

# College Board AGM 2023

## Principal's Report



St Francis de Sales  
COLLEGE

I am pleased to provide Board with the following reflections upon the 2022 College year.

It was an academic year that did not begin exactly as we would have planned it, but given our collective, shared experiences throughout 2021, we were well placed to adapt to the conditions forced upon us and able to pivot effectively to an alternative approach to student learning for the commencement of the year. Thankfully, it was only a brief period until we were able to have students back in classrooms, learning in partnership with their teachers and Education Support Officer staff. These rapid and somewhat unpredictable fluctuations in our start of year processes were once again managed magnificently by all members of our community: students, staff and families; in a manner that was to set a fine tone for our 2022 year with a focus on our Heart Value of *Integrity*. This value of Integrity was something we focussed on together as a community throughout 2022, including our Staff Reflection Day gathering in September, where we unpacked it through the study of Mary MacKillop, our Australian Saint.

Our annual Academic Assembly is always a highlight of Term 1 in the College, and although this year it was also needing to be modified given the circumstances in which we were operating, it was a wonderful celebration of the academic achievements of our students in 2021. We were delighted to welcome back our 2021 Year 12 students and celebrate with them their great successes and the tertiary study pathways they are now on. We were delighted to announce the College Dux for 2021, Madeleine Lipscombe, and to present her with the St Scholastica Shield. Madeleine spoke inspirationally of her years leading up to her Year 12 success, providing great motivation for those students who follow. We were also delighted to welcome back to the College Tayla Hassam, our College Dux from 2011 and hear about her journey since graduating ten years ago. Our congratulations at this academic assembly also went to our Year 7 to 11 Duces of 2021: Charlotte Peacock (Year 7), Rachel Morris (Year 8), Luella Korel (Year 9), Tanielle Bilney and Hayley Stephen (Year 10) and Ella McKinlay-Edwards (Year 11).

In reflecting on the challenges 2022 presented for all of our students, we are especially aware of the graduating Year 12 Class of 2022. These students have completed all of their senior schooling of Years 10-12 through the

midst of the COVID pandemic. As Year 10 students in 2020, they were called to live out our focus Heart Value of *Perseverance* as we all moved into new and unknown territory, adapting to new ways of operating with social distancing, health protocols, Microsoft Teams meetings and online learning. As Year 11 students in 2021, they needed to live our College focus Heart Value of *Compassion*, as it became obvious the pandemic was not going to pass quickly, and that we were going to need to show compassion and care for each other to ensure our physical and mental wellbeing. These were challenges that could have broken them as a cohort of students, but instead steeled them and united them as they headed in their final year of schooling in 2022, a year in which they prevailed and attained their own level of personal excellence.

2022 saw further enactment of our College's *Vision for Learning* through a whole school focus on Student Agency and Voice. This focus on empowering students to have ownership of their learning and our desire for them to have greater control over how to recognise areas of growth and strive towards them, led to renewed attention as a whole staff on classroom Learning Intentions and Success Criteria. The College is excited that the work we have undertaken with our *Vision for Learning* across these last four years is being complemented from this year onwards with a body of work to formalise a whole school approach to wellbeing. The College will be engaging with the Life Buoyancy Institute over a three year period to develop a cohesive and integrated wellbeing framework embedded in our existing tradition and culture. We will be focussing on shared language, skills and strategies to respond to the unique needs of every student, and grow student capacity through intentionally delivered social-emotional learning programs. This empowerment based approach for us all to work together with shared intent to co-design the wellbeing and growth solutions will be the basis of our College's Vision for Wellbeing.

The significant redevelopment of our site over recent years continued in 2022 with the completion of the final phases of our Reception - Year 6 facilities. We were pleased to provide these extensions to our classroom facilities that have enabled us, in 2023, to move to co-teaching structures that involve three co-teachers working together at each year level to support their students in their shared year level space.

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It was also exciting during 2022 to begin our planning work for the significant \$11 million rebuild of The Dell building in the Senior School, which will not only provide outstanding new learning spaces for our Year 9 and 10 students, but also develop a dedicated Performing Arts precinct that will bring together our Music, Dance and Drama learning facilities.

I wish to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank all of our parents and volunteers who provided such great support to the College during 2022. We are grateful to all those who took up formal positions on the College's Board, Finance Committee, Parent Community Group and Fathering Project, but also acknowledge all those who support the College through volunteer work in classrooms, on excursions and school camps.

I wish to recognise the great leadership of our Senior Student Leadership group of 2022, lead so strongly by our College Captains, Sophie McCallum and Lucas Rutter. Their leadership within the College set a great example for students throughout all year levels who undertook various roles of leadership and representation of their fellow students in 2022.

Finally, I wish to name and recognise to the College Board the amazing work of our teachers and non teaching staff throughout 2022 and their wonderful commitment to ensuring the success of the students in their care. I especially wish to take this opportunity to acknowledge staff who depart our community at the end of 2022 and document on the record our gratitude for their significant contributions to who we are as a College:

**Sonia Nelson** commenced at the College in 2015. She has in 2023 taken up her appointment as Principal at Mary MacKillop College, Kensington, to which she will bring her extensive experience leading learning in our community as Deputy Principal, and her experience as Acting Principal here and at St Joseph's, Port Lincoln. Sonia will no doubt strongly lead the Mary MacKillop community, and the girls and families it serves.

**Paul Fairlie** commenced at the College in 2019 as Deputy Principal - Community and Wellbeing. He has made significant contributions to the wellbeing of students and staff, through his deep and genuine care for others through the meaningful relationships he works to build with all those with whom he works. We wish Paul all the very best as he transitions into retirement this year.

**Rose Hood** has taught students in the Catholic sector since 1998 and at St Francis de Sales College since 2001, marking 25 years of distinguished service in Catholic Education. During this time Rose has positively impacted on the lives of countless young people through her knowledge of English in particular, but also in her pastoral care of each young person. We wish Rose all the very best for the next chapter in her life.

**Rose Manfredi** joined the College in 2001 as Library Support Officer, and during these years she has worked to provide resources and services to students to support their learning. Rose left us after 21 years of service to our St Francis de Sales community.

**Annie Bushten** commenced at the College in 2002 as Canteen Coordinator and Rachel Thorpe as Canteen Support in 2011 on a casual basis. With the Finance Committee supported changes to the delivery of our canteen services at the end of Term 2, we farewelled Annie and Rachel and thank them for their years of dedicated service and valued contribution to the College.

**Alex Field** joined our community in 2005. Alex has taught across many subjects and year levels, from primary to senior secondary classes. As a long-standing member of the PE Team, Alex has also contributed to a multitude of sporting activities, knockout teams, sports days, and athletics carnivals. We wish Alex well as he this year takes up a position as Physical Education Teacher at Antonio Catholic School, Morphett Vale.

**Lorraine Bruce** joined the College in 2006 and held various roles across the College such as School Assistant, Home Economics Assistant and First Aid Officer/Co-curricular Sports Admin. Lorraine left us in 2022 after 16 years of service to our St Francis de Sales community.

**Kaoru Nagata** has been 'Sensei Nagata' at St Francis for the past 15 years. She has encouraged and inspired students' interest in Japanese, seeing many of them go on to success at a Year 12 level. We say thank you and give a warm 'sayonara' to Kaoru as she takes up an appointment at Marryatville High School.

**Rose Ward** has been the 'go to' person in the Senior School office for hundreds of students over the last 13 years. We thank her for the care, support and special nurturing that she has provided staff and students over this time. We send our blessings and thanks as Rose begins the next chapter of her life and transitions into retirement.

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**Rebecca Page** commenced as a Reception to Year 12 Music Teacher in 2016. Over the last seven years, Rebecca has shaped the Music Curriculum across the College and provided many opportunities for students to develop and showcase their talents through extra-curricular activities such as choirs, ensembles and bands. Rebecca has been appointed to a Music Teacher position at Sacred Heart College, Champagnat Campus.

**Jennifer Robertson** commenced at St Francis in 2016. Over the years Jennifer developed students' abilities in Art, Design and Media, and this included a Year 7 STEM – Arts integrated unit, which gave our younger Middle School students a fun introduction to some of the Arts subjects that they would experience in Year 8. Jennifer left us for a new role at Mercedes College, Springfield.

**Kerry Gray** joined us as a Year 5 teacher in 2021 and was a Year 6 Home Class Teacher in 2022. We thank Kerry for her contribution in these year levels and in preparing the students for the transition into the Middle School. Kerry has moved to a position at St John the Apostle School, Christies Beach.

**Aaron Caesarikow** came to St Francis in 2022. Aaron was a Year 7 Home Class Teacher and taught Maths, Science, Physical Education and Digital Technology. We wished Aaron well in his move to Garden College, Davoren Park.

**Amy Waters** joined the College as a Junior School Music Teacher at the beginning of 2022. We thanked Amy for her contributions, in particular for her work with the Angelicus Choir and in preparing students for the Catholic Schools Music Festival. Amy was appointed as a Music Teacher at Xavier College, Two Wells.

**Catherine White** joined us at the start of 2022 from Caritas College in Port Augusta. In addition to her care as a Year 3 Home Class Teacher, Catherine has kept the Years 3 to 5 students 'moving' in their Physical Education lessons. Catherine left us for parental leave in September and we shared in the joy of the arrival of her baby boy late in 2022.

**Mikayla Harrison** came to St Francis in July in 2022 as the Mid-Year Reception Teacher. We thank Mikayla for the solid foundation she provided our new students in Reception and wish her well.

As well as having staff who left us at the end of 2022, we take this opportunity to acknowledge Fr Richard Morris, our Mt Barker/Strathalbyn Parish Priest, who transitioned into retirement at the start of 2023. Fr Richard has been a wonderful pastoral leader of our College community in the decade that he has worked with us. Fr Richard's care and compassion for all of our community members was evident in every interaction he had with individuals, every leading of liturgical celebrations for our community, and in his role as President of our College Board. We give thanks to God for the great gift that Fr Richard has been to our community and know that he will not be a stranger to us in the years ahead. At the same time, we are excited and delighted to welcome Fr Philip Marshall, who has joined our community in recent weeks as Parish Priest and Board President.

As always, I reflect on another College year passed with joy for all the opportunities that have been able to be provided to our young people; with gratitude for the commitment of all our community members to work to ensure the continued strength and development of our College; and with appreciation for again being provided with the honour of leading our community in 2022.

**Gavin McGlaughlin**  
Principal