Nagle Catholic College

Principal’s Annual Report
2011

Introduction

The College Board has made it clear to me that its vision for the school involved providing a quality catholic education and a set of resources which is comparable to schools similar to ours in Perth. In other words, it is our aim to provide quality teaching, facilities and resources which are the equal of catholic schools in Perth.

Clearly the reason for this is that the community is keen to keep their families together and has no wish to send their students off to boarding school if it can be avoided and I can confidently say that is the case at Nagle Catholic College. There is no need for students to leave Geraldton for their education.

The array of educational offerings at the College is outstanding and the opportunity offered to the students is fantastic. Next year we will see one of the final pieces of the puzzle fall into place with the construction of the College gymnasium.

Information and Communication Technology

As you are aware 2012 ushered in a paradigm shift in terms of access to Information Technology.

Every student in Years 11 and 12 took possession of a laptop which was provided by the Australian Government. We always took the view that this would be a year of implementation, adjustment and experimentation and I can report to you that it has been very successful and certainly well received by the students.

The program will continue for Years 11 and 12 into 2012. In 2012 Year 7 students will also be using an Apple iPad, which will be in their possession for most of their classes. You can see that in two to three years that all students at the College will be using portable computing devices of some description or another and that there will be less need for computer laboratories at the College.

These are exciting initiatives and they reflect the world in which we live. It is certainly not the only aspect to education but ICT supports education and most occupations in the 21st Century.

I would particularly like to congratulate the ICT Department in the considerable amount of work to give personal access to so many students at one time. This has been a mammoth job and they have carried it out with a high level of professionalism.
Works and Improvements

The College Board has continued to improve its resources and buildings for the students. This work has been carried out under the expert supervision of Peter Saunders and the Board’s Building and Maintenance Sub-Committee. I would like to thank all those involved for their contributions to the College in this way.

Science
- The College completed construction of the Dr Maslin Science Block under the Building Education Revolution (BER) and we were delighted to open three brand new science laboratories in Term One this year.

Air-Conditioning
- The College continues its program to air-condition as many classrooms as possible throughout the College. There was also air-conditioning provided to Kean House earlier this year.

Renovations
- The caretaker’s flat at the base of the Convent, is being renovated.
- There have been ongoing renovations carried out in the Convent to make it a useable space for the College Counsellors.
- The Brothers’ House at the St Pats Campus bathroom has been renovated and this work was well overdue.

Gymnasium
- The tender process for the gymnasium along with the planning and preparation process for the gymnasium has been completed and the awarding of the tender will take place by the end of 2011. It is hoped that building will commence in Term 1 of 2012.

Religious and Faith Education

I would like to highlight two initiatives’ in the area of Religious and Faith Education for the College this year.

This year is the first year that we have had Ministers of the Eucharist. A group of senior students from our student ministry team made a very public commitment to their faith by taking on training and serving as Ministers of the Eucharist for the College Community. This is a wonderful thing and it gives me great heart.

Secondly, the College has embarked upon a Youth Formation Program called Remar which, we hope, will involve Years 10, 11 and 12 through successive years. The program provides development in four main ways.

1. Social interaction.
2. Leadership
3. Faithful Formation
4. Community service

I am quite excited about this program operating through Years 10, 11 and 12 and, I would like to commend Mr Donaldson, Mr Ramos and Miss Pettigrew for committing to the initial part of this program in 2012.
Education Highlights

The College continues to review its education program in an ongoing capacity. I would like to bring a number of initiatives to your attention for this year.

**National Partnerships Program – Mentoring for Teachers**
The College was involved in a program to support teachers beginning in their profession and it also developed a formation program for its teachers during the year. Support for the program was provided by the Australian Government.

**Language School of Excellence**
The College was chosen along with three other Catholic schools in Perth, to be established as a Language School of Excellence. It received a grant of $25,000 from the Australian Government to support initiatives in this area.

**National Bank – Schools First Program**
The College was one of a small number of schools in Western Australia to be chosen this year for this program. The College was awarded $20,000 to support a series of workshops for students on the Autism spectrum to develop skills to become more successful in their relationships and in their schooling. This was a very worthwhile program and achieved a number of highlights.

**Stellar Program**
The Stellar Program entered its second year this year with more able students in Years 7 and 8 being academically in an after school set of activities to support and extend their learning.

**Australian Curriculum**
The College has been working towards the implementation of the Australian Curriculum in 2014. Staff have participated in a number of professional learning opportunities and conferences. In 2012 the College will spend two days at the beginning of Term 2 planning for the implementation of the Australian Curriculum.

**Student Performance**

The College had another very fine year in terms of student performance in 2011. I am pleased to report that we had a 98% graduation rate and, out of the 143 students that were enrolled, 64% of our students achieved an ATAR and over 80% of those students were offered a place at University (68% of students received their first choice). It is worth noting that many of our students defer offers to University to complete a gap year.

Inspection of the ‘My Schools’ website will provide useful information for our students performance. You will note that they have an ICSEA number virtually on the Australian average and our students are performing slightly above the Australian average in the areas of Numeracy, Literacy, Science and Society and Environment in Years 7 and 9.

I have noted significant improvements in the results for our students this year and that it something to be celebrated. Our teachers do a fine job. Our students work hard and I wish to congratulate them on all their achievements.
Quality Catholic Schools

All schools in Western Australia engage in strategic planning process to improve outcomes for their schools. The process takes 5 years and it addresses 25 different components over that period of time.

The college has completed 10 components so far in the areas of

- Catholic Identity
- Student Learning
- Student Support and
- Stewardship and resources

It is a process which seeks to review College performance in particular areas and through a process of engagement and conversation to set realistic goals to make improvements for the future.

This process works with parents, students and teachers and often results in working parties which recommend improvements in College processes.

Parents and Friends

I would like to commend the work of the Parents and Friends Association at the College this year.

This very loyal group has acted to support the College’s educational program through the provision of a number of items which include;

- A wood lathe for Design and Technology
- A reading laboratory for Learning Support
- A large compactus for archives
- Data logger for Science
- Physical Education equipment
- Air-conditioning
- Art resources
- Chapel stained glass window
- Honour boards.

The Parents and Friends Association have also fulfilled another very worthwhile function in that, they act as an advisory group for the College administration and I have really enjoyed the feedback they have provided.

I wish to commend their efforts.
Farewells

Each year brings the departure of Staff and Students from our community however, whilst they may change locations they leave behind a considerable legacy due to their commitment to our College and for that we are very grateful.

- **Clare McCall** is returning to England.
- **Jason Good** returning to Perth.
- **Eleisha Heyden** conclusion of contract.
- **Marie Wilmhurst** moving to Perth.
- **Meg Cinnani** whose contract is finished.
- **John Roff** has decided to resign after many fine years of contributing to Geraldton Catholic Education. John began with teaching at St Pats, over 20 years ago and, has fulfilled many roles within the St Pats and Nagle Catholic College communities.

More recently he has been Head of Society and Environment but, perhaps his greatest legacy will be in his contribution to building the culture of the school. This is a matter which is very dear to John and into which he has invested a great deal of energy. He has been instrumental in the formation of the Past Scholar’s Association and, I am sure he will maintain his connections through that association.

John leaves us to take up the position of Head of Religious Education at Newman Catholic College in Perth. We thank him for his many contributions and we wish him well for the future.

It is often said that a school cannot rise above its staff room and, this is certainly true of our school.

We owe a great debt of gratitude to our teachers and staff who work tirelessly for our students to achieve the best outcomes they can in their education. We say it every year, but that does not diminish the importance that we place upon them and, the gratitude we have for their service.

Declan Tanham
Principal, Nagle Catholic College
December 2011