

Another year at St Lawrence is behind us and so I take this opportunity to provide an overview of the year that was 2019.

The School Board has the primary function of ensuring the ongoing financial viability of the school.

The Board has met twice each term, with three meetings in Term 4 due to the AGM.

It's not rocket science what the School Board does, we all have children in various years, we are diverse, but united in our focus and determination to ensure the best financial position and most appropriate support is available to ensure that our children receive the best education possible – to help our children become the best that they can be.

2019 was a relatively simple and quiet year from a Board perspective.

The capital development program saw the wonderful upgrade to just about every area except the early childhood areas which were upgraded in 2017.

The Board took part in the refreshing of the school's Strategic Plan which saw for the first time the P&F and the Board come together in a workshop environment. This was such a success, we ran an innovation workshop early in term four to grapple with the challenge of how to better engage with our school community. That is, how can we encourage parents and the wider community to want to be an active member – not just a bystander or observer – what needs to happen to get the community body to actively engage with and be a central part of the school community?

I hope that the ideas, outcomes and agreed actions from this session are considered and introduced to the school community in various forms and ways as soon as possible, commencing in 2020, although some ideas may take a little longer to implement.

St Lawrence is not unique in that we are a small, single stream Catholic School. What makes us unique is our passionate teachers, support staff, Christina Russo and her extraordinary canteen magicians, our determined front line ladies, Lina Armstrong and Marie Boyle and of course, no other school has our Mr Tonge – who can and does do anything and everything. We have an active P&F and an active core group of individuals who work tirelessly so that we, the school community can enjoy our time at school activities, Mother's Day morning teas, Father's Day breakfasts and everything in between.

To Penny Godfrey and the P&F Executive, on behalf of the Board and the greater school community, thank you – without your passion and dedication, our school would not have the opportunities presented to us to meet, make friends and generally have that snapshot of our children’s lives at St Lawrence.

I’d like to thank our Principal, Sheldon Carey for his guidance and good counsel to both myself and the School Board as a whole. I’d like to acknowledge the commitment of Gabby Brennan and Jackie Tucker as our Assistant Principals. On behalf of the School Board, we wish Jackie all the best in her new role and in anticipation, the Board also congratulates Kathleen Tranquill in her secondment to Assistant Principal for 2020.

After seven years on the School Board, with the last six being Board Chair, I’d like to take this final opportunity to thank our Board members for bringing to each meeting a diverse, thoughtful and considered perspective – not to mention their good humour. Johanna Carbone, Patrick King, Fraser Clarke, Father Emil, Penny Godfrey our P&F President, Gabby Brennan and Sheldon Carey. A special shout out to Michelle Millard, Board Secretary and integral communicator - thank you for bringing to the table a passionate perspective. Finally, a heartfelt thank you to Michael Mucciarone, Board Treasurer, who no longer has a child at St Lawrence, but has continued to provide us with his wisdom and prudent counsel.

I’d like to take the opportunity to welcome our new Board member commencing 2020, Melinda Italiano – thank you in advance.

Our School Motto is “with God’s friendship and love we grow” – may this always remain in your hearts and minds as we celebrate Christmas with family and friends. On behalf of the School Board, I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a safe and joyous 2020.