

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT 2011



School Staff

I believe the 2011 School Year has been one of transition. This is certainly obvious in the form of buildings and resources, but also just as importantly in the staff. At St Joseph's all staff have continued to be committed to the well-being of the students, however what has become more obvious this year is their enthusiasm to take on new roles and responsibilities and also to enhance their own growth and development in the field of education.

This transition by staff has been evidenced by

- Their new found interest in using technology in the classroom and their demand for new equipment.
- The completion of leadership courses at the CEO by two staff members and the application by two staff for leadership courses in 2012.
- The return to university by staff members this year, and next, to further their studies. I think the Bursary is an excellent incentive and hopefully will be of some financial assistance.
- The development of a Curriculum Team involving six staff members overseeing the professional learning and development of staff, and the literacy and numeracy needs of students.
- The excellence achieved by both Wendy and Anna in their acting roles this year.
- More staff members taking more direct responsibility for the Sacramental Programs this year.
- A number of volunteers as review leaders in the Quality Catholic Schooling project.
- New staff coming on board as mentors in the ECU Internship Program and as site supervisor.
- The number of maths initiatives being introduced this year.

As a principal there is nothing more exciting than seeing staff volunteer to take on new roles and responsibilities and thrive on those opportunities.

Staff Changes

Unfortunately this year we are losing Kathy Mueller our school social worker who does such a wonderful job supporting those families who are in need. There are a number of families that Kathy has made a real a significant contribution to improving their lives. She will be missed as a staff member and a friend to many. We also wish Rose McGrath all the best as she takes her second instalment of maternity leave and thank her for her commitment this year with the Year 6 Blue class.

Although Jacki Hewson has resigned she has told me that she will continue on, in a temporary, part time, advisory, capacity next year and as such is not ready to be farewelled. This however, will be her last Annual Community Meeting at St Joseph's Primary School and I would like to thank her for her endless hard work and more specifically her contribution in seeing the building program through to its completion.

Parent Assistance

Although not a staff member, an important component to our school over many years has been Peter Palermo. Peter has played a major role in the school's development over the past six years as Board Chairperson. His calm, diplomatic approach to dealing with issues has ensured being part of the Board is a positive experience. I would also like to thank all members of the School Board for their council and advice over the year. I believe it speaks positively of the current Board when we see people nominating to become Board Members.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our hard working P & F Executive efficiently run by Sylvana Restifo. This small team takes on a large number of jobs each year that help raise funds for the school. They have just contributed over \$7 000 so that we can have Reading Eggs and Reading Eggspress on our computers through the school and individual access for each child at home. Sylvana is a wonderful President with her only fault being that she tries to please too many people.

System and School Priorities 2011 and 2012

It is a system requirement for the Principal to report on achievement of 2011 priorities and highlight the 2012 priorities as part of the Annual Report. In 2011 our System and School Priorities were;

- 1. Catholic Identity-**As part of this priority, staff reviewed the **Evangelisation** Quality Catholic School component. On a rating scale of 1-7 this was seen as a 6 and no action was required.
- 2. Community-**In this priority we looked at the QCS component **Wider Communities** where we had a rating of 5. Here we aimed to strengthen our partnership with ECU through the Residency Program but also invite more people into the school as we did on Grandparents and Friends Day when we invited the residents from Castledaire.
- 3. Education-**As part of this priority we looked at two QCS components **Teaching Practices and Student Wellbeing**. Under teaching practices we rated ourselves as a 4 overall. Our action to improve in this area is to develop more reflective practices through the introduction of Professional Learning Communities. These communities will incorporate mentoring, shoulder to shoulder learning, professional reading and mentoring for ICT use. The intention of this process is to improve literacy and numeracy standards with our key focus area being, 'the language of maths' and problem solving.

In the QCS component of Student Wellbeing we rated a 5 overall with action needed in the continual implementation of PATHS. With the new layout of the school we need to ensure new rules are clearly articulated and children understand them. It is also important that student wellbeing is kept on the agenda by being raised regularly at school staff meetings.

4. Stewardship We successfully met our financial and building requirements.

In 2012 we will look at the following QCS components;

- **Vision and Mission.**
- **Learning Environment.**
- **Students with Special Learning Needs.**
- **Professional Learning.**

These QCS Components align themselves with the System Priorities as follows;

1. Catholic Identity. With new school buildings and resources it is now time for a staff review group to look at the school Evangelisation Plan and specifically the QCS Component **Vision and Mission.**

2. Education. The QCS components to be looked at here are Learning Environment and Students with Special Needs.

3. Stewardship. Finally we will review the component Professional Learning which links nicely with staff who are taking on the responsibility of Coordinators of Professional Learning.

2011 NAPLAN

The following represents school averages as compared with state and national averages in Year 3 and Year 5.

Over the past few years our Socio Economic Status has continued to rise reflecting the changing demographics of Queens Park and surrounding suburbs. One of the features that we believe is most strongly impacting on our averages are the new arrivals to Australia, with one or both parents having tertiary degrees. Their children, however speak very little English.

We would like to be consistently above the state and national average and will continually strive to achieve this. This year our Year 5 students achieved this goal and performed very well but unfortunately our Year 3 students did not. We do believe however, that these averages are reasonably accurate and we have not been surprised by the result. The Year 3 averages reflect the fact that we have more children in that cohort, who experience some learning difficulty, than what we have in most other cohorts. This is a fact that we have identified since Kindergarten and worked hard to improve.

YEAR 3 RESULTS

| | SCHOOL | STATE | NATIONAL |
|-----------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Reading | 403 | 401 | 416 |
| Writing | 409 | 404 | 416 |
| Spelling | 391 | 396 | 406 |
| Grammar/Punct' | 394 | 408 | 422 |
| Numeracy | 374 | 387 | 398 |

YEAR 5 RESULTS

| | SCHOOL | STATE | NATIONAL |
|----------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Reading | 509 | 480 | 488 |
| Writing | 497 | 472 | 483 |
| Spelling | 515 | 476 | 484 |
| Grammar/Punct | 514 | 491 | 500 |
| Numeracy | 495 | 479 | 488 |

THE SCHOOL YEAR

There are many highlights of our school but few can compare to the teamwork and commitment of those involved in the Sacramental Celebrations. The parish program under the direction of Fr Peter, and the support of the staff at the school, and the involvement of the families, make these occasions not only spiritually uplifting but also moments that help us all become more engaged in our faith.

Our Performing Arts is unique, in that it is not restricted to a talented few but embraced by the whole school. The energy in our singing at the School Opening and the fun when all joined in the dancing is reflective of the enjoyment and confidence all children gain from this learning area.

Not so many years ago someone described our school as the, 'easybeats' of the Interschool Sports Competition. Over the last several years our performances have been outstanding and if there was a ranking system for our performances across all sports we would be seen as the second best school within the region and borderline on taking over top spot. This has come as a combination of hard training, excellent organisation and teacher and parent cooperation. The number of weeks that you can see multiple activities taking place before or after school is a credit to parents and staff and I thank all those who have helped in this area. Some have done it for a number of years.

Some of the progress that has started under the numeracy initiative will have a long term benefit for the children. The staff are genuinely excited by the new Australia Curriculum and being able to link it to the professional development associated with the Back To Front maths that we are introducing is very exciting. Kate has again got PD taking place tomorrow in classrooms, for the early childhood teachers.

The real success of the school is gauged by the quality of the students, particularly those that are in their final year, and although each year has a few hiccups once again I can say with genuine pride that the children in year 6 are a wonderful group of children. Although this is a reflection of their first educators, their parents, I would like to hope that with God's help we have had some impact on the type of person they are.

I would like to thank all for a very successful year and wish you all the best for the upcoming holiday season.

Peter Yensch
Principal