

## **Annual General Meeting Principal's Report Monday 28 May 2007**

Good evening ladies and gentlemen. Particular, welcome to Reverend Graham Vawser, the Moderator for the Uniting Church, members of the Board and Mr Richard Fogg, who as Acting Chair of the Board, has illuminated a path for a new Principal over the last few months. Also, to parents and, specifically, those who serve on the Parents' and Friends', my appreciation for your attendance. I also thank my colleagues for their presence and interest in the formal proceedings of Pedare Christian College for the year of 2006.

I have composed this report under the four guiding pillars of the strategic planning document of 2005: 'Who We Are and Where We Are Going; Towards 2010.' Within this framework I have appraised the College year through the Pedare Christian College Performance Target document of 2006.

For your recollection the four strategic pillars are:

- Governing and Leading
- Learning Development
- Pastoral Development
- Resource Development

However, before I commence addressing these signposts of the status of the College it would seem opportune to make some preliminary comment as a new Principal.

I have three points of observation.

Initially, I believe that Pedare Christian College has unique strengths that suggest quantitative analysis is only one measurement for consideration. Embedded within the College is a spiritual element, an esprit de corps, for lack of another phrase that is a distinguishing feature. For a new Principal to be in the position where he can say he is fortunate to find a school in very good shape would be a rare compliment in an age where the profession of teaching and the sometime, suggestive media's portrayal of declining standards of student behaviour, are both in question.

My second point is that achieving a balance of mind and body for a young person of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is fraught with complexity. The societal expectations can only begin with the guidance by parents. The learning triad, of parents, school and child, can only function effectively, notwithstanding other influential and compelling aspects of our times, when parents journey with their children. Involvement in the life of a child, with this College, remains the critical responsibility of a parent or guardian.

My third point is that the College enters an age where the challenges of the future must be met with confidence and, indeed, vitality. Pedare Christian College has a staff, at all levels, non-teaching and teaching, who are committed and dedicated. Moreover, they demonstrate their professionalism

and desire to make this College one of excellence. Within these observations I strongly suggest that the time is right for undertaking substantial infrastructure development. While this may well fall within my duties the scope of the dreams must capture all our spirits and actions.

### **The Governing and Leading Targets**

Six objectives were set in place. The most significant attainment being a new constitution and an agreed EBA. Links between the College and the Foundation churches has commenced with scholarships offered to parishioners of these churches. Work in progress continues on action objectives for the Strategic Plan while College debt per student is now at \$6877 placing the College in its strongest financial position in recent years.

### **Learning Development Targets**

Ten objectives were established with desired outcomes attained in the areas of reporting processes that meet Government funding requirements, external assessment of literacy and numeracy in Years 3, 5 and 7 at state averages and above, accreditation of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme, establishment of the MYP in the curriculum and a new learning enrichment centre.

Vocational Education and Training opportunities remain an important area of the life of Pedare's holistic curriculum. The impressive results attained by a student receiving an Australian Vocational School Based Training Award a pleasing outcome of the College's VET program.

There are subjective measures to indicate that the enrichment program is improving and the recent appointment of Ms Julie Bruce from her position as Director of Junior School at Pulteney Grammar is a significant one in this area. The intention to reduce class sizes is given a context when one considers there are 664 total classes in a school year at the Surrey Farm campus alone. As a percentage of this number classes exceeding desired student numbers have fallen to 19%. In the senior school only 0.1% of classes exceeded desired student numbers.

The retention of Year 11 students from Year 10 was four percentage points down on 2005 and the increasing employment opportunities for young people will be a challenge for retaining students for the foreseeable future.

A further challenge is represented in the results of SACE students as evidenced by the 2005 cohort. The appointment of Dr David Wescombe-Down as Director of Learning Development demonstrated the importance the College places on public, academic attainment. Early indications are that the Year 12 cohort of 2007 is better placed in their studies than recent years. However, in real terms the 63 students eligible for Tertiary Entrance in 2006 led to thirty (30) percent attaining a TER exceeding 75 and forty-eight (48) percent a TER exceeding 70. Pleasingly, ninety-three percent completed the SACE.

### **Pastoral Development Targets**

It is an acknowledgement of the excellent pastoral environment of the College to conclude that each of the eight objectives has been met. The National Safe Schools' Program is prominent among these outcomes.

### **Resources Development Targets**

Eleven objectives were set in place. The Child Care Centre building has commenced and this will begin the upgrade to internal roads and the flow of traffic at the College. Additionally, shade protection at both campuses, increases in administration staffing and technology upgrades have been realised during the 2006 year.

In conclusion, the future appears bright if the first few months of 2007 are a guide. Enrolments are strong and the rejuvenation of parental support is underway. It is this human resource that must lead the way for any organisation. The success of Pedare is very much in the hands of its parents, the Board and College staff as I am confident that the next generation of students have the necessary vision of the world to meet the challenges of a world our generation have created. We owe our children the very best of our efforts to ensure the life and world we leave them is better for our presence.

Dr Edward Groughan