



SAINT HELENA'S
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Something Beautiful for God

2021 Annual School Community Meeting

School Advisory Council Chair's Report

On behalf of the St Helena's Catholic Primary School Advisory Council, I would like to welcome you to the Annual General Community Meeting for 2021. My name is Melinda Webb, and I am the current Advisory Council Chair.

As the year draws to a close, my email inbox, just like many of yours I am sure, becomes flooded with emails advertising things I don't want and things I did not even know existed and certainly do not want. However, among them sometimes comes something from which I derive some value. This year, in one of my bulk deletes I almost missed a list of reflection questions emailed from one of my groups. I stopped to read this email and came across three questions that helped put the busyness of the end of year into perspective.

The first question is, "How did your relationships (family, friends, work) evolve over the year?" The second question was "What did you leave unfinished? Will it matter?" and the third question was "What is the most important lesson you learned this year?"

For me the relationships I develop, nurture and build are critical to my wellbeing and at the heart of these relationships is the one I have with my family. The relationships that I have with friends, colleagues and from my work networks are also very important to me. There is great excitement in my family at the moment because my youngest daughter and her family have moved to live in Perth from Adelaide. As to question number 2, I am still working on that one. For question 3, one of the most important things that I have re-learned this year is how resilient people and communities can be when they work together to support each other in times of need. Even though the effects of the COVID pandemic are still impacting Australia, and the world in more severe and far-reaching ways than in our state, nowhere remains unaffected. Here in the St Helena's School Community, we are truly fortunate that a strong sense of support and belonging has been developed and fostered by the leadership team, staff and families of the school.

Once again, on behalf of the Advisory Council, I would like to thank St Helena's leadership team, under the guidance of Lina Bertolini, for the ongoing support of the Advisory Council as we navigated our path into a new way of operating. To the Assistant Principals, Sascha Saulsman and Albert Borrello, who always attend the meeting with us we would like to offer our appreciation. We also wish Albert all the best in his role at Holy Cross College next year and thank him for his contributions to the school during 2021. Thanks also to Tracy Papenfus who attends our monthly meetings as well and provides such excellent advice and shares her wealth of knowledge about all things financial to support and guide the Advisory Council in its decision making.

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation and thanks to the members of the Advisory Council, Eva Gomes-Sebastiao, Tara Palm, Marks Sanders and Genevieve Dapaah. I would also like to thank Mitch Lohrentz who represents the P&F and Hannah Wager, the Parish representative, and Father Bona our Parish Priest. Thank you all for your energy, dedication and focus this year as we worked with the principal and the school leadership team to benefit the students, staff and families of the St Helena's community. Thanks, must be extended also to the gently co-opted

community member Wayne Webb who, almost willingly, agreed to utilise his wide experience in industry as a member of the Building Committee.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2021

STUDENTS AND THEIR LEARNING:

Vision for Learning

The Advisory Council was privileged at the beginning of this term to be the audience for an unveiling of St Helena's new Vision for Learning - "In a world envisaged by Jesus, we are active and engaged learners working together in a safe and respectful environment" - and its four pillars of Collaboration, Christ Centred, Voice and Engagement, and Safety and Respect. Thanks so much to the whole staff for your engagement in the long, productive and collaborative process over the course of the year. Special thanks to Jess Healy, Grace Dwyer, Aleah Staples and Joanna Bukara for their excellent presentation to the Advisory Council.

Appointment of new Assistant Principal

As Chair of the Advisory Council, I was a panel member for the recruitment process for the appointment of Luke Vine to the permanent role of Assistant Principal commencing in 2022. I wish him well in his role in the coming years and am sure that the whole school community will welcome him warmly and quickly make him feel part of this lovely connected and nurturing environment.

NSI School Climate Survey

In May 2021 parents, student and staff of St Helena's participated in the NSI Climate Survey. This survey is completed every two years and focuses on aspects of the school climate. The survey confirmed what we already knew - St Helena's is a great school for students, teachers and parents!

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

New Terms of Reference

Catholic Education Western Australia Limited (CEWA Ltd) came into effect on 1 January 2020. In 2021, the School Advisory Council (SAC) continued to operate under the existing constitution of the Board. The existing Catholic Education Commission WA (CECWA) Catholic School Board Constitution was reviewed by CECWA and will be implemented in 2022.

As a school, St Helena's has had opportunities during the year to engage in discussions around the new Terms of Engagement for an Advisory Council. Early in the year, two staff members from the CEWA team attended an Advisory Council meeting and presented details of the proposed operational changes. Then, in June, as Council Chair I attended the Catholic Schools Advisory Council Chair Conference during which participants heard updates about the proposed changes and provided feedback to CEWA in regard to the draft documents that were presented. The school has now received the new Terms of Reference for the operation of School Advisory Councils which will come into effect in January 2022.

Policy Review

As part of the Council's commitment to understanding their role under the new Terms of Reference, Lina has presented and reviewed with us the new QCE policies mandated by CEWA. So far this year, we have reviewed the Education Policy, Catholic Identity Policy and the Community Policy. This practice will continue in 2022. These policies are available for all members of the community to read. You will find links to all the policies on the school's website.

Advisory Council family friendly meetings

One last piece of information that might interest members of the community when thinking about how they might contribute to the school over the coming years is that every second Advisory Council meeting is now held online. This reflects the feedback about the success of online learning for students and staff during lockdown and the fact that the Microsoft platform offers a very simple solution for connecting online. It is also a very family friendly approach to engaging parents in important decision-making processes at the school.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Combined Advisory Council

Throughout 2021, the school and the Council have worked to continue strengthening the partnership with Holy Cross College. In August, St Helena's hosted the annual combined Advisory Council dinner. With the generous support of the leadership team of Holy Cross, it was held at their venue. Bec Delauney and her partners in crime did an amazing job to organise the night.

Fathering Project

In term 4, Joel Patterson, a representative from Whitford Catholic Primary School community, provided a presentation to the Council on the Fathering Project which has been successfully run by a group of fathers at their school over a number of years. He described the three key principles of the project as being to build meaningful relationships between child and father, building of networks for fathers and engaging experts to support dads to be better fathers and parents. The Advisory Council members were very impressed with the description of some of the outcomes of the Fathering Project in the Whitford community and a decision was made to explore the level of interest from the St Helena's school community in 2022.

SCHOOL FACILITIES AND OPERATIONS:

2022 School Fees

At our last meeting, the Advisory Council discussed the proposed School Fees for 2022. A 0% increase to all fees and charges except for Year 6 camp was endorsed by the Council for 2022. The Year 6 charges will increase to \$310 to cover the camp plus the iPad levy of \$265.

Building progress

As I am sure you will all be aware, Stage 7B of the St Helena Building plan is underway and progress has been good. This includes the extension and refurbishment of the Administration Block, the construction of reflection spaces, the relocation of the garden shed and construction of an additional toilet block, and the construction of a School Entry Statement with an intercom for security.

There have been some delays due to the non-availability of steel supplies, however, building is on track for completion by the end of Term 1, 2022. The Building Committee meets each fortnight with the construction company and the architects to monitor progress and deal with any issues.

It is with great excitement that we also announce that the school has been given approval to go ahead with Stage 8 of the building plan. The work will commence in 2022 and includes the construction of a new Music Room, a secure bike storage area and an amphitheatre.

Closing

In closing, I would like to thank the members of the Advisory Council and the school leadership team for their unfailing support over the last four years. This is my last year on the Council although I have agreed to continue as a member of the Building Committee until the current building project is complete. I have felt privileged to work for the school community and have loved the relationships and connections to the school that I have made. I wish the Advisory Council all the best for 2022 and feel sure that you will ably meet the challenges that come your way.