



## SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

### Annual Community Meeting

21st February 2024

*for the 2023 school year*

### Introduction

Good evening, everyone. For those of you that do not know me, my name is **Craig Bishop** and I have been with the Advisory Council of St Emilie's for several years and have been Secretary as well as being fortunate enough to be Chair for the last two years.

### Input Joke

Why do we have this ACM, it is an accountability mechanism to CEWA and to the St Emilie's community. It is also an opportunity for the School Advisory Council to report on our work throughout the year and to thank key stakeholders.

St Emilie's school has much to celebrate and be proud of.

Firstly, I wish to acknowledge and thank the people whom I have worked alongside throughout the year.

Our 2022 serving **Advisory Council Members** were:

### Council Members 2022

1. Craig Bishop - Chairperson
2. Stephanie Malelo - Secretary
3. Bec Tennant - P&F Representative
4. Melinda Curren – active member
5. Nicole Grima - active member
6. Beau Jose – active member

### Ex Officio Members 2022

7. Father Jean-Noel Marie Parish Priest
8. Chris Burns - Principal
9. Stuart Munro - Assistant Principal
10. Sara Tonkin - Assistant Principal
11. Gillian Norris - School Bursar

## Thank You's

I sincerely **thank all Advisory Council members** for your presence at our meetings, for the contributions you have individually and collectively made and for your wise and considered deliberations when discussing the different issues and directions that have required our reflection and input as a team.

That is a bit of a mouthful, so what does all that actually mean, if you do not know what we do on the advisory council here is a sample:

- a. Support and sounding board for the Principal
- b. Advises on financial matters, i.e. funding, budget, sustainability
- c. Planning and development advice, i.e. construction activities
- d. Assessing present and future needs of the school

It was a pleasure having both **Beau Jose** and **Melinda Curren** settle in to the Advisory Council. Their passion as well as a calm presence and friendly engagement has been highly valued by us all.

The Secretary of the Advisory Council often sits in the background; however, performs an invaluable piece of getting everyone together, sending out all correspondence, and keeping us under the CEWA governance structure required. So, a thank you to **Stephanie Malelo** for taking this role in 2022 and beyond.

I would also like to thank Gillian Norris who does an awesome job ensuring we are financial. Without a Treasurer Gillian stepped into this role and does a volume of work for us on the Council.

## Thank you to Stuart

A very special thank you is extended to Stuart from the Advisory Council, for all your hard work and steady leadership between Tania and Chris. Our Advisory Council continued to go from strength to strength through this time. One of the greatest reasons for problems/issues in any business/education facility or organisation is changing leadership. It can disrupt continuity and strategy, however with Stuart leading the charge for the first half of 2023, and an awesome executive team, from an Advisory Council point of view it was seamless.

## Thank you to Chris Burns

Welcome to your very first ACM at St Emilies. From an Advisory Council point of view it was a seamless introduction and business as usual on the council. Your enthusiasm and dedication are already shining through, and we know you're going to be a fantastic leader for our kids, staff and school community.

## Thank you to our Staff

The Advisory Council takes this opportunity to **sincerely thank each and every individual staff member** here at St Emilie's for their incredible hard work, expertise and genuine pastoral care of students and families.

## **The Work of the School Advisory Council in 2023**

### **New School Principal for Starting 3<sup>rd</sup> Term 2023**

The Advisory Council was tasked at the start of the year to help with the selection of the new principal for St Emilies. Our involvement included:

- Undertaking group discussion and workshopping what we believed makes a good principal which was sent onto CEWA
- The Chair was included on the panel (with Father Jean Noel) at CEWA for the interview process

It was an extremely professional and thorough process run by CEWA.

### **School Improvement Plan**

Last year I stood here and talked about a School Improvement Program whereby the Council worked through the Strategic Intentions document created by the school, 2022-2024. This document links back to the QCE (Quality Catholic Education).

The School has taken the improvement program and adopted many of the strategic intentions. Examples include:

- Parents as Partners – supporting parents in their role as first educators of their children
- Creation of a St Emilie's Vision for Learning – looking at improvements to make the most positive difference to student learning and wellbeing
- Natural Environment - To continue promoting and fulfilling our Christian responsibility to care for the Earth as our common home.

### **Accountability For All Council Members (Annual Training)**

CEWA required each Council member to register for Mandatory Reporting training. This happens on an annual basis. St Emilie's, and all Catholic Schools need to meet registration standards and other compliance obligations, including Mandatory Reporting, Codes of Conduct for staff and students, protective behaviours curriculum, training for staff and students, and information for parents and carers. As such the Mandatory Reporting training undertaken was part of the Child Safe Framework encompassing child protection training and the School Code of Conduct for all Council Members.

## School Maintenance & Improvement

Sometimes we can overlook **'the amount'** of additions and upgrades the school introduces. Some of the great improvements we can see around the school and the capital works that were approved include:

- Service of Roller Doors in Hall and Hub
- Replacement of Admin Lights
- TV in Library replaced
- TV in PPG replaced
- New TV in Library
- Replacement of MPR Air conditioners
- Seating in area of tennis courts
- Seating area outside year 1
- New Water Tank
- **The big-ticket item – The Senior Playground** (from a parent point of view, giving the kids a buy-in and say on the playground was awesome. It drove so much excitement.)

Thanks to Stuart we now have two completed undercover walk ways (Staffroom & year Four to Year Two), a refurbished AP Office, Signage for the parish and school, new soak wells installed around the school and a new gate at the back of the school for ease of rubbish collection.

## Advisory Council Constitution and Governance

The current CECWA Catholic School Advisory Council Constitution is under review to ensure that it meets the new governance requirements of Catholic Education Western Australia. There is a Transitional Terms of Reference until the review is completed by CECWA.

In terms of governance, the broad definition as it relates to the Advisory Council is “Governance encompasses the system by which an organisation is controlled and operates, and the mechanisms by which it, and its people, are held to account, i.e. compliance, risk management etc.”

### *Example:*

To help with this transition, and to maintain a level of governance, the School Advisory Council moved the year prior to Microsoft Teams for all meeting agendas, reports, induction documents, and any other advisory council important documents such as the Code of Conduct. It has also enabled maximum participation with advisory council members being able to log in remotely, a leftover from COVID.

Further to this, the Advisory Council has membership conditions:

- (a) a commitment and desire to promote Catholic education and give service to the Catholic School Community;
- (b) a commitment to the safety, wellbeing and pastoral care of all students and staff;
- (c) an ability to work cooperatively and constructively with the Principal, school leadership team and all other members of the Advisory Council;
- (d) the possession of skills, competencies and experience that are reflective of, relevant and beneficial to the Catholic School Community; and
- (e) a sufficiency of time to devote to Advisory Council duties.

### **Working with St Emilie's Parish**

**Father Jean-Noel Marie** has continued to work very closely with the School Leadership Team throughout the 2023 school year. Father is a busy man and cannot make many of the Council meetings, however between the Parish and School leadership team working closely together, it has ensured the smooth rollout of the parish-run, school supported Sacramental Program and seeking ways that parish and school can work more closely together, for the good of all.

Thank you Father Jean-Noel Marie for your presence, wisdom and support - especially of the Leadership Team throughout the year - it is very much appreciated. Your sermons at school and community masses throughout the year have inspired and comforted us, as individuals and as a community.

On a personal note, I had the privilege of spending time with Father whilst being on the panel for selecting the new principal of the school. I say spending time, however I offered to give him a lift into CEWA, so he was trapped in my car for a period of time. I quickly realised that Father does a power of work in our community, and now have a deeper understanding of the dedication, caring and understanding he holds within our community.

### **Thank you to Families**

St Emilie's **families are sincerely thanked** for their cooperation throughout 2023. Year on year at the school there is always new faces that pop up helping with school activities.

### **New Staff in 2023**

On behalf of the Council I would like to welcome the following new staff:

- Amy Dreyer
- Kris Harris
- Sian Lewis
- Sandra Leavy
- Perlis Novaiara
- Sarika Srivastava

### **Staff who left in 2023**

- Rhonda Landers
- Veronica Williams
- Linda Dobson
- Simone McKenzie (Maternity Leave)
- Aaron Kubicek

A sincere thank you to all the above staff for their considerable efforts throughout the year and all the very best for the years ahead.

## Membership changes on the Advisory Council - 2024

Melinda Curren will be taking on the position of Deputy Chair

Currently there is still vacancies for:

- Advisory Council Chair
- Advisory Council Treasurer
- Advisory Council Members

### **Closing Comments:**

Looking back over the 2023 school year, it is with much gratitude that I acknowledge the wonderful contribution of so many children, staff, families, leaders and parishioners to the ethos and culture of our beautiful school. I have thoroughly enjoyed working on the Advisory Council as a Chair.

I would strongly encourage other parents to consider joining the Council at some point in the future as it is a great way of serving the community, of understanding some of the broader issues that schools need to deal with, and of forging friendships with members.

It has been an absolute privilege and a pleasure to be able to contribute to the school, and a little sad at the same time that it is coming to an end.

I wish everyone a very safe, happy and successful year ahead.

Kind regards

**Craig Bishop**

St Emilie's Advisory Council Chairperson