

# PRINCIPAL'S REPORT TO SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL & PARENT'S AND FRIEND'S ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

8<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2009

I am pleased to provide this report to the St Michael's School Community detailing the 2009 school year.

Always when reviewing our progress as a school, it is essential that we are aware of and united in our school vision. As a staff we frequently review our vision and endeavour to be true to it with every decision we make as a school community...

*Alive to the urgings of the Spirit  
guided by our faith and our traditions,*

St Michael's Parish Primary School ...  
**Reflects the human face of Jesus, to the children in our care,  
In an environment of faith, hope and love.**

***Faith – that is celebrated and will sustain us through life's challenges.***

Hope – that by our work, we will reach our own potential –  
academic, spiritual, physical, emotional and social.

**Love – that will liberate us to be compassionate and committed to the  
service of others**

*My report will be presented under the five spheres of School Improvement identified by the Catholic Education Office Melbourne.*

## **School Community**

This year we had an enrolment of 229 students. The total number of families in 2009 was 141 with the gender balance being 105 girls and 124 boys. The August 2005 census figure of 148 indicates a population increase of 81 students in 4 years. As identified in previous years, the changing demographics of our catchment area may be reflected in the growing school population. Correlation with the number of baptisms in the parish indicate that Prep enrolments may be around 30 - 40 for the next five years. We expect that the school population will stabilise at around 260 in 2010.

We identify ourselves as a community of learners where all students are personally known, encouraged and challenged by a dedicated, caring staff. In 2009 we have 10 classes, 2 preps, 3 x 1/2, 3 x 3/4, and 5 & 5/6, with an average class size of 23. Today we have 6 students receiving Literacy, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs (LNSLN) funding. There have been 31 students referred to the SWB Core group, by classroom teachers in 2009.

Currently we have 10 families receiving the Educational Maintenance Allowance. In the sphere of **Community** I believe St Michael's Parish School experiences extraordinary success.

Our school has an outstanding parent community who seek every opportunity to participate in the life of the school through the classroom helpers program, a vigorous Parent and Friends Association and School Advisory Board and numerous other school activities.

We actively welcome the presence of parents:

- in the classrooms this is evidenced by the high number of classroom helpers each week;
- at school enhancement sessions where 67 families attended one or more of the 7 school enhancement sessions in 2009;
- participating on committees and celebrating the social life of our community through various fundraising activities.
- There are strong links to the parish through involvement in liturgies, sacramental program and numerous community events like the Mother's Day breakfast.
- Three Open Days were held in 2009 and were well attended by old and new families in the area.

- Art, Music & Story time sessions for pre schoolers advertised through local kinders and making contact to new families through Mini Micks.
- Our stall at the Ashburton Festival, organised by the SAC was a huge success and an avenue for community attention.
- The St Michael's Parish Council have actively demonstrated their interest in the welfare of our school. through participation in PFA events and offering to support us in any way they can.
- Healthy Community initiatives continued including: the Walking School Bus; scheduling of monthly Walk to School days; healthy lunchbox information sessions with the dietician from Booroondara Council; a school Walkathon as a healthy fundraising alternative; continued links with the YMCA; compliance with Go For Your Life Award status.
- Extra curricular activities were conducted such as: Running club, Art Club, Chess Club, Library open at lunchtime, park visits, the school choir.
- Grandparents and Special Friends Mass on June 19<sup>th</sup> joining the school community in celebrating.
- Classroom Helpers Training sessions were held in Term 2.
- Participation in the Festival for Healthy Living in Term 1.
- PFA functions: Mother's Day Breakfast, Moroccan Night, School Disco, BBQ's at, Vintage Cellars, School Enhancement Mornings, Book Fair

### **Education in Faith**

We firmly believe that Catholic school communities like ours – teachers, staff, parents – are most effective when the community works together to educate the whole child emotionally, academically, socially and spiritually.

We want our school to be a place where the teachings of Jesus are transmitted, not only through the provision of a well planned and systematic curriculum, but through the sincere and interpersonal relationships that are nurtured and developed between all members of the parish.

Evidence of achievements in Education in Faith:

- Regular Professional Learning Team meetings continue to contribute to staff professional growth.
- As part of the National Chaplaincy Program children have experienced regular Christian Meditation opportunities.
- The staff has plan and implement challenging activities that enable students to engage in Faith and Life by integrating Religious Education with all curriculum areas.
- The Parish Priest and Religious Education Leader meet regularly and the Religious Education Leader is a member of the Parish Sacramental team.
- Participated in Caritas Australia projects: buying cows for villagers in Africa, participating in Stand Up Day to raise awareness of the millennium goals, participating in the 'Knit-a-square' project.
- Opportunity for each class to celebrate with the parish at weekend mass; School masses through the year, Mission week and liturgy, class prayer and reflection, Pentecost expo evening etc.

### **Learning & Teaching**

The staff value Professional Learning and the learning journey is articulated in all we do. In our curriculum we place strong emphasis on team planning and whole school inquiry.

We endeavour to improve teacher knowledge and performance based on the belief that teachers make a significant difference to student achievement.

That student achievement is improved by a positive, stimulating learning environment and that we are a community of co-learners student, staff and parents learning together.

Evidence of achievements in Learning & Teaching:

- Students were given opportunities to 'add value' to their achievement both within curriculum and from extra-curricular activities. Examples include: Premiers Reading Challenge, G.A.T.E.W.A.Y.S, Interschool sports, Walkathon, Australian Maths Competition, excursions, camps, subject specific competitions, etc.

- Reported against Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) in Maths, English, Interpersonal Skills, Health and Physical Education, The Arts, Personal Learning, Thinking and ITC.
- Prep students at St Michael's have exceeded all schools benchmarks in the past two years.
- NAPLAN data shows St Michael's above state and well above National averages in all areas.
- Staff participated in Australian Government Quality Teaching Projects this year – Developing Inquiring Minds and Visual Literacy's.

## **Student Wellbeing**

Evidence of achievements in Student Well Being:

- Participation in Student Action Team Project.
- Popularity of Parent Support Library.
- Student Well Being as an agenda item at every staff meeting.
- Provided opportunities for all students to be involved in class and school organisation.
- Published Parental education tips in newsletter.
- Students have input into the routines and structure of school through participation in class meetings and the SRC.
- Buddy Programs.

## **Leadership & Management**

Staffing

My role as principal is to oversee the daily running of the school – I am fortunate to be supported by a wonderfully, dedicated staff.

We began the year with three new staff members: Clare Hicks, Frank Cotela and Geraldine Esmore. Dian Faulisi requested a years leave without pay due to health reasons and has since resigned – all other staff from 2008 were retained at the beginning of 2009. Through the year our Religious Education Leader Lousie Harris was appointed to a position at the Catholic Education Office and Loiuse Kilndworth took maternity leave.

The leadership team of John Sandy, Clare Hicks, Kerrin van Mourik, Annie Engellenner & Frank Cotela have been a great support to me this year.

## **Fees and Levies**

This year the school accountant, Joe Brick reviewed the school budget each month and presented to myself a summary and action required to maintain budgeted expenditure. Many thanks to our accountant Joe and to Kathy Muhllechner who have done an outstanding job with all financial matters. The school budget is presented and reviewed by the Parish Finance Committee quarterly. SAC reviews financial accounts in August as part of our rolling agenda.

Based on this year's figures, it is expected the fee collection rate to remain at **93%** for the following year. The accountant is satisfied with the school account figures.

The Parents and Friends Committee led by President Mandy Passmore has once again done an outstanding job in organising social and fundraising activities within our school. The regular meetings were always well attended. We are fortunate to have such a hardworking, generous and organised committee. This year PFA have funded:

- new classroom furniture for twoclasses to begin 2009 with.
- Interactive whiteboards for 5 classrooms to begin 2009 with.
- Fence adjoining our neighbours property
- Replacement of shade cloth

I thank you all for your practical help, suggestions, positive ideas and support in all areas of school life.

The School Advisory Council led by Michael Foldi has had another fruitful year. The discussions and policy development held at every meeting were very helpful in setting direction for our school. The input, constructive dialogue and vision of the SAC has I believe benefited the whole school community. I value your support, advice, questions and input.

I wish to thank you the parent community for the support you have given me a principal for without your support my job would be impossible.

Fr Hien I thank you for the manner in which you have involved yourself in our school community this year. Your friendly and approachable manner has been valued and appreciated by the entire school community. We are very lucky to have a priest who is so available and so open to working with us.

The children at St Michael's are why we are here. They enthusiastically enter into all parts of school life and inspire us everyday.

I look forward to working with you in 2010.