



## MARIAN SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### NEWSLETTER

01/2009

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Members of the Marian Community,

This is the first Board of Trustees Newsletter to the community. In response to the feedback received through the community survey and the constructive discussion surrounding our strategic direction, the Board resolved to provide the community with a Board specific newsletter. This is in addition to our regular notices contained in the general school newsletter.

The Board provides governance over the school and often makes decisions in consultation with the community, the Diocese and other key stakeholders impacting upon the future direction of the school. The Board would like to ensure continuity of communication to all members of our school community. We are mindful that the families that make up our community will change over a short period of time and as such, issues that were discussed and conveyed to the community by this Board or former Boards in the past will be new issues to those that have joined our community since.

#### **BOT Notice Board**

For those that are unaware, in the school office foyer is a notice board with a communication book for the Board of Trustees. Also located on the notice board is a schedule of Board policies for review and renewal. Please feel free to write in the book or contact the Board through the Board secretary, Mrs Stephens ([jstephens@marian.school.nz](mailto:jstephens@marian.school.nz)) if you have any comments to make. Thank you to those who have provided feedback on policies for review as well as providing views on current topics. Policies already reviewed and updated this year were: Health and Safety, Parental Access and Education of International Students.

All policies are available electronically through the school web site ([www.marian.school.nz](http://www.marian.school.nz)). The web site also contains information on the Board, who we are, our respective roles and the dates of upcoming Board meetings. Members of the school community are welcome to attend and observe our monthly meetings.

#### **Library Development**

One of the many strategic priorities set by this Board, former Boards and the Diocese is the replacement of the current school library. This was formerly approved to be built on the site of our pool, however, the issues surrounding the pool were separated from the library development after the Board received feedback from the community.

The Board and Diocese are currently in the process of developing concept plans and drawings. With a considerable amount of the school's land area being land filled gully, the new library will be built on the current site of the caretaker's shed adjacent to Marian house. The Board acknowledges that the placement of buildings wherever they go will always have those in favour and those against. The Board has rigorously debated the placement of the buildings and was ever mindful of the needs of the children, staff and greater community.

With the addition of a new building to house the library, the Board will be able to secure a new classroom to reduce class numbers and increase teaching space using the old library as a classroom. The Diocese currently has a moratorium on building new classrooms and without the new library our school would not be able receive an additional classroom until the moratorium is lifted. At this stage the duration of the moratorium is unknown.

#### **Pool Update**

Following feedback from the community, the Board separated the pool and aquatics programmes from the library redevelopment. The Board established a subcommittee chaired by Mr Matthew Cooper to investigate the viability of our pool, the potential for replacement and the options available for aquatics education. Geotechnical investigation of the soil surrounding the current pool will be undertaken this week and will assist the subcommittee in understanding the viability of the current site. Full consultation and feedback to the community will occur with the recommendations presented towards the end of the year.

### **Property Plan**

Representatives of the Diocese visit the school annually to assess and plan for the future property management of our school. As a State Integrated school, the Board must seek approval and funding for the majority of capital works from the Diocese. Included in long term property planning was the establishment of our new administration building, Marist block and the new library. Also on the long term plan from former boards was the installation of a lift in the St Mary's block to aid and benefit those with specific mobility needs. The Diocese has approved the commissioning of plans for the lift, the next stage in this project becoming reality.

Plans of the library, lift and other long term property plans will be posted on the BOT notice board when available.

### **External Reviews**

The School has recently received a positive audit review of our financial management processes. The Board is increasing its own spot checks of financial practices through proprietor's representative Sue Kenrick (treasurer) and parent representative Nonu Tui Samoa.

The Diocese has undertaken its Catholic Character review of Marian school and it was clear that Catholic Character is strong in our school community. The review found:

*"Marian Catholic School is a community where gospel values are central, where faith is nourished and where celebration in the Catholic tradition is highly valued. The principal and staff are to be congratulated on the superbly positive environment they present. They are proud of their history and work to ensure that this influences the present and future."*

The Education Review Office (ERO) visited the school in the first and second week of this term. ERO will provide a detailed report on how our school performs against national standards and will recommend areas of improvement. ERO will provide a community document summarising the findings as well as a detailed comprehensive report. When available, the community summary will be distributed to the community and the full report will be accessible through the ERO web site, our own school web site and the school office.

### **After School Care**

Over the last two years the after school care programme has received considerable review by the Board and after school care committee. The after school care programme was formally run as a separate entity to the school. It is now under school governance to ensure continuity of practice, policy and procedure with the after school staff and management reporting to, and working with, the Board to ensure the continued high standards of care.

### **Recognising Excellence**

The Board has requested that the promotion and celebration of excellence throughout the school be standardised across the whole school. There are many initiatives such as the Principal's Award that were not awarded across all teams. You are likely to see an increase in recognition for excellence with continuity across the teams.

### **Strategic Goals**

Building upon the community feedback received through the community survey and priorities identified by the school leadership team, the Board have set the following strategic areas of focus:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The implement the new Revised Curriculum</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improving written language, numeracy and reading comprehension</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Religious Education</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Physical Activity and skills</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Development of the Arts Curriculum</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Aquatics Education</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improved facilities</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Marian School Identity(Charism)</li></ul>

The Board welcomes your feedback on our newsletter initiative. Another edition will be published in term three with any additional information in the intervening period provided through the weekly school newsletter.

Baden Hilton  
Chairperson  
Board of Trustees  
26-May-09