

MOTHER TERESA CATHOLIC COLLEGE BALDIVIS
PRINCIPAL'S REPORT TO THE ANNUAL COLLEGE COMMUNITY MEETING
22 NOVEMBER 2016

Madam Chairperson, College Board-members, Parents and Staff

I'd like to begin by acknowledging the Wadjuk Nungar people and paying my deep respect to their Elders, past, present and future, and acknowledge their ongoing spiritual connection to this Country – and to this land on which Mother Teresa Catholic College now stands.

Firstly, thank you for being here tonight. Your presence here at our College Community Meeting bears witness to your real commitment to our Catholic College. Without your support our students simply would not flourish.

Tonight is about recalling and celebrating our third year in this rapidly growing community, noting this point at which we have arrived on our learning journey, and setting our priorities for next year.

THIS YEAR!

2016 has seen us enjoy the completed primary facilities, culminating a few weeks ago in the official Blessing and Opening ceremony – a joyous occasion acknowledged in the days following by messages of congratulations from many of the invited guests. Our talented and dedicated architects have designed multi-award-winning buildings for us including the CEFPI Australasian Region Education Award 2014 and The Australian Institute of Architects Public Buildings Award 2014 – both for Stage 1 – and the Australian Institute of Architects Hillson Beasley Award for the Best Education Project for 2016 (for the complete primary section – Stages 1 and 2). Like all successful ventures, the capital development of Mother Teresa Catholic College has been and continues to be a team effort – a team of people who communicate and work very well together to follow very detailed and robust plans and procedures and to meet inevitable challenges as they arise. Just this morning I was informed that the tender process for Stages 3 and 3A (2017 & 2018 build) was to open at 2:30pm today, with the Quantity Surveyor's pre-tender costing of \$32,545,378 being a mere 14 cents above the CEWA-approved project costing of \$32,545,377.86!!

More important than the buildings of a Catholic College are our students and what happens for them during their time here. What our College staff and families do and achieve by working together for our students is what really makes our vibrant learning community. For everyone here, Learning is the work!

Our curriculum and the delivery of learning and teaching has been enriched by a full calendar of special events and experiences spanning across all developmental aspects of each student – spiritual, social, emotional, intellectual and physical – and including events for staff and parents to support student learning and development. In addition to the weekly Assemblies, Class Liturgies and morning-teas, staff meetings, daily prayer-times, literacy, numeracy and Walker Inquiry Learning sessions, specialist classes in Indonesian, Music/Drama and Physical Education and Dance, Reading Recovery and small groupwork in Literacy (Levelled Literacy Intervention) and Numeracy (Extending Mathematical Understandings) - special happenings which have impacted on our students this year have included – Parent-teacher information evening and interviews, 123 Magic and Emotion Coaching course and sundowners for Kindy and other parents new to MTCC this year, the Staff Commissioning Mass, the Holy Week liturgies, First Reconciliation and Eucharist family meetings and retreat days, Anzac

Assembly, Athletics Carnival, Remembrance Day Service prepared by our students from Defence families, various incursions for the whole school and for individual year-levels, class excursions related to current learning, Pyjama Day Life-Link, Caritas and Socktober fundraisers for charities, Whole-Staff Professional Learning and Regional Staff Meetings, Book Week Parade, Baldivis Library visits, Walkathon Fund-raiser, Swimming lessons, next week's Orientation & Move-up Day and the Nativity Play and Community Christmas Picnic to be celebrated on Friday 2 December here at MTCC oval when, at the request of our local members in both our State and Australian Governments, we will host the wider community of Baldivis (expected 1,000 people). We have also been fortunate to have been selected along with 8 other schools (Government, Catholic and Independent) to be involved in "Towards Transforming Learning" an Apple initiative which has supported onsite fortnightly coaching of five classroom teachers up till October this year.

This broad spectrum of learning and teaching experiences is increasing our students' capacity, even from their early years of schooling, to ultimately contribute with confidence, courage and creativity towards making the world a better place for all peoples. To equip our students for their working lives, we work to provide a learning environment in which they will problem solve, develop creative and critical thinking, collaborate, communicate and negotiate, and develop intellectual curiosity. To achieve these skills our learners need to be independent self-starters who are responsible, flexible about learning and able to adapt to change. 'Creativity', 'Communication' and 'Community' continue to be our '3Cs' here at Mother Teresa Catholic College. Learning is no longer preparation for the job – Learning IS the job.

SO WHAT LIES AHEAD IN 2017?

We are continuing to develop according to our Strategic Plan in effect from 2015-2017. The main features articulated in this plan are the Vision, Mission and Values we espouse here at Mother Teresa's, along with the set targets for growth in Learning, Engagement, Accountability and Discipleship as well as strategies to achieve those targets over the life of the plan. The strategies include the implementation of five whole-school initiatives to address the spiritual, social, emotional, intellectual and physical development of our students: the 'Making Jesus Real' framework, Inquiry Learning a la the Walker Learning Approach, the KidsMatter framework (promoting positive well-being), Information & Communication Technology for 21st century learning, and the 'Waste-Wise' sustainability initiative which has seen us this week receive notification of our accreditation at the entry level as a 'Waste-Wise School, attracting \$2,000 set-up funding. Next year we will work towards achieving the next level of accreditation, which will qualify us for a larger grant towards embedding sustainability into our daily living and learning here at the College. Each staff-member has chosen to belong to one of the steering committees driving each of these five pillars and this practice will continue next year to include our new staff for 2017.

Just as the crux of teaching may be simply described as knowing WHAT to teach and HOW to teach it, so the lynchpin of a flourishing community is both WHAT that community does and HOW that community does it. Consequently earlier this year our staff elected five members to form a School Improvement Team, focusing on leading the whole staff in processes to explore and examine our culture – HOW we behave and relate to one another and to our students and families. Our current elected School Improvement Team will continue to operate through next year, and given that twelve

new staff-members will join us for 2017, building staff capacity in this way is crucial to our continuing development and improvement as a learning community.

So who are the staff-members who, through their various roles, will be facilitating these whole-school initiatives for our students in 2017. *(Refer to full 2017 Staff List distributed to AGCM attendees)*

Early next year an external provider will facilitate assessments of all Year 4 and 5 students to identify any students who are Gifted and/or Talented. In early March all Year 3 students will undergo different assessments facilitated by the same external facilitator to identify children who may demonstrate indications of being Gifted and/or Talented. Identified children will then be invited to participate one morning per week in a multi-age Enrichment Program.

We will offer a 3-year-old Kindergarten class on Tuesdays when we become officially registered, hopefully notification will be received any day now.

Individual/small group tuition in piano, keyboard and guitar on a user-pays basis by negotiation between parents who wish their children to undertake this tuition and the tutors will be available again in 2017.

Also continuing in 2017 will be our recent initiative (since the beginning of this month) of weekly involvement in a Story Dog program. Some of our Year 3 students are already experiencing 15-minute sessions on Tuesday mornings reading to Poppy, a specially trained Labrador, who is brought to school by her trainer. There are two more dogs currently completing their training to join the program here at MTCC from the beginning of next year and it is planned that they will help some of our Year 2 students to increase their involvement in and love of reading.

Of course throughout next year our students will be aware of further building works happening further up the block, and will again have the opportunity to see first-hand how the rammed earth blocks are made. The current northern fenced boundary of the property will remain in place throughout the next two years.

Enrolment interviews for our first Year 7 students will begin in earnest from the commencement of 2017. Our first secondary school cohort can look forward to a stimulating year in 2018 in a brand new learning environment. In addition to the core learning areas of English, Mathematics, Science and Technology the curriculum experienced by our first Year 7 classes will also include integrated, challenge-based inquiry learning – as a natural development and deeper progression from the inquiry-learning sessions experienced in their primary years here at MTCC. From the start our Year Sevens will be able to experience a comprehensive elective program in Music, Drama, Dance, Textiles, Food Technology, Art, and Design and Technology in purpose-built, well-equipped facilities. Indonesian will continue as the foreign language, with the possibility of an additional language being offered in 2019. Technology will be integrated across the curriculum through the one-to-one iPads and Apple TVs throughout the Years 7-9 middle years of schooling.

FAREWELLS AND THANKS

This year we have already farewelled temporarily two staffmembers – Aisling Keaney (Yr 4B) and Kim Rosario (Indonesian) – while they take Parental Leave. At the end of this year we will also farewell Tameka Slomp (KB EA) on Parental Leave, Michelle Farcich who will return next year to her seconded position as Finance Officer at St Damien's Dawesville, Janelle Saffrey (Special Needs Education

Assistant), Megan Waters (Yr 4B Replacement Teacher). On behalf of the whole MTCC community I thank you for your generous and dedicated service to our students and their families – and wish you every success in your chosen endeavours, whether they be birthing and nurturing new little persons or serving other communities in other ways in other places.

Sadly, we also have a foundation member of MTCC who is retiring from a long and lustrous career in Early Childhood, where she has started thousands of children on their learning journey and introduced them the wonderful world of curiosity, excitement, joy and love of learning. Anita Grimminck, you will be sadly missed. You take with you, not only a life spent moulding the characters of our little ones, but also memories in our foundation school of close to 40 hours straight of gathering, loading and carting furniture, resources and all sorts of amazing classroom resources back and forth in a big truck from a disused school in Caversham to Baldivis in our first few months. Thank you for getting us up and running towards a sustainable learning environment as convenor of our Waste-Wise pillar. Please think of us as you join the grey/blond nomads club – and make sure you drop in to check on us whenever you're motoring by. Anita – thank you. You will be sadly missed!

While earlier I have recorded some of the significant happenings for our students this year, there have been a significant bunch of events which have been initiated and organized by the adults in our community: - Monthly meetings open to all parents and carers, Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day stalls, Book Fair, Scholastic Book Club, Class Parent Representatives, After-school Netball, AusKick and Soccer coaching, School Banking, sausage sizzles, disco, Quiz Night, morning-teas, Feast-Day mini-fete, walkathon and athletics carnival assistance, fundraising, Easter Raffle, Library book covering, in-class help and nature-playground duty. All these happenings and more have been driven and led by an enthusiastic and generous Executive of Mother Teresa Catholic College Parents and Friends Association. Heartfelt thanks to Mrs Melissa Osborne (President), Caroline Sampson, Sara McCabe, Kaelee Edwards and their wonderful and extensive band of parent-helpers through the many and various P&F initiatives over the year. Thanks also to the Sports Committee and the Garden Committee, sub-groups of our wonderful parents and friends. Both of these committees have worked hard and successfully to provide extra-curricular sporting opportunities and to develop a fantastic sustainability learning centre (for chooks, fish, vegetables, worms and lots of kids) – two fabulous initiatives which enhance the lives and learning for all our students.

Another group of people whom I am privileged to thank is the inaugural Mother Teresa Catholic College Board. Our Parish Priest Fr Geoff has continued to support the college in many ways including serving as an Ex-Officio member of the College Board, celebrating class and college liturgies with us, meeting and visiting current and prospective college families and attending college assemblies and events. The sharing of facilities between the Parish and the College, and provision of the Covered Area for weekend parish Masses and Sacramental Celebrations make for a mutually beneficial relationship between parish and college. Mr Bryan Evans, the Parish Representative on our Board and the Chair of the Parish Pastoral Council, has been journeying with us since the Interim Board of what was then Baldivis Catholic Primary School was convened in September 2012. Tonight we farewell four Board-members who are stepping down from Boardmembership at the end of their two-year term: -

Elena Radomiljac, an original Baldivis parishioner, has also been a Board member since September 2012 – first of the Interim Board of Baldivis Catholic Primary School and then of Mother Teresa Catholic

Primary School – and now as Inaugural Boardmember of Mother Teresa Catholic College. Thank you Elena!

Mark Aurisch and Rosanne Cross have been members for the last two years of our Inaugural College Board and have contributed significantly at Board level in these early years of establishment of our college – Mark in the area of organizing Cleaning contracts and drafting Ongoing Maintenance Plans, and Rosanne sharing the task of Minute Secretary at Board meetings. Thank you Mark and Rosanne!

Alison Romagnolo has been an early member of the Interim Board since February 2013. She then assumed the Chairperson's role when the then Catholic Education WA-appointed Chairperson went to Christmas Island as Principal responsible for the schooling experience provided by CEWA for the refugee children. Alison was then appointed unopposed as the Chairperson of the inaugural Mother Teresa Catholic College Board in 2015. She is standing down now because she has accepted a teaching position at the College from the beginning of 2017. In thanking you Alison for your generous service and exceptional membership and leadership of the College Board in what have been four very busy, fruitful and successful establishment years of our now flourishing college. Thank you!

Please join me now in our sincere acknowledgement and thanks to the four retiring Board-members who after this current term of service of our College community, are vacating their positions: Alison, Elena, Mark and Rosanne, I please come forward to accept a small token of our appreciation for all your great work on the Board of MTCC.

My heartfelt thanks to all staff-members who have given generously and tirelessly of their time and talents well beyond the call of duty to the students and families of our college throughout this year. What we are on about together is best described, I think, in these often-quoted words of T.S. Eliot:

We shall not cease from exploration

And the end of all our exploring

Will be to arrive where we started

And know the place for the first time!

I am so proud to have you as my colleagues! So proud to be on this Mother Teresa Catholic College journey with you! Thank you all!

Special thanks to the Assistant Principals, Janine Moore and Alan Morrison. Your contributions to our Leadership Team, to the day-to-day running of the school and to the wellbeing of all community-members have been pure gift to me as principal and to the whole college community.

Of course, no school can operate without a welcoming and efficient administrative staff – the glue that holds all of us, parents, staff and students, together – the face of Mother Teresa's. Thank you to Raelene Ritikis, Jane Pastore, Sue Quigg and for our seconded Bursar for this semester, Michelle Farcich –Thank you!

In February 2014, Mother Teresa Catholic School opened its gates for the first time to 113 children from Kindy to Yr 2 in 5 class groups with a total staff of 13 (head-count).

In February 2015 there were 201 children enrolled at the school from Kindy to Yr 3 in 7 class groups with a total staff of 19 (head-count). We're finishing this our third year with a student population of 328 students and 3 staff-members. Next year we are expecting to have a student enrolment of 440 and a staff of 43.

It is our collective responsibility to be welcoming and to take care to disseminate information anew without assuming that the new families and staff will just 'know' how we go about College life and learning here.

Our college families continue to come from all over the world, reflective of the wider Baldivis community.

We welcome and celebrate difference! We follow the example of our patron Saint, Mother Teresa - knowing that by embracing difference and reaching out to others in love and service we can ourselves grow in our understanding of what we all share as human beings – the need to be accepted and respected for the persons we are – different yet the same – citizens of our one world – fellow-travellers towards our common destiny – life with God. Mother Teresa's legacy to us is the compelling example of a life lived in the service and love of others – making the world a better place for all. Inspired by our patron's charism, Mother Teresa Catholic College is truly a place where all in our community are challenged to connect with learning about ourselves, one another and the wider world in order to contribute with confidence, courage and creativity to making our world a better place for all.

Geri O'Keefe (PRINCIPAL)