

Annual General Meeting

20th November, 2017

School Board Chair Report

A warm welcome to the 2017 St John's School AGM and I have pleasure in presenting the Board Chair report for the last school year.

The School Board has many roles but its primary role is to ensure the sound management of our school's finances, to provide support for the Principal, Mrs Bizzaca and our teachers to ensure they have the best resources available for the development of our wonderful students.

This year, the Board has been able to build further on the achievements of the past few years to continue to improve the facilities for the St John's School community.

Without doubt the most satisfying project that the Board was able to deliver on in 2017 was the completion of the new **Nature Playground in the Early Childhood Education area**.

I am sure that you will all agree that the finished product is simply stunning and is a wonderful enhancement to the school which not only provides a sensory experience for our youngest children in an exciting and stimulating environment, but also as a significant attraction for new families to St John's.

On behalf of the entire School community, I would like to thank one of our school parents, Adam Lange for his tireless commitment to the project, the wonderful people at Plan E & Landscape Elements, who designed and completed the construction of the playground. The time and effort and attention to detail they provided helped to create what I'm sure you all agree is just a fantastic outcome. A special mention of thanks to the project manager, **Nick Lindley** of all of his hard work and diligence in bringing everything together and also **Kevin Roberts** the site manager whose work ethic care and attention in completing the project was just fabulous.

I would also like to thank all teachers, staff, parents and students for their patience during the construction phase, there was some significant disruption at times but it was worth it.

The culmination of this project was held on 10 August with the official opening ceremony and a wonderful Blessing by Father Ben.

In 2017 the Board has also overseen the following improvements to the school's facilities:

A revamp and design change of the school website: to improve functionality and to enable better use on mobile devices.

Continued to implement the new 21st Century classroom furniture: implementing this into years 3 & 5 throughout the year. This also involved placing new carpet in the Yr 3 class, the 4th classroom to be recarpeted during the past two years.

Technology improvements: the school continues to embrace technology and has provided new laptops for teachers and has made significant future funding commitments to ensure the school keeps up to date with the latest advances in this area.

Establishment of a Capital development plan: The Board has embraced a capital development plan for the next 10 years in conjunction with CEWA and EIW Architects is taking shape. This will see some major capital works commenced to improve facilities and the Board is in the process of finalising the priorities and costings for this work to begin.

It is envisaged that the initial capital works as part of the Development plan will incorporate covering the area outside the current Pre-primary, Year 1 & Year 2 classrooms. Please feel free to look at the proposed changes which are available to be viewed at the AGM tonight.

New fencing on Lalor Street frontage – after some delays in getting council approval and thanks to Mrs Bizzaca’s persistence, we now have the building permit to commence work on installing a new wall and fence at the front of the school.

Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish Revitalisation project - the Board was also proud to be able to provide financial support to this wonderful project including making the school hall available for parish services during renovations. I am sure everyone would agree the fresh new look of the church is a fantastic outcome for the community and parishioners.

2017 Board

This year I had the opportunity to attend the Board Chair conference on 19 May. This conference focused on making board more effective, risk management showcasing the new technology platform LEADing lights that is being rolled out by CEOWA. This exciting new technology will significantly improve school administration and parent/student participation and communication.

Sadly, at the end of this year we are saying goodbye to our Treasurer, Mark Langridge who is leaving to devote more time to his business. Mark has been on the Board for 4 years, all as Treasurer, and has contributed immensely to the prudent and sound management of the school’s finances. The Treasurer’s role requires a significant time commitment, something Mark has done without question.

Thank you Mark for your passion and commitment to the Board and the role of Treasurer. Yours will be big shoes to fill but you leave with the knowledge that the school has a strong balance sheet for the future.

It is also with some sadness that this will be my last “official” function as Board Chair. I will be retiring at the end of the year as I have completed my 3 two year terms on the Board, with four of those years as Board Chair.

It has been a great privilege to serve the School over the past 6 years, I have been fortunate to have worked with many wonderful people who have devoted their time and expertise to ensuring a safe, happy and prosperous environment for our children to shine.

I am proud of what the Board and the school has been able to achieve during my time as a Board member and as Chair. I have no doubt that the current and new Board members will continue to provide sound management in the years ahead.

The school is great shape financially and with quality Board members, it is in very safe hands along with our Principal Mary Bizzaca and the wonderful teachers and staff who support her.

Including Mark, I would like to acknowledge the great work done by all of my fellow Board members in 2017, Julie Johnson, Ben Cohen, Sarah Waddell, Andrew Durkin as well as Wendy Hunt for her contribution on behalf of the P&F and Sue Harvey for the Parish Council.

Thank you also to Assistant Principal Ashlee De Campo for all her great input to the Board. Ashlee's knowledge of IT in particular and sourcing of different options in this area has been invaluable.

Thank you to the Executive and members of the P&F who continue to do wonderful work with fund raising and events, supporting the School and the Board with projects and their engagement with the school community.

Finally, a very big thank you from me to our Principal Mary Bizzaca for her continued support of the Board and especially me as Board Chair, particularly when I took on the role 4 years ago. I was a little "raw" when Mary first asked me to take on the role as Chair, but she provided some wonderful guidance during the early times and this allowed me to feel comfortable and grow into the role. Thank you, Mary.

So, another year is quickly coming to an end, they seem to fly by too quickly these days. At the end of next year, both my children Charlie and Olivia, who have been at the school since pre-primary and year one, will be at Sacred Heart college and yet it only seems like yesterday that started here at St Johns.

As my time on the Board finishes, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved with the St Johns community and wish all students, staff and parents a safe and joyous Christmas and a happy 2018.

John Donald
Board Chair