children attend. This has been a financial benefit to many families especially during these difficult economic times. So I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the parents, to thank Father Peter and St Norbert's for this programme.

Other Items Addressed by the Board:

1. Changed exit through new gate on Treasure RD
2. Shade covers and turf mats for Year 1 ,2 and 3 courtyard area.
3. Board kept briefed on Leading Lights and changes from Cash to Accrual.
4. Looking at options to upgrade signage at the front of the building.
5. Enrolments remain very strong at a competitive time
6. Coolock Centre is progressing frustratingly slow.
7. The canteen has continued with changes, including: the new Mercy Café sign, introduction of the slushy machine, more tasting days and different menu options

This year I had the responsibility and privilege of taking part in the Principal Appointment process. I along with 4 other panel members, were to take part in appointing a new Principal for St Joseph's School for 2018. The process was very interesting and rewarding. The school has a wonderful reputation, resulting in a high number of applicants. As a panel we met and discussed all potential candidates, deciding on four who were short-listed. After interviewing each applicant, we were pleased to appoint John Rose the new principal for 2018. We wish you all the best John, and we know you will be a wonderful addition to our school community.

This leads me to Peter Yensch. Peter has been the principal of St Joseph's School for the past 12 years. During this time, Peter's contributions have led to an unprecedented growth, and positive outcomes for the school. I cannot list all of Peter's achievements, as we know there are way too many to list, however, hopefully I can quickly touch on some major contributions, he has made to the school during his time here.

Peter always modelled Christian values in his dealings with staff and students and believes everyone deserves a second chance. He also shares his own faith with students, especially when discussing the rosary. He encouraged members of the Parish to conduct the Rosary each year for the whole school.

Secondly, the new build. Peter, along with the board, oversaw the rebuilding of the school. This was an enormous task on top of keeping the school running effectively during the lengthy time the build took. As a result, we have this wonderful school, which not only looks aesthetically pleasing, but is functional and has everything children and staff need.

Peter put a spotlight on Sport and assisted staff in coaching swimming and athletics. This has resulted in the school winning both Swimming and Athletics Interschool competitions in recent years. However, to Peter, it wasn't all about winning and he was known for his consistent encouragement and support of students and sport

teachers. It was about student participation and school spirit, hopefully leading to a shield win.

Peter in conjunction with many other staff, enabled St Joseph's to earn and maintain a reputation as a top Performing Arts primary school in the Catholic Schools Performing Arts Festival. He provided funding for resources, and allowed time for students to practise. The wonderful successes the students experienced, the school pride, and the trophies in the cabinet are a testament to the talent he and all the supporting staff fostered.

The children, staff and parents, always enjoyed his 'down to earth' approach and his ability to laugh at himself. His dancing ability, or lack of as he might say, had the school community in hysterics on more than one occasion. His enthusiasm for dressing up, whether it being in his favourite football team uniform or dance costume provided entertainment, and it is this one side of Peter, that I think we all agree we are going to miss.

Other contributions include, the introduction of Edu-Dance, the purchasing of the Flags to represent all cultures within the school, the celebration of NAIDOC week, he built and fostered a great relationship with St Norbert's, set up teams to share the responsibility among staff for the maintenance of the strong academic performance of the school, and much much more.

Peter, as a leader you displayed the perfect balance of fun and laughs with the seriousness and responsibility your position required. So on behalf of the Board, parents and students, we would like to say Thank you for all you have done, for St Joseph's School. Your contribution to the school will not be forgotten and you will always be remembered fondly in our hearts. We wish you all the best for the future!

On a personal note. This is my last meeting as the board Chair. I have thoroughly enjoyed my 6 years on the board. I have been very proud of the achievements the board has made, and being a part of the Principal Appointment Process and the appointment of both Deputy Principals, has been a highlight for me personally. I would like to thank board members, both past and present, for all their support.

I would like to wish everyone a safe and Merry Christmas.

Thank you.

Marisa Dawson

Chair - St Joseph's School Board

