

## Annual Community Meeting- Board Chair Report, Candice Ienco

Good Evening

Back in 1991, as a 5 year old little girl, I walked through the gates of St Brigids Primary School. This was one of my favourite places, where I felt I belonged to a community, a safe place, where I could grow and learn. Fast forward 30 years and I am standing in front of our school community again, feeling a little less safe, but very proud to deliver the St Brigids School Board Report for the year that was, 2020.

The role of the School Board is to plan for the present and future operation of St Brigids and help the school fulfil its educational responsibilities in accordance to the policies and practices prescribed by Catholic Education Western Australia. This year, our School Board was a good mix of new members and experienced members. I would like to thank a couple of individual members who have completed a massive 6 years sitting on the committee.

Firstly, Shane Kenyon, Thank you for your valuable contributions to all discussions raised during meetings. Your knowledge of the school in general and your ability to think forward and plan for larger upgrades to our school has been noted. Nothing was ever too much work for you Shane, your tireless work in regards to the management and coordination of the bus, the communication with the wider Collie community when the rain created a brand new river through our school, and your research into the best technology for our students were just a few of the things you put your hand up for. You are an asset to our school and we are so very grateful to have benefited from the many hours you dedicated to this volunteer role.

Secondly, Carina Roney, Thank you for your supporting role in 2020 as Board Treasurer and the previous 5 years in the role of Treasurer. Your expertise in this field and concise run down of the schools finances at each meeting was appreciated. Thank you for colour coding different sections and your simplified versions of the intricate balancing act that is the treasurers role. Your keen eye for details and depth of knowledge on the subject is an incredible benefit to our school. Carina, we wish you all the best in your future endeavours and know that you wont be a stranger, the time you have volunteered and your commitment to our school has earned you respect and admiration amongst our school community. Thank you again.

Thank you also to Cassandra Bertolini. You have worked tirelessly to fit into the role of Board Treasurer under the guidance of Carina Roney. You have picked up the role with enthusiasm and your willingness to learn is admirable, and very much a valued attribute of our school. It is with deep regret that you are unable to continue your role for 2021 and build on your knowledge, however, we know your family needs you most at this time and please know that our school community is here to support you all.

Melanie Elks is also resigning from her position on the School Board as P&F representative and Parish representative. Thank you for being the link with the other two entities that support our school and keeping us updated with the latest information. We have thoroughly enjoyed your company, your smile and laugh that brings life into our meetings and your willingness to go above and beyond for anything you volunteer your time to. We know you will be successful in your studies as you have shown that you can excel and achieve your goals through determination and passion. We look forward to welcoming you back onto the Board when you have completed your studies.

2020 was a very intense and turbulent year for both students and parents alike. We were forced to engage in online learning and expected to become masters in technology overnight. St Brigids

administration, teachers, education assistants, cleaners, gardeners, canteen operators and volunteers took this massive hurdle in their stride and we continued to deliver an education to our students at the very highest of standards. Nothing was too hard or too much for anyone, and we all just got on with it. Reflecting on the difficulties of the year and the challenges that were overcome by our school makes me so proud to have been a part of a historical year at St Brigid's.

As a School Board, we are tasked with ensuring all spending of school funds is done in compliance with the budget and in accordance with the needs and direction of our school. During 2020 we have replaced the drink trough in the Kindy and Pre-Primary to a 4 tap system with a water bottle filler and handwash station. We made the decision to purchase new laptops for our teachers to ensure they have the greatest opportunity to connect and engage with our students both at school and online. The library computer upgrade is underway along with the investment of Multilit – an intervention program that will upskill our staff and improve the literacy and outcomes of our younger students. The purchase of 15 new iPads and 4 new air conditioners is also a purchase that will be welcomed by staff and students alike. The safety and security of our school and students is paramount and as a result, the School Board has and planned for and financed the replacement of the external lighting around the school.

Looking back on the goals we set ourselves as a school in previous years, we aimed to increase student enrolments and parent communication. We have achieved both of these goals in 2020 with a huge Kindy class of 30 students and our investment in SEQTA and the increased use of text messaging. We were stumped when the pandemic hit and we felt our progress on increasing parent engagement was halted, however, the open communication between parents and teachers via technology proved to be effective and will continue to be developed into 2021.

The School Board is fully supportive of CEWA's decision to not increase fees across Catholic schools in 2021. At St Brigid's we are proud that, due to strong enrolment growth and skilled financial planning, we have been able to provide our parents and families a 0% increase in fees over the previous five years and this will be continued for the sixth year. We will continue to offer \$0 school fees for Kindergarten to financially assist families with young children beginning at St Brigid's and to support ongoing enrolment growth across our school. We will continue to work on our school's strategic plan and endeavour to make recommendations that will continue to provide our students with the best education in a supportive and safe environment.

Unfortunately, our School Board numbers have severely depleted and we respectfully request the support of our school community in the way of recruiting new members. Without the School Board, the school simply can not run. We require a Board Treasurer, P&F Representative and Parish Representative for 2021 and are seeking anyone with an interest in the wellbeing of our students and the growth of our school to attend the 2 meetings per term required of this role. As a busy mum of two young boys, a FIFO husband and working full time, I felt I was very disconnected from my children's education. The opportunity to be a member of the School Board enabled me to be actively involved in my children's education and become more informed about the direction and running of the school. The knowledge and information that comes from attending the meetings offers an in depth perception of the school that is invaluable. If you have any questions regarding the role of the School Board or are interested in any vacant positions, please do not hesitate to see me or any other board member.