



## **PRINCIPAL'S REPORT FOR MATER DEI SCHOOL COMMUNITY – NOVEMBER 2014**

It is with pleasure that I present this report for 2014. At this stage of each year we review and report against our Strategic Renewal Plan that was developed in 2012. This plan guides our activities for a 5 year period to the end of 2016. This plan was developed under the guidance of a special taskforce with members representing staff, School Board and P&F. It was prepared in conjunction with BCE's new 2012-2016 plan for the Archdiocese, and in consultation with the school community.

The plan is designed around four broad strategic priorities for school development through 2012-2016. From this plan, we detail our annual action items for the year and it is in this context that I present my report. There are many other ongoing programs, activities and events that contribute to, and shape the very nature of Mater Dei, and we also acknowledge and thank the many people responsible for these continuous areas of work.

### **Priority 1:**

#### **Mission and Religious Education**

**Mater Dei is a parish Catholic school where we will endeavour in partnership with parents to foster a Catholic Identity and Faith Community true to the Gospel Values of Jesus our teacher and mentor.**

Therefore we intend to:

- nurture the Faith and Spirituality of staff, students and community members as they grow in the love of God.
- further develop Social Justice and Mission programs to put our beliefs into action.
- integrate a contemporary religious education curriculum that supports the mission and vision of our school community.

<b>Goals 2014</b>	<b>Strategies 2014</b>
To consolidate teachers understanding of the new RE curriculum and facilitate more competent use of the documents.	Extra planning time allocated for the development of a whole school scope and sequence for the Religious Education Curriculum.

	<p>Significant professional development undertaken in the area of Judaism and 3 Worlds of the Text with Beth Nolan (BCE Consultant) to support teachers' background knowledge and inform planning.</p> <p>Promotion of digital resources through regular updates by APRE to teachers via portal and connection with the Global Learning Centre.</p> <p>System- wide focus on Religious Education for the purpose of interschool moderation.</p>
<p>Nurture the spirituality of staff through participation in the Catching Fire program.</p>	<p>Dedicated staff time for spiritual formation and reflection with a focus on the capacity of presence and gratitude.</p> <p>We began the journey of spiritual formation of staff through the Catching Fire programme.</p> <p>Further developed ways of praying during staff prayer time.</p>

I would like to acknowledge the significant contribution and thank Fr Tuong for the caring manner in which he continues to nurture our parish and school community. He has been actively involved in the school since his appointment as parish priest at Mater Dei in August 2011. We thank him for his input into the liturgical program at our school and for his humble leadership of all at Mater Dei. I would also like to acknowledge the significant contribution our acting APRE, Rosie Harrison, has made to the religious life of our school and the leadership provided in the development of our RE Curriculum Scope and Sequence overview in collaboration with the teaching staff. Thank you too, to the teaching staff involved in the spiritual formation programs this year – Rosie Harrison, Louise Scott, Julie Towler and Sherryl Shaddock.

**Priority 2:**

**Learning and Teaching**

**Mater Dei is a community committed to providing quality inclusive learning and teaching for all. We aim to provide learning that is personalised, active and interactive. As a result of this, we hope to develop successful, creative, confident and informed learners who will shape and enrich our world.**

Therefore we intend to:

- Continue to implement the Australian Curriculum within the context of the BCE learning framework catering for the specific and diverse needs of our student population in an environment which nurtures, challenges and supports skills for life - long learning.
- Implement a holistic and accessible pastoral care program relevant to our school community needs and appropriate to the changing structure of schooling.
- Support staff and students in the ongoing acquisition of skills and pursuit of excellence in the use and application of Information and Communication Technology.
- Implement current curricula based on best teaching practice that is data-informed and evidence –based.

<b>Goals 2014</b>	<b>Strategies 2014</b>
<p>Introduce and develop an understanding of Geography – Australian Curriculum</p>	<p>Significant Geography curriculum development and resourcing with external presenters.</p> <p>Provisioning of access to Curriculum to Classroom from Education Queensland.</p> <p>Supporting planning through the provision of a template.</p> <p>System wide focus on Geography for the purpose of interschool moderation.</p>
<p>Develop a vision for learning (What does a good learner look like) including a shared understanding of effective pedagogical practices through the use of learning intentions, success criteria and effective feedback.</p>	<p>Published and distributed the Characteristics of an Effective Learner at Mater Dei and promoted with staff, students and parents.</p> <p>Introduction of student awards at assembly to reflect the characteristics of an effective learner.</p> <p>Combined professional development day with numerous schools to develop a shared understanding of Visible Learning principles.</p> <p>Teachers set individual Visible Learning goals as part of goal setting process with Principal.</p>

	<p>Scheduled check in and sharing of practice by teachers in relation to Visible Learning strategies embedded in classrooms.</p> <p>Introduction to the Business Intelligence tool with the intent of further analysis of this data to inform planning.</p> <p>In a range of curriculum areas, teachers have begun to identify and use learning intentions and success criteria.</p> <p>Increased support in the area of planning for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) including development of specific strategies and class based adjustments with regular review of these.</p>
<p>Familiarize school staff with the Disability Standards to promote ownership of inclusion of children with a disability in their classroom</p>	<p>Term 2 one twilight and one staff meeting lead by Dave Greig (PEO Learning and Teaching Services) to familiarize staff with the updated National Disability Standards in relation to education.</p>
<p>Further develop and embed the language of Play is the Way in the culture of the school.</p>	<p>Ongoing focus on professional development for teachers and parents with Wilson McCaskill, author of 'Play is the Way'.</p> <p>Dedicated time allocated for professional reading at the commencement of staff meetings.</p> <p>Continuation of allocated time for teachers to teach peers specific games.</p>

I would like to acknowledge and thank Jacky Dittmar for her work as Curriculum Support Teacher. Jacky's knowledge and expertise in the Australian Curriculum area is outstanding and she capably leads others in the development of year level programs that reflect the intent of the curriculum. This year, since Term 2, Jacky has combined this role with the Teacher Librarian role and in doing so, has also continued to support teachers and students in the area of information literacies and promotion of good quality literature. Terry Wally, as Support Teacher Inclusive Education, also plays a significant role in supporting teachers as they plan for the diverse learners in their classes. This year, through additional funding support from Brisbane Catholic Education, we were able to engage Jenny Rolph in an additional Learning Support role. Both Terry and Jenny have also linked strongly with the Guidance Counsellor -Cathy Mills, outside agencies, and families, as we work as a team to support those children with special needs so that all students can access the curriculum. I

would also like to acknowledge the teachers and school officer support staff at Mater Dei for their dedication, motivation and professionalism in their approach to delivering high quality learning and teaching experiences for children in their care. The challenge for teaching staff this year was to embed Visible Learning strategies in their planning and teaching to assist children in knowing what they need to do in order to be successful with their work. I would like to commend the staff for the way in which they have engaged with this professional development.

**Priority 3**

**Professional Practice and Collaborative Relationships**

**Mater Dei is a community committed to promoting professional teams who develop and maintain current, relevant and best teaching practice.**

Therefore we intend to:

- Identify staff qualities and capabilities, and align relevant professional development.
- Develop a long term plan to facilitate development of professional standards and staff well- being.
- Implement appropriate coaching and mentoring programs.

**Mater Dei is a community committed to developing and maintaining collaborative communities with professional, spiritual and local affiliations to support holistic outcomes for all students.**

Therefore we intend to:

- Identify affiliations that support the long term goals of the school.
- Implement formal networks and arrangements to support collaborative partnerships.

<b>Goals 2014</b>	<b>Strategies 2014</b>
AITSL (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership): Continue to educate teachers in understanding and meeting the criteria for professional standards within the AITSL framework.	Referenced teacher annual goal setting in relation to the AITSL framework. Two teachers moved through the Queensland College of Teacher registration process to full registration and provided

	evidence of work that reflects the requirements of the seven AITSL standards.
To participate in collaborative conversations around curriculum and pedagogy to improve professional practice.	<p>Dedicated planning time ( General Curriculum, Religious Education, ICTs and Supporting children with ASD)</p> <p>Facilitation and attendance at the interschool professional dialogue meetings (POD) once a term.</p> <p>Combined professional development day with numerous schools to develop a shared understanding of Visible Learning principles.</p> <p>Teachers set individual Visible Learning goals.</p> <p>Scheduled check in and sharing of strategies by teachers in relation to Visible Learning.</p> <p>Early career teachers participated in specific support networks.</p> <p>Mentoring relationships also exist within the school.</p>

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the people who have been involved in the numerous ongoing school community activities throughout the year. These have included the Trivia Night, Music in The Moonlight, Mater Dei Race Day, School Discos at the beginning and end of year, the morning teas and various social activities, the work of the 'Class Parents', the school working bees, Mother's and Father's Day stalls, the tuckshop operations, the instrumental activities, the Dance school, the Directory production, School Banking and Sustainability work. These successful events and ongoing activities have helped to both maintain and enhance Mater Dei's sense of community. Much of this work has been coordinated by the dedicated members of the P&F. I am very grateful to Nicole Quinn (President), Beth Toon (Vice President), Annette Henry (Treasurer) and Melissa Sharland (Secretary) for their leadership of this group, and to all of the other parents who have taken a lead role in the various sub- committees. The work of this group of people has a significant impact on the positive nature of our school and the expansive opportunities afforded to the children. I give thanks for your dedication and enthusiasm toward the many projects that have taken place this year. For those who are stepping down from P&F positions this year, I sincerely thank you for your valued contributions.

We have also continued to support parish and pastoral activities such as the sacramental program, children's masses, the Multicultural Mass and celebrations, community meals and other support for families in need, and continued to link with organisations such as the local Respite Centre, St Vincent de Paul, Caritas and Project Compassion.

## **Priority 4**

### **Strategic Resourcing**

**Mater Dei is a community committed to maintaining integrity, respect, accountability and excellence through its implementation of policies and practices.**

Therefore we intend to:

- Embed sustainable environmental practices into our school structure and processes.
- Continue to plan for the allocation of school resources informed by stewardship, contemporary learning and the changing needs of our students.
- Focus our attention on information and learning management systems and technology to enhance engagement with learning, teaching and evolving technologies.
- Prioritise resources and budget allocations to support our goals in achieving best teaching practice.

<b>Goals 2014</b>	<b>Strategies 2014</b>
Continue planning for the resourcing and structure of a P to 6 school.	Reviewed all aspects of school planning and school processes to reflect a P to 6 school community from 2015.  Refurbishment of rooms to accommodate future changes.  Planning for administration and toilet refurbishment to commence at end of 2014 school year.  Auditing of curriculum resources.  Developed new media and marketing material to reflect changes.
Further develop staff expertise in using Information and Communication Technology (ICT)resources already available within the school: LIFE (LMS), Clicker 6, IWB, Mactivia, iPad management	Mactivia installed in all rooms to enhance teaching and learning.  Professional Development with BCE consultant Kate O'Neill in relation to ICT: student entitlement in 21st century learning and digital citizenship.

	<p>Reviewed and planned for ICT allocations for 2015 and beyond, including iPad management and distribution of devices across the school and planning for the introduction of a one to one laptop program.</p> <p>Training of the school officers in Clicker programs on computers and iPads.</p> <p>Reviewed and provisioned adjustment of staffing to support ICT from 2015 onwards.</p>
<p>Embed sustainable environmental practices into culture of the school.</p>	<p>Renewed focus on Clean and Green awards.</p> <p>Liaised with electricity consultant to reduce consumption and instigation of controlled shut down during holidays.</p> <p>Teacher representation on Sustainability committee to support initiatives within the school.</p> <p>Parent education at social functions to support waste reduction.</p> <p>Streamlining of Bokashi system.</p> <p>Increased recycling capacity with Brisbane City Council.</p> <p>Tree planting and creek rehabilitation program.</p> <p>Development of sustainable practices pamphlet to distribute to new parents.</p>

I would like to thank the Board for their work this year and the wisdom they have brought to our discussions and planning, as we have worked through a range of items. I would like to particularly thank Cameron McKenzie (Chairperson), John Muir, Jason Locke, Jason Camden, Janine Rees and Michael Thorpe. I would like to particularly acknowledge the contribution of Cameron and Michael, who have contributed to the School Board for the past 4 years and are now leaving the Mater Dei Community. Their contributions to the life of Mater Dei in this capacity have been much appreciated and valued by the school community.

I would like to thank the Leadership Team (Rosie Harrison, Jacky Dittmar and Terry Wally) for their commitment and support of the strategic planning for our school community. Each role -holder brings a much valued perspective and insight into planning and decision making to ensure our school is a place of forward thinking and continual development.

I would like to thank the parent body and in particular, the P&F, for their financial support. The P &F contributions enable us each year to provide fantastic resources and facilities for the children. These will be outlined in the President's report to follow.

I would particularly like to acknowledge the significant contribution of the P&F executive: Nicole Quinn (President), Beth Toon (Vice President), Annette Henry (Treasurer) and Melissa Sharland (Secretary) and all the members of each of the committees.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank the secretarial staff and ancillary staff. Theresa Fry, Treena DellaVedova, Sciobhan Bingham, Therese Walsh and John Empson are tremendous in their enthusiasm and work ethic. They are responsible for so much of the operational aspects of our school (Administration, Tuckshop and Grounds) and provide support to so many people in our community.

## **Farewells**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those who will be finishing their current role at the end of this year.

**Jenny Rolph, Katrina Hammond, Reffeech Chalmers, Bernadette Tomlin and Rosie Harrison** will be finishing in their current capacity as support teacher, class teacher and APRE as the end of this year. We thank each one of these staff members for the gifts and talents they have shared with us during their time at Mater Dei. Our school community, and most importantly, the children, are all the more richer having had experience and the opportunity to work with these dedicated educators. We wish them many blessings as they go forth from our community.

**Mike Cahill** is also resigning from his position as IT support technician at the end of the year. Mike has worked for BCE for since 1996 and in this capacity at Mater Dei for 2 days a week since 2002. Mike has provided a secure and robust IT platform in conjunction with BCE and Fawmatt IT solutions to ensure access to IT services is seamless. We wish Mike every blessing as he not only resigns, but also retires and makes the move to the Gold Coast to be closer to family.

## **Departing Families**

I would also like to acknowledge and thank the families and the children who will be ceasing their association with Mater Dei at the end of this year. We hope that you can look back with fond memories of your time with us and that you remember positively the partnership you had with this great community. We wish you all the best as you transition to new school communities in 2015. We also acknowledge in 2014 the final year of Year 7 being in a primary school context. Consequently, we have two graduating classes and an increased number of families departing from our school.

I wish you all a happy and Holy Christmas and look forward to resuming the journey together in January 2015. Best wishes for a relaxing and safe holiday break.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathryn Nulley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial 'K' and a long, sweeping underline that extends under the rest of the name.

Kathryn Nulley  
Principal