



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Board Chair's Report

January 2018 – December 2018

INTRODUCTION

As the Chair of Brigidine College Indooroopilly Board I have much pleasure in presenting this report on the governance of the College for the period January 2018 – December 2018. In doing so and at the outset I acknowledge my sincere appreciation to the commitment, spirit and generosity of the Board Directors in this voluntary stewardship and the professionalism and support from the College and the College Leadership Team.

This report should be taken in context and considered in review conjunction with the other suite of documents and papers prepared for this Annual General Meeting namely:

- (1) the mandatory School Annual Report 2018
- (2) the Principal's Annual Report 2018
- (3) the audited Financial Report incorporating the Director's Report 2018

MEETINGS AND DIRECTORS

In addition to the Annual General Meeting the Board convened for eight (8) general meetings. To ensure compliance with ongoing formation development and governance education the Board held two (2) days, February and September external to regular meeting days.

The Committees through which the work of the Board is carried out conducted as many meetings as required to fulfil their brief and achieve their goals. Most met at least six times through the working year; although in preparation of our Building project this Committee met many more times.

The Board membership maintained as a reasonably stable entity for the year. However, due to work commitments and a moving economy, the Board had some



changes to its membership. The Board continues to work through the Mission, Formation and Succession Planning Committee to determine the necessary professional and personal strengths of prospective Directors in order for the Board to fulfil its mission and legal responsibilities.

With the resignation of Mr Chris Byrne, a replacement with financial experience and qualifications was required. Mr John Auld was invited to join the Board given his expertise in this field with the added bonus of broad knowledge and experience in risk management.

Through the revision of the *Skills Matrix* and given the goals set for the year and the College's move to greater emphasis on marketing and communication, a Director in this field was desirable. Ms Emma Beach currently employed at another All Girls Catholic College in this role, was approached and through the necessary interview and induction process, was invited to join the Board. Emma not only brings these skills but a younger perspective and a richness in mission and justice.

Towards the latter part of the year, Mr Matthew Dique resigned from the Board in order for him to complete his studies in his professional life.

The Board is most appreciative of the involvement and commitment both of these men gave to our ongoing future focussed Board.



The Board was similarly disappointed to accept the notice of retirement of Sr Margaret Daniels who had completed her tenure with the Board. Margaret's wisdom, broad educational experiences and richness on spiritual direction and reflection is sadly missed. We recognise that her much valued physical presence and membership of our Brigidine Sisters on the Board will continue to reduce in the coming years. As a consequence, the Board is very aware of the importance of our spiritual connections and formation opportunities to ensure the mission is paramount to our operation.

FORMATION

In keeping with the Kildare Ministries designated year of *Hope*, the Board developed this theme through its prayer and reflection component of each Board meeting.

'We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain'.

Hebrew 6:19

PROGRAM

February

To facilitate and encourage members to participate in the preparation and leading the spiritual reflection component of each Board meeting, one of our Directors Dr Kate Hall led us through a workshop of planning a 'Prayer and Reflection'. Kate discussed the different types of prayer and presented very helpful and useful guidelines on how to construct a simple prayer/reflection. Kate also provided advice on useful resource sites.

In addition, members have been encouraged to access the monthly prayer and reflection provided by the Trustees of Kildare Ministries to use as a basis for preparation.

The Mission, Formation and Succession Planning Committee have also developed an online repository for resources for access by members.

Developing a confidence to undertake this, reflection times, while challenging for some is also an opportunity for educational growth. Our Board brings with it a diverse range of cultural and spiritually aware people of different faiths. We share an opportunity to grow in the broader understanding of gospel and spirituality while maintaining a focus on being *Christ* people.

Sr Maree Marsh followed with a presentation on a historical update of Kildare Ministries – *The Journey 2007 to 2018*. Board members appreciated the opportunity to again be reminded and gain a greater in-depth understanding of our new entity.

This year we re-introduced a commissioning service and a blessing for Board Directors as the year commences. Sr Maree led the Board in this ceremony.

September

This formation session was divided into two components:

- i. An in-depth reflection on aspects of Brigid and her journey, presented by Dr Kate Hall
- ii. Immersing ourselves in the Ireland Pilgrimage presented by two of our recent pilgrims, Sr Chanel Sugden and Mrs Claudia Mathews

Both of these sessions gave us a greater understanding of our story from a rich historical perspective enhanced by visual images and anecdotal stories.



While we appreciate input by our guest presenters, involving the experiential stories and knowledge of our members assists us to grow in our relationship with one another and expands our horizons for opportunity in the future.

Other opportunities afforded our community included the Kildare Ministries Conference, the Induction Day for new Board Directors and the Board Chairs meetings.

New Board Directors have engaged with the Mission, Formation and Succession Planning Committee's developed Brigidine College Board Induction Program (Brigid's Well).

Governance Training and Education

Our attention to being educated with governance structures and legal responsibilities continued this year.

- i. Mandatory Student Protection Policy and Procedures inservice was conducted at the April meeting. All Directors are now compliant. This training has become an Annual inservice from the College to an online program.
- ii. As a component of our September Professional Training and Formation Day, we were led through a number of risk and compliance learnings and understandings which resulted in our determination of the Board's Risk Appetite. As an outcome, the *Risk Appetite Statement* was developed by the Risk and Compliance Committee and certified by the Board. This statement will have an annual review cycle.

Risk Appetite Statement

Risk appetite refers to the level of risk that the College Board is prepared to accept to achieve the College's priorities. The College has a low appetite is for risks associated with:

- *safety of children and students;*
- *workplace health and safety;*
- *compliance with legislation and regulation; and*
- *reputation.*

These are enterprise risks and all areas of the College must consider this when assessing risk. The College has a low appetite for risks that may negatively impact the delivery of high-quality education and care and reduce confidence in the College and its services.

The College is willing to accept a higher level of risk where there is an opportunity to pursue innovative initiatives with benefits, such as better student outcomes, outweighing the benefit of maintaining the status quo and that does not expose the College to increased risks for which tolerance is lowest. This means that as far as reasonably practicable, the College is not willing to accept or be exposed to risk that compromises the ability to meet our obligations in the areas where the College has the lowest risk appetite.

It recognises that its appetite for risk varies according to the activity undertaken, and that its acceptance of risk is subject always to ensuring that the potential benefits and risks are fully understood before developments are authorised, and that sensible measures to mitigate risk are established where required.

Compliance with this risk appetite statement will be monitored regularly. In addition, regular reports shall be provided to the Risk and Compliance Committee and to the College Board.

During our meeting inservice sessions, the Directors reviewed the Constitution to have a closer connection and understanding and to review in compliance with the Kildare Ministries documents.

A number of print articles and publications such as *Board Matters* and *Better Boards* are made available to Directors for their reflection and consideration. Information and suggestions for improvement of our Board meetings are discussed and initiated where relevant and appropriate.

Interaction with Kildare Ministries Formation, induction and meetings are utilised when available and as necessary. Economic constraints and the tyranny of distance precludes more involvement.

The Board through the Chair and with the Principal, Mr Cahill appreciate the opportunities to meet with the Trustees during the year to raise concerns, discuss issues and to be informed and to have the opportunity to develop communication and build relationships.



BOARD GOALS FOR 2018

During the first meeting of the year, the Board analyses the results of the annual evaluation process to develop the goals for 2018. The survey results revealed the Board was *doing well* in:

- i. Willingness for honest, open transparency and decision-making
- ii. The recognition of the growth and changing needs of the College especially in the employment of support staff such as the Risk and Compliance Officer
- iii. Developing a greater understanding of governance structures, responsibilities and Kildare Ministries expectations.

The survey similarly indicated that continual attention needs to be given to succession planning and the search for suitable Board Director candidates.

As a consequence, and following a review of the achievement of the goals from 2017, the Board determined the following goals for the year:

The Brigidine College Board:

- 1) through the Mission, Formation and Succession Planning Committee, will seek new Board members in key areas and provide a structured induction program.
- 2) through the Mission, Formation and Succession Planning Committee and together with the College Leadership Team, will implement a process to review the College's Mission Statement.
- 3) through the Building and Property Committee, will continue to action the revised Master Plan towards the completion of Stages 1 and 2 of the Building Program.
- 4) through the Risk and Compliance Committee, will action the engagement of a Risk and Compliance Officer to support the Committee.
- 5) through the Risk and Compliance Committee, will engage in ongoing risk formation and education.
- 6) will further develop their knowledge and understanding of the College's heritage and ethos within the Catholic tradition.

This report is generally directed towards the achievement of these goals.

In discharging its responsibilities for the 2018 year, the Board was requested to give serious reflection, consideration and discussions to a number of extenuating and emerging influences on our horizon. Of the issues these consumed much of our time in consideration:

- Mission
- Funding
- Enrolment Trends
- Building
- Risk Management

To facilitate these decisions and the impact on our *due diligence* process, more discussion ensued around 10-year forecasts, levels of funding available, enrolments and how this determines our future growth and projects.

The development of the Strategic Plan 2018 – 2020 has given the framework from which planning and decisions flow.

All Boards have much to contemplate as we face uncertain times, a growing trend towards state education and their specialisation and a constant political football game of changing goalposts.

Like most other Catholic schools in Australia (except of course in growth corridors), there has been an impact, but we continue to strive towards faithfulness to our mission, a rich diverse curriculum, an environment for improvement and the development of happy, enlightened and inspiring young woman.

‘I have come in order that you might have life – life in all its fullness’

John 10:10

As followers of Christ, we are called to be both disciples and servant leaders. The Board Directors are indebted to those who invite us and then support us to be both.

Our young women, the recipients of our stewardship continue to inspire us in their generosity of spirit, the perseverance of respect, the pursuit of justice for all and above all else to be a hope filled and peace yearners.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Recognising that development and oversight of the College strategic direction is the most significant priority of the Board’s responsibility, the Board has been much more involved in the development of the Strategic Plan 2018 – 2020.

At the commencement of the year, the Principal Mr Cahill tabled the draft Strategic Plan which is centred around the Vision Statement, *‘Inspiring young women to be the difference’*.

- 1. Catholic Identity and Spirituality**
Living the Brigidine tradition and Catholic Mission in a contemporary way
- 2. Teaching and Learning Culture**
Enhancing a passion for learning and educational excellence
- 3. Student and Staff Wellbeing**
Developing and nurturing a resilient community
- 4. Stewardship of Resources**
Caring responsibly for a sustainable future



The Board discussed the Plan and advised that there were too many strategies to achieve in the three-year period. Following a revision by the College Leadership Team, the Board accepted the Plan.

The Board continues to monitor the achievements each meeting through the Principal reports, presentation by members of the Leadership Team and through the work of the Committees.

Achievement this year has been directed towards:

Catholic Identity and Spirituality

- ✦ Interpret the Catholic Faith, Spirituality and Scripture in the contemporary, pluralistic content
- ✦ Present expressions of Faith and Spirituality in the inclusive, eucharistic community
- ✦ Actively engage in faithful service of others in a just way

Learning Culture

- ✦ Cultivate a culture of continual improvement, where challenge is valued, without fear of failure that leads to achievement
- ✦ Transform learning into purposeful action
- ✦ Embed evidence-based practice, research and resources to enhance innovative and contemporary pedagogy and curriculum

Wellbeing

- ✦ Promote a safe and inclusive school community where students can flourish
- ✦ Support all staff to model wellbeing at the College
- ✦ Work in partnership with families and the broader community to develop authentic relationships

Stewardship

- ✦ Enhance financial practices and accountabilities for the 21st Century School
- ✦ Provide for an improved safe working environment
- ✦ Reduce the College's environmental footprint
- ✦ Continually update and engage in digitally enhanced operations
- ✦ Enhance the College's presence and profile in the community

The Board recognises that improvements qualitatively and quantitatively take time to achieve from careful planning and execution of plans. This year has been one of preparation and planning and it has become apparent that the basis for action has been very successfully achieved. The Board commends the College for this year of hard work, careful use of resources and encouraging and inspiring staff and students.

COMMITTEES

The detailed planning and proposed recommendations is conducted through the Committee system. A review of the needs and goals of the Board was conducted during the first meeting of the year (February) and the decision was made to retain the same Committees.

Through its *Charter* and *Code of Conduct* each Committee has a determined process, set of responsibilities and sets its own strategies to achieve its goals to fulfil the *College Strategic Plan 2018-2020*. The Committees work in a very professional organised manner and there has been robust discussions and worthy outcomes. I commend the Committees for their commitment, honest deliberations and fruitful outcomes.

Mission Formation and Succession Planning Committee

Chair Dr Kate Hall

Members Sr Chanel Sugden, Sr Margaret Daniels, Mr Andrew Beiers, Ms Libby Banks

Ex-officio Mrs Robyn Killoran, Principal Mr Brendan Cahill

The committee meets prior to each Board meeting as a matter of member availability. This committee has the responsibility for the *essence* of the Board.

Their goals for the year were:

1) To seek new Board members in key areas and provide a structured induction program.

The *Skills Matrix* provides the determination of the skills sets required for the Board to achieve its goals. The search is a continual process as we seek to find forward looking professional members who understand the work of our Board. We are also aware that we are not alone in this quest.

The Induction Program is an exciting concept and continues to be developed. A number of topics are now completed under the appropriate name – *Brigid's Well*. This is an online program consisting of a number of themes in *Formation* and *Governance*. The format comprises education (information), reflection questions and a face-to-face conversation with a mentor. Modules include:

- ✦ St Brigid
- ✦ The Brigidine Story
- ✦ Nano Nagle and the Presentation Sisters Story
- ✦ Catholic Schools and Catholic Identity
- ✦ The Brigidine College Story
- ✦ Kildare Ministries and the Concept of the PJP
- ✦ The Structure of Kildare Ministries
- ✦ The Brigidine Board and its History
- ✦ Introduction to Governance
- ✦ The Constitution and Role of Director
- ✦ What does Canonical and Civil Law mean
- ✦ Your responsibilities on the Board - Accountability to Kildare Ministries and the legal entity AINC / ASIC

2) Implement a process to review the College's Mission Statement

Some review has been conducted and a decision has been made to delay this goal until the next year.

3) To further develop the Board's knowledge and understanding of the College's heritage and ethos within the Catholic tradition.

The Committee continues to plan and organise meaningful, reflective learning experiences through our Formation Program as evidenced in this report.

Finance and Audit Committee

Chair	Mr Chris Byrne and Mr Matthew Dique
Members	Ms Joan McKay, Mr Michael Hogg, Mr John Auld
Ex-officio	Mrs Robyn Killoran, Principal Mr Brendan Cahill, Business Manager Ms Claudia Mathews

The Committee met a number of times during the year to undertake its responsibilities to:

- Review and advise the Board on the Annual Budget
- Review periodic Financial Reports
- Make recommendation on insurance provision for staff, students, building and property
- Advise the Board on financial strategies and conduct impact Risk Analysis
- Review and report to the Board on all aspects of the annual Audit and Financial Statements
- Devise policies appropriate to the risk management of all aspects of Finance
- Present the Audit Report and Financial Statements to the Annual General Meeting

The Committee spent considerable time evaluating and reviewing the 10-year forecast in light of the changing landscape of Federal funding and our Building project and to ensure our tuition fees remain affordable and in keeping with our mission and still be able to accomplish the goals of the Strategic Plan.

While enrolments remain a focus, the College has been fortunate to benefit from the new funding regime from 2020. Forecasts have been reviewed in light of this change.

Building and Property Committee

Chair	Mrs Robyn Killoran
Members	Dr Kate Hall, Mr Matthew Dique
Ordinary members	Mr John Hall, Mr Graham Killoran, Mr Paul Davies
Ex-officio	Principal Mr Brendan Cahill
Specialist Member	Business Manager Ms Claudia Mathews

This Committee has the responsibility to:

- Review of the annual Maintenance Plan and recommending it to the Board as part of the Annual Budget
- Periodic monitoring of the Maintenance plan
- Oversight of the Building Projects currently underway
- Development of any Policies relevant to the discharge of the objectives
- Monitoring risk Management

This Committee is to be commended for the time spent examining and reviewing documents and tenders, and meeting numerous times during the year to make recommendations to the Board to accomplish their goal:

1) To continue to action the revised Master Plan towards the completion of Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the Building program.

The result of their hard work is being realised as we watch the next building slowly emerge from the earth.

I am indebted to them for their diligence, knowledge, persistence and courage to make the decisions to proceed with choice of consultants, determine tenders and budgets to realise a building design and tight timelines for completion for occupancy for the 2020 school year.



The first stage of the Science and Technology building is underway with consultation and consideration still in progress for the Stage 2 Administration building.

The Committee has worked closely with the Finance and Audit Committee and Risk and Compliance Committees to realise this achievement.

Our thanks particularly to Mrs Claudia Mathews for her diligence, persistence and keen eye to ensure the necessary documents were prepared and ready on time for the Committee meetings.

Risk and Compliance Committee

Chair	Mrs Robyn Killoran
Members	Chairs of Committees: Dr Kate Hall, Mr Matthew Dique, Mr John Auld and Directors, Ms Hanh Luu and Ms Salwa Marsh
Ordinary Member	Mrs Dot Lawson
Ex-officio	Principal Mr Brendan Cahill, Deputy Principal Pastoral Ms Dana Wedge, Business Manager Mrs Claudia Matthews and Risk and Compliance Officer Mrs Jackie Wood

The Committee met a number of times during the year to achieve their goals:

- 1) To action the engagement of a Risk and Compliance Officer to support the Committee**
- 2) To engage in ongoing risk formation and education**

This Committee has indeed benefitted from the wise decision to appoint Mrs Jackie Wood as a Risk and Compliance Officer and the appointment of Mr John Auld to the Board.

Much energy has been spent collating and reviewing current policies and process documents.

The Risk Register has been reviewed and revamped to a much more workable document and in line with the cyclical review by Kildare Ministries. Much clearer delineation between Board and College documents has been made and a clearer process for reporting has been put into practice. The Board has also applied its Risk Appetite to the components of risk in the register.

In 2018, policies developed or reviewed included:

- Grievance
- Risk Management Appetite Policy and Procedures
- Teaching and Learning
- Wellbeing

Kildare Ministries Executive Officer Ms Erica Pegorer conducted the first review of the College's policies and procedures in the areas of:

- Catholic Identity and Mission
- Child Protection
- Audit and Finances

The successful audit was attributed to the professional approach of the Risk and Compliance Officer.

Other agenda items have included a review of the Workplace Health and Safety Incident reporting and a review of our insurance policies.

While it would be fair and honest to state this Committee struggled in its infancy last year, there is obvious strong evidence that through education and consideration, much has been achieved towards collation and consideration of the policies and procedures that were in place in the College.

The Board will continue to have training sessions in risk to ensure we continue to grow in understanding of this aspect of our role.

COMMUNICATION AND REPORTING

The Board continues to develop relationships with one another, members of the College community and Kildare Ministries community. The changing Board membership creates new and renewed relationship building. Opportunities for social interaction, acknowledgement and appreciation of Directors and staff are made at various times during the year, e.g. College Masses, Graduation, Awards and Acknowledgement Ceremony, Brigidine Day and at our end of year get-together.



At Board meetings, Directors respect and support one another both professionally and personally allowing the development of trust, transparency and honesty even during the most robust debates and difficult decision-making.

In recognising that the successful Board is determined by the relationship between the CEO (in this case the Principal) and the Board Chair regular formal and informal meetings are convened to discuss issues and to prepare the Agenda for the Board meeting.

The Board Chair has welcomed opportunities to meet with other Chairs of the enterprises of Kildare Ministries a couple of times a year and offer at these and other times to renew relationships with the Trustees.

The Principal's Report at each meeting is an important component of the Agenda. The Board appreciates the very considered comprehensive report that is presented. Considerable time is allocated to this to ensure the Board fulfils its responsibility in monitoring compliance with its mission.

This year, the Board has continued the practice of members of the Leadership Team presenting individually to present their goals for the year and to report on their outcomes towards the end of the year. These opportunities give the Board a closer picture and greater understanding of the work undertaken in these roles and has assisted in developing relationships and a two-way conversation of mutual request.

The Board communicates with the broader community through a variety of means. Face-to-face opportunities arise at the College events during the year while the recently revamped and restyled College website has a *Governance* link giving information about the Board, the Directors and our responsibility and will include this AGM Report.

CONCLUSION

The Board continues to evolve, to grow to recreate and receive. This year has presented a number of very difficult challenges from exciting opportunities and possibilities. Our new buildings will be much more than a physical growth on a changing landscape.

In this metamorphosis there are risks and no easy answers. However, in being risk takers (through diligence) we are change agents.

In order to be ready to meet these challenges, *Knowles and Wilson* tell us we need to be:

1. *Forward thinking* – spending time to look at the world outside the organisation to understand what the organisation needs to do to remain relevant and achieve our mission.
2. *Align people and practices* – ensuring the organisation is ready and able to deal with a very different set of challenges and opportunities.
3. *Creating a platform for engagement* – building the organisation's ability to effectively engage with funders and shareholders in an increasingly connected world.

For the year to come, the scene is set!

The Board congratulates the College on a successful year. In doing so, it acknowledges the very significant contribution made by the Principal Mr Brendan Cahill and the members of the Leadership Team. The Board is appreciative and understanding of the challenges the year has also given.

The Board congratulates Mr Cahill on his commitment to the *Mission* and *Values* of the Catholic school and its position in the Church and for his leadership in strengthening the community to a greater reverence for tolerance, equality and justice – for being a Christ centred community!

Strength and gentleness is encouraged, actioned and celebrated.

The Board thanks the staff for their continued support in ensuring each young woman is encouraged, realise they are unique and valued and to be the best they can be.

The Board acknowledges and appreciates the continual support that it and the College receive from their Brigidine Sisters including their presence at College functions and through the wisdom and presence of Sister Chanel and Sister Margaret as Directors of the Board.

The Board acknowledges the work and support of the Co-Chairs, Trustees and staff of Kildare Ministries as we continue to grow in understanding and acceptance of their roles and our responsibility in our organisation.

The Board sincerely thanks and acknowledges the very significant contribution Mrs Joanne Strachan makes to the preparation, organisation, recording and reporting of all the Board's activities and to Mrs Claudia Mathews as the Company Secretary. Both ensure the Board is compliant, informed, invited and acknowledged. We are indebted to them both for their patience, generosity of heart, passion of and loyalty to the College and service to the community.



As Board Chair, my sincere thanks to each of the Board Directors for their commitment, dedication and willingness to trust and support by ensuring they are well prepared for meetings, share their knowledge and many gifts with us and to be prepared to be risk takers and change makers for our young women. I am indebted to each of them for their support for and of me as I continue to grow in knowledge, faith and love of my Brigidine family.

In presenting this report, in the words of *Michael Morwood*,

'may we allow the Breath of Life to be evident in our words and actions, in our homes, in our workplaces (in our Board) and in our relationships and in our world'.



Robyn Killoran
Board Chair

