



Many Minds

One Heart

Our Lady of Lourdes School

Dardanup

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Our Lady of Lourdes School Board – P&F Annual Community Meeting 29 November 2016

Good evening everyone and thank you for your attendance at our Annual Community Meeting

Thank you for welcoming me to your community this year. It is a privilege to lead such a vibrant, supportive community. I thank God every day for the opportunity to work and grow with our staff, students and families.

2016 has been a very positive year at OLOL.

As part of our strategic planning, school goals have been based around the Catholic Education Strategic Direction of LEAD, which represents LEARNING, ENGAGEMENT, ACCOUNTABILITY and DISCIPLESHIP.

In our **Learning**, we have had a focus on the teaching of Maths, and working on improving our teaching across the school. We explored this through a professional learning day and regular learning community meetings. We held a maths day where students worked together on maths activities across the grades.

Our **Engagement** focus was to implement Keeping Safe – a Child Protection Curriculum, which was delivered for the first time this year. This curriculum aims to give students skills needed to be safe and to know how to deal with difficult situations if they were to arise in their lives. Also, part of our Engagement focus was to continue to strengthen our relationships with families. One way we achieved this was by improving our communication. We wrote a Social Networking Acceptable Use Policy and did a lot of research prior to starting our school managed Facebook page, which aims to communicate, remind, inform and celebrate. It also aims to meet our community in a way that reaches them daily. This has been positively received, as evidenced by the many 'likes' we receive for each post.

Our **Accountability** focus involved establishing an Information Technology plan. We improved and updated our technological equipment and arranged for regular IT support through the services of Perth ICT. To meet the needs of our school we purchased equipment to add to and upgrade our existing IT equipment. This included three interactive projection systems for our senior classrooms and 15 new Chrome books. These have added to our existing lab facilities and iPads currently in use and are providing flexibility for our students to select whatever device is best suited to the learning experience they are engaged in. This is helping to broaden their skills and prepare them for the world in which they will be living as they move through school and beyond.

In the **Discipleship** area, we re-wrote our Evangelisation plan, and continued to implement the Making Jesus Real program. This is a program with a message, where students strive to make Jesus real to all they meet in the ways they act towards others. We try to notice the spirit of Jesus

in people when they do kind things, and we focus on positive actions, celebrating MJR stars twice a term at an assembly. This program is linked to our school values.

After more than 10 years with a focus on Library and Sport as specialist learning areas, there will be a new focus in 2017 on History and Science.

During 2016, an assessment was made of where the school has its current focus, the current operational and educational needs and the future direction for OLOL, based on strategic planning, our Annual School Improvement Plan, CEWA's focus on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) and a school-based focus on sustainability and our waste/water wise curriculum. Digital Technologies in the WA Curriculum need to be integrated into all learning areas. This is why History will be a specialist area, as it is an area the specialist teacher can cover, using the library and computer resources. One teacher covering History across the school will be able to view the scope and sequence of the learning area and plan according to the requirements for each year level. The specialist teacher will complete assessments and take responsibility for reporting in this area.

Instead of Sport, which will be covered by each classroom teacher, the specialist area will be Science. This is the focus for the school and the area of need moving forward, as a whole school approach. A specialist teacher will coordinate Science across the school, utilising resources effectively, maintaining science displays to support the learning, and engage and excite students about this learning area. After advertising for a Science specialist teacher, Kath Heelen was appointed to take on this role.

Earlier in the year we said goodbye to Lynda Ursino after more than 23 years of dedicated service, and Colleen Lewis, who supported students in their learning for 17 years. We appreciate their contribution to our school. With the change in specialist areas for 2017, we thank and farewell Otto VanKampen for his many years of service at OLOL as sport teacher. Haylea Harris left us in Term 1 to have her second baby, and Abbey Thomson left in Term 2 to have her third baby. Abbey Thomson joined us as an Education Assistant during the year, and will move to Perth to further her career next year. Ros Ruland joined us for a while this year supporting a student in Year 3. We thank all these staff members for their dedication to OLOL.

Sacramental programs were highlights during the year, with 14 students receiving Jesus in the Eucharist for the first time, 19 students being confirmed in their faith, and 26 students having their first Reconciliation just a few weeks ago. Parents committed to working with the school and Parish as part of the preparation, with an enrolment Mass, home program, parent meetings and a parent/child workshop leading up to the celebration of each Sacrament.

Camps were also highlights for our students this year, with Year 6 students at Ern Halliday recreation camp, and Year 5 students at Margaret River for their surfing camp. The Year 6 camp was a different format this year, with on-site based activities including abseiling, caving, high ropes, orienteering and other challenging activities. The Year 5 surfing camp, with close links to our MJR program was introduced this year, and successfully achieved its aims of providing students with an opportunity to be challenged out of their comfort zone, achieve success at a new skill, and celebrate their own success and the success of others.

Our P&F Association had another very successful year. They continue to engage in fundraising and community building activities. They supported our camps, provided funds for teacher and classroom resources and had a special project this year to purchase our new stage blocks that

have enhanced our assembly performances and other activities in our school hall. They were successful in securing a Shire of Dardanup grant which enabled us to add to the stage blocks already purchased, providing extra flexibility for all our performances and activities. The P&F have committed \$5000 towards the establishment of a nature play space on our school oval. They also have the foresight to continue to contribute towards the purchase of the block of land next door to our school for future growth. By committing \$5000 towards paying off this loan, the committee are showing their commitment to the future of our school. Although the block may not be developed while our current students are at school, we recognise that the forward thinking of past P&F committees to provide for the future has enabled us to have the benefit of the amazing facilities and resources we enjoy today.

Our school board continued to oversee the financial management of our school and worked on several projects over the course of the year. One project was to explore a new school entry statement sign. A design was developed and this has now been approved by the Shire and construction will hopefully occur during January. The entry statement will incorporate recycled red bricks, as a link to the Thomas Little Hall and original school building, as well as timber fence posts as a link to the local farming area that surrounds our school. Another project was to create and provide some public art in our school. A stunning mural has been created, designed by Nicole Johnson, supported by Gillian Brady, with the assistance of our senior students and will be displayed in our undercover area. This is a bright new feature that celebrates our school values. Our existing sound system has had some components replaced, and the Pre-Primary storage area will be upgraded and improved in the coming weeks. There will be some changes to the Resource Room to facilitate Science as a specialist learning area for 2017.

We have had many community building events this year that were very well attended. Examples include our Welcome Sundowner, Mother's Day Mass, class Masses and Liturgies, sports carnivals, Open Morning and Fun Run. The students appreciate parents and grandparents attending to show their interest, and as a bonus we can build up our supportive community.

Our school website continues to be maintained as an up-to-date method of communicating and promoting our school. The website, together with our fortnightly newsletter, school managed Facebook page, newspaper articles and regular contributions to the Dardy Times are all ways we keep people informed about our school priorities, successes and events.

A re-vamp of parking around the school for the safety of our students has seen the Prayer House car park properly marked and designated as 'Staff Only' parking. Also, the introduction of a morning 'Kiss and Drop' zone has reduced the congestion in the main school car park for families.

We will start 2017 with 224 students, ten more than we started with in 2016.

We plan to have a focus next year on 'STEM', as already mentioned. Research is showing that some of the careers our students will have don't exist yet. With information being so readily available, the focus is less on learning content, but more on developing skills, collaboration and innovation to prepare students for the world in which they live.

We will also focus on making learning intentions explicit, and Literacy Dedicated Time.

Next year will see teachers continue to learn more about integrating the use of technology into lessons. We will also focus on implementing our Evangelisation Plan and continuing with our MJR program.

We thank all our volunteers who have supported our school this year in many ways whether it be by classroom help, excursions, sporting events, Canteen, Book club, Uniform shop, P&F, School

Board, Nature play committee and Kindy Cafe to name a few. We sincerely thank all our volunteers because it is their contribution to the life at OLOL that makes our school the wonderful place that it is.

I thank all our hardworking and dedicated staff who always go 'above and beyond' in the care and education of our students. Your work is greatly appreciated. Educational researcher, John Hattie, writes that the greatest influence on student achievement that we can have an effect on in schools is the teacher. Thank you for making a difference.

I would like to extend my thanks to Leanne Depiazzi for her patience with me this year, and her dedicated hard work, in a year that has been a huge learning curve for both of us. I would also like to thank my Assistant Principals, Natalie Dillon and Jenny Maslin for their attention to detail, hard work and support this year.

Most importantly I would like to thank our students. They are the reason we are all here. It is through our students that life and joy are evident in our school. I thank each student for making our school such a welcoming happy place of learning. I thank the school community for entrusting me with leading such a dynamic community. I wish you all a festive season filled with family and friends, happy holidays, safe travel, time to recharge and refresh and I look forward to seeing everyone back at OLOL in 2017. Thank you.

Angela Hegney
Principal