

ADVISORY COUNCIL CHAIR

This year, 2022, has seen us align the Mercy College Advisory Council to the Terms of Reference provided by Catholic Education WA Limited. We implemented a change to the frequency and format of meetings and have aligned the activities of the Advisory Council to the Terms of Reference.

A highlight of the 50th Anniversary celebrations was the Mercy Day Mass. We had seven Sisters of Mercy in attendance plus two past Principals. We were blessed with ideal weather and were able to celebrate the Mercy spirit along with our 50th Anniversary.

One of the biggest areas of focus for the Advisory Council is capital works. For the last 3 years the Advisory Council has been pursuing an initiative to upgrade several of the aging buildings via a rebuild. It is pleasing to note that these works are now about to commence and will provide an up-to-date learning environment and improved facilities to enable effective teaching and learning. This is a strategic project to ensure that Mercy College can provide a high-quality learning environment well into the future.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic has continued to affect teaching and learning. Many students were forced to isolate meaning they missed class-time and there has been on-going load on teaching staff due to isolation requirements as teachers, also, were absent due to sickness. Optimistically, the impact of COVID-19 will be reduced for next year and beyond.

From a budget perspective, after a small increase in fees between 2021 and 2022, CEWA dictated that there be a reduction in fees between 2022 and 2023. This results from increased Federal Government funding for Mercy College.

The Principal, Finance Team and Senior Leadership Team have managed this well and Mercy College has, again, operated within budget for 2022 and have prepared a balanced budget for 2023. In particular, we welcome Kerry Davidson to lead the Finance Team. This year, Kerry has provided an excellent strategic perspective on the financial management of Mercy College.

Key topics addressed by the Advisory Council this year include:

- Participation in the 50th Anniversary celebrations
- Finalisation of the plans associated with the building upgrades
- Communications with the Mercy Community
- Implementation of the new Terms of Reference
- Assistance with recruitment of Kerry Davidson as new Business Manager
- Budget Planning and Management including fees.

After the excitement of 50th Anniversary planning many of the planned activities could, unfortunately, not proceed due to COVID-19 restrictions.

I acknowledge our Principal, Lisa Fogliani, for her excellent leadership this year. In particular, the last two years have been somewhat challenging, mainly due to the COV-19 Pandemic, yet we have seen Mercy College prosper.

I thank all the Advisory Board members for their contribution this year: Adrian D'Vauz (Deputy Chair), Jacquie Cooper (Secretary), Domenic Zappa (Treasurer), Sharn Tutt, Sr Joanne Dickson, and Fr Sam. Thank you all for your contribution and valuable insights.

This is my final year on the Advisory Council – both of my children graduate Year 12 this year. I have found it a highly rewarding experience and I like to think that I have been able to, in a small way, contribute to the success of Mercy College. I encourage other parents (and friends) to consider nominating for a role on the Advisory Council.

In conclusion, on behalf of the Advisory Council, I especially thank all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, for their contribution to Mercy College. As a result of the efforts of staff, we are able to share in excellent academic results, a nurturing, safe and welcoming teaching environment and a vibrant, inclusive College community.