

St Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School

The Annual Meeting of the School Community Wednesday 23 November 2022

School Advisory Council Chairperson's Report

It is with the greatest of pleasure that I once again have the opportunity to present the annual report for 2022, on behalf of the whole school community of St Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School.

Janelle Prunster (Vice Chairperson), Craig Grantham (Finance Officer), Laura Hampson (Secretary), Stephenie Kunder (P & F Representative), Jacinta Lynton, Jevita Nilson and Father Dariusz (Darek) Krzyształowicz SDS joined the school's Leadership Group to begin 2022.

As always, there is something to appreciate at the beginning of each new school year and 2022 was no different. With the assistance of Mark Hughes, additional shading was added to the school grounds, primarily in the Senior Nature Play area and the Prayer Garden, recognising the importance of the safety and comfort of our children.

Further access to some of our buildings, providing additional space for the Psychologist and Music tutors was also facilitated – a range of instrumental tuition is now available, including acoustic and electric guitars, keyboards and drums.

And we welcomed 25 new families to our community, a wonderful endorsement of our marketing strategies and our growing reputation.

COVID did have an inevitable impact at the beginning of the year, with our first recorded cases amongst the community, however sensible protocols were implemented which minimised the disruptions and prevented further whole school closures. Despite isolations and class shutdowns, well managed processes allowed the education and learning of all unaffected students to continue.

It has been another eventful year, with the undertaking of two significant and overlapping reviews in June, focussing upon several aspects of school processes.

CEWA appointed leaders carried out a Cyclic Review of school procedures, examining the learning opportunities and experiences afforded to all members of the St Francis of Assisi Community. As part of this process, which took place over four days at the end of Semester 2, our school's improvement processes were investigated, which included the gathering of extensive data and feedback from staff, students, parents, SAC members and P&F members. Jason himself was a major focus within this review period – as is the case with any new Principal in his third year of leadership, formal evaluative procedures are conducted to establish the performance of the incumbent. The audit was extremely thorough – initial surveys were followed up with formal panel interviews. Several members of the SAC were invited to participate in one such interview to shed light on Jason's leadership, particularly regarding the Community Pillar of Catholic Education. Feedback from all stakeholders has been extremely positive and encouraging, such that Jason has been afforded a further 5-year contract as Principal at our school and I am confident that all stakeholders are delighted with this outcome.

As always, our children were thoroughly prepared for all Sacraments throughout the year - Reconciliation, First Eucharist in June and Confirmation in September. As highlighted last year, the Parish and Schools continued to adopt a more personal and collaborative approach to the Catholic Identity Pillar, taking responsibility for a specific Feast Day Mass. St Francis coordinated and prepared the Mayflower Mass in May to acknowledge the significant role that our Mother Mary has played throughout the life of the Church. The Sunday morning Mass was followed by a sausage sizzle event, provided by SFOA for the St Andrew's Community. We also continue to contribute towards Church ministries, providing an additional five new Altar Servers to their pool, with more on the way, whilst the Leadership Group maintain representation at monthly Pastoral Parish Council meetings, further cementing the relationship between school and Parish. And we are building positive relationships with IMCC – exchange of student visits between the schools has occurred throughout the year, including Reading Clubs, Cheerleading Workshops and Cooking Classes.

In order to facilitate the transition to high school, Year 6 students will have access to lockers from next term, alongside upgraded desks. And we await the first yield of crops from the recently established sustainable gardens, an opportunity for our students to develop their entrepreneurial skills.

With the removal of COVID restrictions to baseline settings, we have once again embraced the involvement of parents on school grounds and the return of events such as whole school gatherings, assemblies and Masses, and on behalf of the whole school community, I would like to thank the P & F for their tireless efforts throughout the year regarding this matter.

A Leadership Group can only function with the support of a hardworking and dedicated staff body and SFOA boasts one of the best. Our children are in the very safe and accomplished hands of gifted teaching and non-teaching professionals who continue to provide meaningful learning and enrichment opportunities on a daily basis. As parents and grandparents, we can rest assured that their future is receiving the best of foundations and on behalf of the SAC, I thank you all.

So, as 2022 concludes, we look forward to further developments both inside and outside of the classrooms. A major project for 2023 will be the installation of a shade structure encompassing additional sails which will provide much needed shade and a more comfortable environment throughout the few remaining exposed areas around the school. This will complement the existing shade infrastructure which currently protects our children, particularly throughout the summer months. Preparation for the construction of this shelter, which is destined for the space between the Years 1 and 2 blocks and the Years 3 and 4 blocks, is already underway and we anticipate that it will be completed by April.

I am confident that the 10% reduction in school fees announced at our last meeting will provide welcome relief in 2023, especially considering the current climate of financial challenges and the implementation of a significantly reduced IT Levy following a revised BYOD iPad model will also assist when budgeting next year.

As for now, I would like to wish you and your families a very happy, safe and blessed Christmas and a peaceful New Year. I thank you for your attendance this evening and for your continued support of our exceptional school community.

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Tony Summers

Date

School Advisory Council Chairperson