mer·cy  [mur-seɪ]  noun (pl. -cies)
compassion or forgiveness shown toward someone whom it is within one’s power to punish or harm: the mercies of God.
• an event to be grateful for, esp. because its occurrence prevents something unpleasant or provides relief from suffering
• [as adj.] (esp. of a journey or mission) performed out of a desire to relieve suffering; motivated by compassion
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Standing from left: Sr Mary Moloney rsm, Dr John Brick, Sr Kath Tierney rsm, Mr John Shannon, Mr Eugene Lynch (Executive Officer)
Seated from left: Dr Annette Schneider rsm, Ms Patricia Ryan OAM
Inset: Mrs Lucy Molony

Legal Consultant Mr Jacob Okno
It is again a pleasure to present the Annual Report of Mercy Secondary Education Inc.

Once again we in Mercy Secondary Education have shared a year of blessings, challenges and celebrations.

The MSEI Strategic plan was formally launched and adopted at the 2008 Public General Meeting. A major challenge for us as a Board has been to ensure that the Plan remains a living document that informs everything we do. In August 2008 the Board spent two days in Ballarat, working with facilitator Kate Redwood, to set ourselves tasks and timelines. Our agenda is now presented under the headings of the six goals that form the framework of the plan to ensure that they remain at the heart of our deliberations. It seems appropriate therefore to report on the year that has passed in terms of the goals and objectives articulated in that document.

Living Ethos

To ensure that Catherine McAuley’s vision of the lived Gospel is at the heart of each education community.

It becomes very clear when one reads the Newsletters from all of our colleges that the vision of Catherine McAuley, and the message of the lived Gospel, are indeed at the heart of each education community. It is there in the reflections of the principals and other members of leadership teams, in the contributions of students, and in the reports of social justice activities and of liturgical celebrations.

World Youth Day was an event of particular significance in 2008 and the recollections and reflections of students and staff published in college Newsletters left no doubt of the profound effect of this experience of being part of the world-wide community of the Church. Of particular significance to our students and staff was the Mercy Day, held at Monte Sant’Angelo in North Sydney, which brought together close to a thousand people involved in Mercy Education.

The Seeds of Justice Group continues to be a vital manifestation of the spirit of Catherine McAuley in our schools as students are made aware of justice issues in our world and their responsibility to respond to the needs of those less privileged than themselves. It is appropriate to recognize here the significant contribution of Mr Darren Egberts, Deputy Principal – Director of Mission at Mount Lilydale Mercy College, who has been a member of the Seeds of Justice Committee since its inception in 2001, and has been the chair of its Steering Committee for the last five years. To Darren and to the other staff who lead and support the students in their justice education, thank you on behalf of the Board for the splendid work that you do.

The formation of staff in the Mercy Ethos continues to be a vital concern of the Board. This year for the first time there will be two Mercy Ethos programmes held at Baggot Street in Dublin for participants from a range of Mercy ministries, many of them from our schools. These programmes will be led by Deb Kent, Mercy Ethos Formation Coordinator, and Annette Schneider RSM. The second programme will include participants from other Sisters of Mercy congregations.

I was privileged to represent the Board at the Annual General Meeting of McKillop Family Services, and at launch of McAuley Community Services for Women, the new entity combining Mercy Care and Regina Coeli, and the Commissioning of its CEO, Ms Jocelyn Bignold. Both of these experiences gave me new insight into the depth and richness of these Mercy ministries, whose work embodies the spirit of Catherine McAuley.

This same spirit is symbolized in bronze in the Spirit of Mercy sculpture commissioned by the Academy of Mary Immaculate and created by Melbourne sculptor Pauline Clayton, as a fitting conclusion to the 150 Years celebrations.

Effective Governance

To review the MSEI model of governance to ensure that it is effective and appropriate to the issues and vision of the next decade.

The implementation of our strategic Plan has encouraged the Board to review a number of its existing policies and to formulate new ones as necessary. Regular meetings with Principals enable the Board to be aware of issues confronting Principals and to respond to these. The new policies regarding the naming of new Buildings and the writing of histories of Mercy institutions have been welcomed by Principals, as was an excellent presentation on the role of the archivist in a Mercy school.

Regular meetings with our WorkSafe Agent have assisted us in monitoring compliance in the area of Workers’ Compensation.

We were delighted recently to welcome to the Board, Mrs Lucy Molony, former Principal of Our Lady of Sion College, Box Hill and
for Principals, Deputy Principals and Business Managers to meet, our system, enjoyed by leaders, staff and students. The opportunity
of the great work of Mercy Education which is carried out with
dissesatisfactions with the former auditors on the part of Principals and
Strong Partnerships and Communications
The networks which link our schools are one of the great strengths of
Business Managers.
the Colleges and to provide advice and assistance when needed.
In 2008 new auditors were appointed in response to some
effective tool in measuring the strengths and drawing attention to areas
Conferences and Communications
The practice of meeting at different schools has been warmly
The Frayne Speech Festival, hosted splendidly in 2008 by Emmanuel
or our group of schools.
the Seeds of Justice Programme.
The practice of inviting current or past students from our schools to
Tributes and Thanks
I could not complete this report without paying tribute to the
remarkable contribution to Mercy Education and to Catholic
Education in Victoria of Sr Sylvia Williams rsm, who retired from her
It was fitting that one of the final celebrations of Sylvia’s Principalship
May I conclude by thanking my fellow Board Members for their
generosity, openness to new ideas and willingness to work together for
I am particularly grateful to Congregation Leader, Sr Kath Tierney,
former Director of Towards Healing. We welcome the wisdom and
experience that she will bring to the work of the Board.
Well-Supported Leadership
To ensure there is outstanding visionary and compassionate
educational leadership throughout Mercy Secondary Education.
In the last twelve months new Principals have been appointed to
Mercy Colleges. In Semester 2, 2008 Regina Byrne took up the role
of Principal of Sacred Heart College, Geelong, and at the beginning
of 2009 Darren Atkinson succeeded Sr Sylvia Williams as Principal
of St Joseph’s College, Mildura. We welcome and celebrate the gifts
of energy, enthusiasm and new ideas that these new Principals bring
to Mercy education. Board members engaged in consultation with
members of each school community prior to the selection process,
and served on the Selection Panels. The practice of Commissioning
of new Principals underlines the importance of the Principal’s role in
ensuring the passing on of the Mercy heritage and vision.
The Board is active in arranging mentoring for new Principals and
meets with each new Principal early in their term of appointment.
Board members are involved in goal-setting with new Principals and
in the appraisal cycle for Principals and Deputy Principals.
The Board is most appreciative of the important role of the College
Advisory Councils and the support they offer to Principals.
This year the Annual Seminar for Advisory Council Members provided
an opportunity for Council members to hear Sr Janette Gray RSM
address the subject of The Theology of Stewardship.
Effective Systems
To develop a practice of advice, planning, monitoring and review
which ensures relevance, viability and fidelity of the Colleges.
The Board has continued to monitor the financial management of the
Colleges and to provide advice and assistance when needed.
In 2008 new auditors were appointed in response to some
dissatisfaction with the former auditors on the part of Principals and
Business Managers.
The Board is supportive of the School Improvement Framework as a
useful tool in measuring the strengths and drawing attention to areas
in need of improvement. We are grateful for the knowledge and
experience in this area of our new Board Member, Mrs Lucy Molony
Participation in Policy Forums
To be proactive in our engagement with the wider Catholic Education
system.
Members of the Board have been involved in discussions with
CEOM regarding provision of Catholic Education in the inner
city area. Our Executive Officer, Eugene Lynch has represented
the Sisters Of Mercy on the Catholic Religious Victoria Education
Committee and is involved in a network exploring governance issues.
We have recently conveyed to the Grants Allocation Committee
concerns of Principals regarding funding issues.
Ms Patricia Ryan OAM
In 2008, the experience of World Youth Day was far reaching for individuals, for school communities and for the Church. Participation in this world event which was Catholic, and centred particularly on youth, has been memorable and in some instances, life changing for our young people.

For many, it was their first experience in sharing with youth from all over the world, focused in faith, participating in a Global Church. The preparation within school communities for WYD and the events that are happening in schools now because of WYD enable students to reflect on their experiences. It also allows them to further explore their Catholic identity as individuals and in the context of a faith community.

A constant challenge in our schools is to be leaders in faith education and to provide faith filled experiences for our students. It is also to give students a sense that it is “okay to be Catholic” and to confirm leadership in faith and social justice endeavours. There are many opportunities provided in our schools for students to develop their faith, skills and leadership qualities.

As I visit the schools, I am always deeply moved by and very proud of our students. Their ability to accept leadership in their student roles is outstanding and their contribution to the school community and its functioning is exceptional.

On behalf of the Sisters of Mercy, I thank the Principals for their leadership within the school communities.

Each Principal is supported in the local setting by a School Council. It is with appreciation that I acknowledge the role of the School Councils.

Thank you to the staff members of our schools. Your dedication is inspirational to students and community members.

The MSEI Board takes many roles in providing the governance structure for our Education Ministry. Their support and guidance for Principals and staff is greatly appreciated.

Thank you to the members of the MSEI Board for their commitment to the Board and their roles and for their leadership in this important ministry.

Mr Eugene Lynch, as Executive Officer, plays a central role in MSEI and I thank him for his dedication and generosity in his position.

In the Letter to the Ephesians, St Paul says to us … *through the Spirit may your hidden selves grow strong…* [3: 16-17]. I believe that this is your role as educators and for us, the Board and the Congregation, to support you in challenging and allowing the hidden selves of our young people to grow strong – in faith and in a nurturing environment.

*Sister Kathleen M Tierney rsm*
The work of the MSEI Association continues to provide assurance to the Melbourne Congregation that the education ministry of the Sisters of Mercy is alive and well and in very capable hands. Each of the Mercy sponsored and co-sponsored Colleges is led by a passionate, experienced and competent Principal, is sustained by a professional and generous staff and offers wonderful opportunities to hundreds of students to be educated in the rich Mercy tradition. Members of the MSEI Board take great pride in fulfilling their governance role in supporting principals, staff and students to ensure that Mercy education, founded by Catherine McAuley almost 180 years ago, continues proudly into the future. It is a remarkable statistic to note that every six years, approximately 10,000 students complete their Mercy secondary education and become equipped and confident to enter society and to make a difference in their world.

As described by Mary Sullivan rsm in the Life and Legacy of Catherine McAuley (2005), "Catherine’s approach to education was very simple: she wished to empower poor people and others to lead happy, mutually sustaining lives; she believed the development of girls’ and women’s talents (and probably boys’ and men’s too) is most conducive to the good of society; and she saw religious education as the centrepiece of a truly merciful education."

Nothing could be more evident in placing religious education as the centrepiece in our Mercy schools than the celebration of World Youth Day 2008. Hundreds of students and staff from Mercy Colleges gave their hearts, souls and minds to WYD08 in Sydney last year and joined in a once in a life time experience of publicly and proudly celebrating their Catholic faith in the presence of the Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI. So too was their much pride in a few days earlier when nearly 1,000 Mercy students, staff and Sisters gathered at Monte’ Sant Angelo in North Sydney to share and reflect on social justice issues in our world and on the corporal works of Mercy. This public expression was truly a culmination and manifestation of the important and consistent work that is undertaken in the religious education programs at our Colleges.

The Seeds of Justice Project, Young Mercy Justice Tree and Mercy Links continue to provide opportunities and forums for current students, and recently graduated secondary students from Mercy schools across the southern Australian states, to partake in social justice initiatives, to raise awareness and to play an active role in helping those less fortunate. These projects are sponsored by Mercy Congregations and bring the charism of Catherine McAuley to life in the wider secular world.

The series of professional development seminars offered through the regular MSEI program provides networking opportunities and support for principals, deputy principals, business managers, religious education coordinators and school council members. At recent seminars, Sr Jan Gray rsm, learned theologian and educator, stimulated the minds of school council members and RE teachers with her engaging and entertaining sessions on ‘Catholic secondary schools as Church in the modern world’ and on ‘The theology of stewardship’. Other MSEI seminars held over the past twelve months help strengthen relationships across the networks and encouraged the sharing of ideas and best practice.

While retirement can be accompanied with some degree of sadness or loss, the over-riding sentiment at the completion of Sr Sylvia William’s thirty plus years as a secondary principal was one of pride, admiration and appreciation. Sylvia finished her eleven year term as principal of St Joseph’s College, Mildura in January this year, having led three other Colleges as principal since the late seventies. Her contribution to Mercy education, and Catholic education in general over this long time, has been enormous and it has been a privilege to share some of her wisdom first hand when she was a member of the MSEI Board. Darren Atkinson, former deputy principal at SJC Mildura replaces Sylvia and we wish him, as well as recently appointed principal of SHC Geelong, Regina Byrne, much joy and success as they lead their Mercy education communities.

In closing, I wish to thank sincerely the members of the MSEI Board, in particular, Board Chair, Patricia Ryan, for their commitment, expertise and support for the work of the Association. For Congregation Leader, Sr Kath Tierney, I wish to express my appreciation for the confidence she has in the MSEI Board, for her trust in its operation and for her passion and understanding of all things Mercy. Finally I wish to acknowledge the expertise of the Board’s legal consultant, Jacob Okno, and for the loyal and professional support of Maureen Smyth and Effie Coulson in servicing the administrative needs of the Board.

It is indeed a privilege to witness how Mercy Education continues to be most conducive to the good of society.

Eugene Lynch
The College theme for 2008 was “Creating our Tomorrows Today” - a particularly appropriate theme for the first year of the post 150th era as our attention moved from an acknowledgement and celebration of our past to a focus on the exciting journey ahead, the next 150 years.

Mercy Day, at the Academy of Mary Immaculate, with its emphasis on community and celebration, is always described by students as the “best day of the year”. In 2008 this day took on an added significance, with the launch of our new Vision, Mission and Values Statement at our Mercy Day Mass. This Statement was a collaborative effort on the part of staff, students, parents, past pupils and School Council members providing us with the opportunity to reflect on our values, re-define our Vision and re-articulate our Mission.

Over the first few months of 2009 our focus moved to the development of an accompanying Strategic Plan 2009–2014 which will provide direction for us and support in realizing our Vision and Mission. This document, along with our new Prospectus, was launched on Foundation Day, April 20th.

Another significant event of the past twelve months was the unveiling of the Spirit of Mercy sculpture – a sculpture which depicts a woman alive with the fire and passion of Mercy, a welcoming presence, at the entrance of the College and a reminder of all we are called to be.

The religious dimension of the College continues to form the basis of all we do at the Academy. This is lived out in three main areas: Faith Development, Religious Education Curriculum and the Church in Action. These drive our approaches to all programs.

Life at the Academy has been very exciting for the students and they have eagerly accepted the challenges and opportunities offered to them. A group of twenty-six staff and students participated in World Youth Day and returned exhilarated by this event and burning with zeal to share the experience. It was certainly a defining moment of the year.

The Justice Group, a very dynamic group at the College, continues to challenge us all by consciousness awareness raising as well as by offering practical support and assistance to worthy causes.

Student Leadership is strongly encouraged at the Academy. The Senior SRC held a very successful 20:20 summit, a forum which provided students from all year levels with the opportunity to articulate their issues and to prioritise an action plan for the future. A student representative of the Senior SRC also attended each meeting of the School Council and a number of students led the “Talk and Tours” for prospective parents.

Students explored the world with Cultural Tours to France and Japan. In turn we welcomed staff and students from our sister school, Nishiyama High School in Japan - what a strong relationship the two schools now have! Many students enjoyed participating in our production of “Cinderella”, while sport was the catalyst for involvement for others.

To optimise the Teaching and Learning program of the College the decision was made to move to a fortnightly timetable and from a seven period to a six period day. This has proven to be a very positive and successful move as has the introduction of VCAL as another Pathway for students.

Staff Professional Development has had a particular emphasis on teaching and learning with staff forming learning teams to investigate specific action research projects as part of their work in the area of the Thinking Curriculum.

In terms of Technology our focus has been on the introduction of our new intranet, SIMON, and the refinement of the Online Attendance system associated with this.

I acknowledge with gratitude all who have contributed to the life of the College this year especially the dedicated and committed staff of the Academy.

Recently one of our parents made the following comment:
“At the Academy they don’t only concentrate on getting A+ in the head, but also A+ in the heart”.

Ursula Frayne would have been proud to hear this!

Sr Mary Moloney rsm
Principal
When I arrived at Sacred Heart College the theme for the year was ‘Step Up’, and step up the Sacred Heart Community did!

On reflection, it wouldn’t have been easy to have a third Principal within ten months arriving half way through the year but the community rose to the occasion. My transition was easy, thanks to John Shannon whom I would like to thank. His experience, wisdom and leadership of the school over the first six months of 2008 is still remembered fondly by the community.

**Significant Moments of 2008**

**National Sorry Day** on 13 February was a significant moment in our nation’s history. Within the Sacred Heart Community this momentous occasion did not go unnoticed nor did the significance of the history that led to this apology.

**World Youth Day** was an amazing experience for staff and students. It was an opportunity to share their faith with thousands of people from across the world. Even though World Youth Day was in Sydney there was a filtering effect around the state of Victoria leading up to the event. Our College Vocal Ensemble played a significant part in the ‘Days in the Diocese’ liturgical celebrations held at Telstra Dome. Mrs Margaret Wills was seconded by the CEO late in 2007 as Musical Director to coordinate this event. As a college we sponsored Emiliana Armaral and Lucia Hornai from the Instituto Catolico para Formacao de Professores Baucau, Timore Leste (Catholic Teachers’ College, Bacau). The Old Collegians provided the money, staff member Mr Paul Kenny provided a home away from home. The college community welcomed them with open arms. This sponsorship has strengthened the bond between the Bacau community and Sacred Heart College.

**TriUMPH Fest** (Tri-schools United to make Poverty History) was a joint initiative between the students of three Catholic Secondary Colleges - St Joseph’s, Clonard and Sacred Heart. This one day music festival was held at St Joseph’s on 1 September to raise awareness of issues of global poverty, environmental sustainability and Indigenous rights within the world today and to raise much needed funds for the region of Timor Leste. The three colleges of 4,000 people, 8 bands and 6 hours of music raised $43,000.

The College Social Justice Group continues to go from strength to strength. This aspect of the college impressed me greatly on my arrival. I was impressed that it was more than a fundraising group. The students are actively involved in social justice activities such as the Felicity Project, Seeds of Justice, serving breakfast and dinner at Christ Church, tutoring Sudanese children, Mercy Convent visits and Maryville Nursing Home visits. They raise awareness within our community of those in need locally and overseas. This is Mercy at its best.

Even though we did not undertake any capital programs in 2008 we are preparing plans and costings for a new Information Resource Centre and VCE Centre. We are also looking at minor refurbishments of the Carmel O’Dwyer PE Centre to allow us to gather as a school community. In 2008 we remodelled an old Science Lab into two demonstration labs and our old dark room into a digital media lab.

We can now say with confidence that we are an International Baccalaureate school, our staff are now experienced in the delivery of this curriculum and the benefits for the students are evident. The yearly moderation is now approached with confidence rather than trepidation and in 2009 we will be starting the review process for the IB.

The co-curricular program at Sacred Heart College is extensive. If a student has an interest, there is a staff member willing to give up time to enable that student to explore it. Lunchtimes are packed with meetings, sports trials, rehearsals – there is something to suit everyone.

We continue at Sacred Heart to be blessed with very supportive affiliated groups. Our College Council, Old Collegians, Parents and Friends and Rowing Club give generously of their time and expertise. I would like to thank the College Leadership Team, Mrs Martina Millard, Mr Peter Morgan, Ms Anna Negro, Mr Tony Grant and Mrs Kath Walsh for their generosity of time and patience with the ‘new kid on the block’. Also my assistant Mrs Suzanne Skidmore for her tireless energy and ability to make me look like I was totally in control at the ‘helm’.

December 3rd 2009 is approaching rapidly. This will begin our 150th Year celebrations as we recognize the arrival date of the Sisters of Mercy to Geelong. 18 April 1860 was the official ‘first day’ of school at Sacred Heart College. Ironically 18 April in 2010 falls on a Sunday so preparation has begun as we make this our main day of celebration.

So looking back at my first six months, how could I sum it up in a few words … the spirit of Catherine McAuley is present in all that we do …

There is much to be done, 2010 is on the way …

Regina Byrne
Principal
Catherine McAuley’s practice of looking for images of the cross in ordinary objects underpinned our liturgical celebrations and our participation in the World Youth Day events. The theme “Everyday Crosses” not only linked well with our participation in the Journey of the Cross and Icon leading up to World Youth Day but also helped us explore the spirituality of Catherine and the Sisters of Mercy. In a very secular world this simple practice can be a powerful reminder of our faith and how we present this faith to others. This year we are privileged to have Fr Justin Woodford working with us one day a week as College chaplain. We look forward to a richer sacramental life within the College and the opportunity for students and staff to have spiritual direction.

At the end of 2008 Mrs Mary Dean finished her five year term as Director of Religious Education and Faith Development. We are truly grateful for the enthusiasm and commitment she brought to this demanding task. Staff and students alike have benefitted from her wisdom, determination and knowledge and she has set a solid foundation for future development in this area.

Much work has been done in the curriculum area developing processes to enable the reporting of student learning goals. The implementation of Part 2 of the reports, as required by the Commonwealth Government, complicated the normally straight forward processes for student reporting. While it involved significantly more work by teachers, the opportunity for students to become aware of the learning goals and evaluating their achievement against these goals should have long term benefit for their learning. The work of implementing the Thinking Curriculum continues and staff are making significant gains in this area. Last year a review of the Assessment and Reporting Policies was undertaken and resulted in the amalgamation of these two policies.

After many months of preparation, in late August we welcomed nineteen students and three staff from our sister school in Milan, Educandato Statale Setti Carraro Dalla Chiesa. This was a great opportunity for a special exchange between the two schools and one we hope will endure for a long time. At the end of term one this year, we sent a much smaller cohort, six students and two staff to stay with the families from the school and attend classes and functions there. The purpose of the relationship is to encourage the study of the Italian language and to provide enrichment for our students studying history and design. The friendships that developed out of such opportunities are very enriching and will be cherished by each participant for a long time.

The end of 2008 saw the conclusion of our current Strategic Plan and in evaluating what we had achieved we were able to note significant changes had occurred at the College. Towards the end of this four year cycle, the leadership team decided that being part of the School Improvement Framework (which was implemented by the Catholic Education Office, Melbourne), was a valuable way of continuing to further the work of the Strategic Plan and at the same time providing us with a coherent way of using data to drive the next four year plan.

The college community was saddened by the announcement of the closure of St Joseph’s College, Melbourne in the next two years. Being the closest boys’ school to the College we have a long history of cooperation. The announcement that Simonds College would be taking students to year 12 is good and we will be looking at ways to help them make this transition.

The legacy of Catherine McAuley to empower young women through education is continuing to bear fruit in North Melbourne. Our VCE results and VCAL results have continued to improve and the education offered to our students is outstanding. This improvement results from the hard work of the students, their teachers and is well supported by their parents. This partnership is an important aspect of the wonderful community spirit and sense of belonging that so characterises St Aloysius College. I want to thank all those who daily contribute to ensuring that learning and teaching are the focus of our efforts and who, through their commitment and dedication, enable our students to become active and conscientious participants in society; young women imbued with gospel values prepared to follow in the footsteps of Catherine McAuley.

John Davidson
Principal
Another successful 12 months have passed for Sacred Heart College — a year where, in keeping with our College theme for 2008, we all endeavoured to be Living Witnesses.

For staff, the theme was opened up to us by the Mercy Ethos Coordinator, Deb Kent. At a staff day in May, Deb spoke about spirituality, charism and mercy in the Western tradition, placed Catherine McAuley within that tradition and gave us the opportunity to reflect on what it all means for us in Kyneton today. For surely, “if the love of God really reigns in your heart, it will quickly show itself in the exterior.” (Retreat Instructions p. 145)

For students, our hope is that through the various programs offered to them, they also come to a deeper understanding of what it means to be a living witness. The signs are there. For example, at our first College Council meeting this year one of our College Captains, Laura Caruana, in speaking about her time at Sacred Heart, thanked the school for giving her the chance to attend World Youth Day which she described as, “the best thing that I have done in my life”.

As a follow-up to WYD the College has established an Encounter group where senior students led by a small team (which includes our Liturgy Leaders) meet for social and faith-based events. Encounter brings together young people who have a commitment to their faith and an interest in exploring it further. More recent examples of witness came in response to the bushfires — for instance forty Year 12 students donated blood for the first time and at a College Assembly in March students presented a representative of the Redesdale community with a cheque for $10,000.

For parents, opportunities to be involved at the College are valued. The Service Scheme, Friends of the Music Program, College Fair, School Production (The Wizard of Oz), Parents and Friends Association and the School Improvement Framework were some of the activities which saw every family contribute in one way or another to the life of the College.

The School Improvement Framework (SIF)

In 2008 the College was one of ten Catholic secondary schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne to take part in a process which aims not only to satisfy expectations of government on issues of accountability but also to assist schools and teachers to improve student learning outcomes.

The SIF process identifies five key spheres of school life – Education in Faith, Learning and Teaching, Student Wellbeing, Leadership and Management and School Community. A survey of all staff and a random sample of 100 parents and 150 students was conducted. An external reviewer spent four days in the College and presented his final report to staff and to College Council in November. The report, whilst overwhelmingly positive, offered a number of areas for improvement. There were few surprises as most of the suggestions had originated from one of the five focus groups.

In 2009 our energies have been directed to formulating the first SIF Annual Action Plan. The Leadership Team and the five Working Parties have been busy prioritising the thirty “Intended Outcomes” from the final report. Exciting times ahead.

The Leadership Team

I want to acknowledge the work of the Leadership Team at Sacred Heart College. Brian Reed (Deputy Principal: Faith Development and Staff, Student Welfare), Elaine Dugdale-Walker (Staff Professional Development), Judy McDonald (Director of Teaching and Learning), Kerri Ruff (Daily Organiser) and Tim Walsh (Business Manager) are all outstanding leaders. In my dealings with them and when I see the manner in which they interact with others, I reflect on the appropriateness of the College’s 2009 theme: Thank God You Are Here.

John Arthurson
Principal
Spiritual Formation
A significant highlight of 2008 was our ability to increase the number of occasions that we gather as one community to celebrate the special events throughout the year.

The Passing of the Message Stick which acknowledged the Journey of the World Youth Day Cross and Icon was a special celebration. WYD08 was a central focus of the College throughout 2008. The generosity of the staff and the determination of the students to live out the gospel arising from their experiences were features that extended well beyond their return.

The most moving liturgical celebration was recently held to acknowledge and give praise to the emergency services whose heroic deeds saved scores of lives, wild life and property during the recent devastating bush fires. Our College was directly impacted upon by Black Saturday with the lives and property of our community members under continued threat for several more days.

The Spirit of the Community rose to the occasion and offered much support for all those affected. As with the broader community, it was uplifting to see the outpouring of compassion for those in need. Schools, associations and past pupils all made contact with the College to offer assistance. Our Mercy brothers and sisters were exemplary in providing emotional and financial support.

As part of our commitment to the Reconciliation process, the College has developed a formal relationship with the Worowa Aboriginal College. This relationship has enabled us to establish the ‘Archbishop Sir Frank Little Scholarship’ for indigenous students. We continue to also provide a welcoming hand to Sudanese refugees displaced by the conflict in their home country.

Community
Parental support and appreciation, as identified by our parent satisfaction surveys and community feedback, remain high. Parents have indicated that the sense of community at our College is highly valued and greatly appreciated. Such sentiment is evidenced in our enrolment numbers. Demand continues to far outweigh available places. The College needed to apply for an increase in our Year 7 intake for this year from 250 to 256 to cater for all the Catholic students who applied. There was also strong demand for available places throughout the year at other levels that arose from student relocation.

Teaching and Learning
Three VCE students were selected to perform in the VCAA Top Acts and Top Drama Performances. This is a credit to the students and to the staff in our Performing Arts Faculty. Our VCAL students were formally acknowledged at a civic function by the Mayor of Lilydale for their generosity to the local community. Whilst our VCE results are but one measure of learning, I am pleased to advise that our results in VCE and VCAL continue to remain strong.

Wellbeing
Our leadership structure in 2009 introduced two Directors at McAuley and Barak Campuses. These senior positions encompass a Learning person and Pastoral person to ensure we maximise our support for each child. Combined with our Year Level Coordinators, School Counsellors, Wellbeing Coordinator, and Deputy Principal of Students, the College provides support to our homeroom and subject teachers. We continue to deliver programs that build relationships and enhance resilience assisting our students to face challenges with hope for the future.

Capital Development
Our new building project, the Design and Technology Building has commenced. We look forward to moving in before the end of the year.

Environmental issues have been a primary focus. A 260,000 litre water tank has been installed to collect rainwater that is reticulated for use in toilets and on our grounds. A bore has been established to support our recycled water system and a new irrigation system using B grade water from Yarra Valley Water has been installed to maintain our main ovals.

Challenges for the future
Whilst reflecting upon the characteristics of Catherine McAuley we must not lose sight of the fact that her model was Jesus. Catherine had an intense love for the gospels and a profound insight into the dignity of each person. Catherine recognised that Jesus is the person who reveals God to us. Each person is a pearl of great value, and needs to be treasured.

In times when many Catholic students are ignorant of the details of Jesus’ life, we are challenged to present the good news in a way that helps each student develop a relationship with Jesus.

Bernard G Dobson
Principal
It is a great privilege to submit my first annual report as Principal in what can only be described as an “eventful” year in the rich history of St Joseph’s College, Mildura. A number of significant milestones have been celebrated including a change in leadership, the completion of two significant capital projects incorporating a grand opening, and the 50th anniversary of our College Ball.

Sr Sylvia Williams

After eleven years of distinguished service to the St Joseph’s College community, Sr Sylvia decided that this year would be her last as Principal. Her contribution to the College is important in many ways. Most observable is the substantial capital works that have been undertaken. Less obvious, but arguably of greater value, has been her encouragement of growing professionalism amongst our staff and a desire to showcase St Joseph’s College as an outstanding educational setting in both our local and wider community. We were able to farewell Sr Sylvia at our Advisory Council Dinner in December. A highlight of the evening was a performance from a small troupe of Irish Dancers, celebrating a much loved pastime of Sylvia. In her response, Sr Sylvia was inspirational in describing what it means to be a Principal for over thirty years. We wish her every blessing in her next “great adventure”. As her successor, there is a great challenge to maintain such high standards of leadership in a spirit of Mercy.

Mercy Theatre and Performing Arts Centre

The Mercy Theatre was formally blessed and opened in October. A substantial capital project transformed the third basketball court of the SJC Stadium into a 360 seat theatre, dance studio, and classrooms to support tuition in the performing arts. In what turned out to be an excellent decision, it was felt that a theatre really should not be “opened” without some form of performance. The evening that ensued showcased some of our finest talent in what could only be described as an event that surpassed all expectations. We were most fortunate to have a number of past students, each now well established in their particular fields of the performing arts, very keen to return to their school and participate in this evening.

McAuley Refurbishment

We are enjoying the opportunity to experiment with some different learning situations as a result of the redevelopment of the McAuley Wing. This refurbishment was possible due to a grant obtained from the Victorian Government Needs Based Capital Assistance Funding and was completed ready for the 2009 school year. The refurbishment has created two flexible learning areas with several break out and passive learning areas, along with byte style desks which encourage creative grouping arrangements. Both rooms are equipped with smart boards, data projectors and computers available for student use. Upstairs, original rooms have also been refurbished, and with improved acoustics and serviced by reverse cycle cooling and heating, we have a more pleasant learning environment. Students have found the rooms to be conducive to a more varied lesson structure and greater opportunity for more collaboration in their learning.

College Ball 50th Anniversary

A much loved legacy of past Principal, Sr Pancratius Holland (1957-71), is our annual College Ball. This gala event for students in Year 9 and above, resplendent in their evening dresses and suits, celebrated its 50th anniversary this year. We decided that we needed to mark this milestone and invited a number of special guests. Of special note were a small group who were actually at the very first ball, including our own Sr Patricia Fitzgibbon. A small band of dedicated staff members put together a most memorable night for all participants.

Mercy Works

We have introduced a new subject at Year 8 level called Mercy Works. It is an activity based program focussing on community service. Denise Knight our Mercy Ethos Coordinator has been working with her team to develop an engaging and valuable program. Mercy Works is seen as a vehicle for involving students in the wider Sunraysia community as well as educating the students in the personal growth that can come from volunteering. The course is practical in nature and is seen as an adjunct to our established Religious Education Program. Initial reaction from the students involved would suggest that there is high engagement of the students and that they are looking forward to making a meaningful contribution to the local community.

A note of thanks

I would like to conclude with a note of thanks to Sr Kath, Patricia Ryan, Eugene, the other members of MSEI Board and my colleagues in our Mercy network of schools for the wonderful support I have felt in my short term as the Principal of St Joseph’s College.

Darren Atkinson
Principal
Education in Faith
In September we launched the College Mission Vision and Values at our Mercy Day Mass in the presence of Sr Kath Tierney, Ms Patricia Ryan and the College community. The values of Compassion, Justice, Courage and Joy reflect for us the ethos of the Sisters of Mercy, the foundational story of Catherine McAuley and the rich story of our history at OLMC. The Vision gives a clear direction about being a community where relationships are nurtured and where young women are educated to actively participate in creating a world of peace and justice.

Education in faith is a high priority for us whether through our RE program or through opportunities for students to be involved in community service and social justice activities. Karen Rivalland leads this area with passion and is well supported by Giovanna Scolo and Kathryn Williams in social justice. Our students continue to be enthusiastically engaged at the Austin Hospital, Collingwood Soup Van, St Pius Reading Club and in activities for the Exodus Community in our local area.

Prayer and liturgy are regular parts of school life and the College is fortunate to have great support from the local priests to enable our students to have regular and meaningful liturgy.

Learning and Teaching
The main focus of the work of staff over the last twelve months has been the implementation of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards and the accompanying review of our assessment process. Staff have really engaged in the demanding process of developing and implementing rubrics for assessment. Fiona Hyslop and the Domain Leaders led this process with clarity and determination and staff responded with great professionalism.

2008 VCE results were pleasing with four of our Year 12 students gaining ENTER scores over 99 and two students, Carmel Condello and Jessika Syrjanen receiving study scores of 50. Another VCE success was Stephanie Cammarano. Her photography was selected for VCE Top Design and was used for the poster for that exhibition. Work started on the Heidelberg Project which is a staff project to create a learning program at Year 9. The program will embrace learning in the local community and wider community.

In August we signed a Sister School Agreement with Seirei College in Akita, Japan. We join Sacred Heart Geelong in this sister school agreement. This completes the planning for overseas language experience in the three languages offered at OLMC. In 2008 a group of students visited Italy and we hosted 32 students from Seirei and this year we will have a group of students travelling to France.

Student Wellbeing
In 2008 we moved back to a Year 7 – 12 Wellbeing model led by Teresa Lincoln, Vice Principal. The Wellbeing team worked hard to develop a case management model for its work and continued to implement restorative practices, which was a focus of a whole school professional learning at the end of Term One.

Leadership and Management
New appointments have been made in VCE Leadership, Adrian Flanagan; Head of Library, Patricia Sweeney and Head of Learning Support, Benita Bowles. These staff have added significant expertise to our staff and have created new momentum in their areas.

A new integrated professional learning and appraisal model is being implemented this year. We are naming it Recolo, a Latin word meaning to reflect upon, consider, to cultivate or work again. Term One has been committed to interviews with all staff to develop individual school based learning plans and we now move into the collaborative learning phase of the project.

Two staff members resigned at the end of 2008 after twenty-five years of service. Celeste Pegoli and Joan Audino served the school with passion and energy. We gathered at a cocktail party in December to farewell them in the presence of three former principals under whom they had served, Sr Beth Calthorpe, Mrs Philippa Darmody and Sr Helen Delaney.

School Community
The Parents Association continues to be an enthusiastic group committed to creating community and raising money. An ABBA night in August 2008 and a Food and Music Festival in March 2009 were their major activities.

We continue to foster our relationship with Marcellin College, our neighbouring boys’ school, with our joint production of West Side Story in 2008.

Preparations are well on the way for the celebration of the centenary of OLMC in 2010 and a committee has been meeting for over twelve months.

Infrastructure
At the end of 2008 we completed two development projects after a few years of inactivity. The Library has been refurbished and relaunched and Marylands now has a “Tiger Turf” surface. Alongside this, Nic Sulzberger has led the development of a Master Plan, now endorsed by MSEI, and planning is almost complete for Stage One of a three story building of general classrooms and Science rooms.

With all these developments we try to make sure that we never forget the purpose in all that we do and that is about what is best for Olivia, Bianca, Daniela, Clare …….and all of our 1116 students.

Julie Ryan
Principal
The Opening College Mass this year, for the first time, was held off site and required the whole College to move to St Pius X hall in West Warrnambool. After the induction ceremony at that Mass, one of the College Captains, Gemma Gray, addressed the student body:

Our theme for 2009 as a student body is: **We inspire involvement, life is reality.** We believe this acronym and statement of intention relates to the challenges we face as a College and highlights the difference between living lives virtually, and living life as a reality.

Being caught up in a false, virtual world where we don't relate to each other and don't become involved with our school, is opposed to living a real life in which we grasp the opportunities we are faced with and attempt to maximise our involvement to get the most out of our lives.

With the end of term one, the Pascal Mystery fast approaches. What greater call can we have from our student body than to be fully involved in the lives of others as Jesus would have us do. The students from our College offer us such great hope.

The overall enrolment of the College continues to grow with an enrolment of 1019 students in 2008, 1064 students in 2009 and current projections for 2010 being 1130. The pressure on College facilities is still a very real issue, although the building program continues to go well. 2008 saw the construction of a new Science Laboratory and the complete refurbishment of two courtyard areas surrounding it. One of these courtyards has been re-dedicated to all the past Principals of our College. Presently under construction is a new Food Technology Centre that should be available for student use by semester 2, 2009. The College Building and Facilities Committee has now turned its attention to the development of a new Master Plan to take the College to 2020.

We were privileged to have Anne Doody working with us again this year with the focus of our professional development on Literacy across the curriculum. The concept of ‘Life Long Learning’ is alive and well at Emmanuel with the College continuing its roll out of Smartboards. This technology is having an impact on the pedagogy of many staff and it is exciting to see students assisting staff as they develop their skills.

This year has seen the introduction of two Teaching and Learning Coordinators. The establishment of professional reading groups and technology tutorials has been a positive outcome for the College. It is anticipated that these groups will grow in popularity as the benefits that can be gained from engaging in these activities is fully realised.

Much of the Curriculum Committee’s energy this year has been directed at implementing the recommendations from the review of the Flexible Learning Years (FLY) program. Reviewing curriculum offerings, and when necessary, developing new courses is an exciting process as it helps ensure that students are provided with the best possible programs.

During 2008, as an outcome of our whole school wellbeing review, the Student Wellbeing Team was enhanced with the appointment of a full-time School Counsellor. This decision has allowed the team members to be more proactive in spending more time in preventative and early intervention practices with the support of a professional counsellor to work with the more sensitive and ongoing cases.

There can be no doubt about the focus of our students in the area of social justice. Involvement in Kids View Conferences, Edmund Rice Camps, World Vision events and Seeds of Justice all require a great commitment as most workshops require a great deal of travel and organisation of events takes an enormous amount of energy and time. This energy continues to amaze me as does the creativity of their young minds in generating new ideas.

World Youth Day was a major event for the Australian Catholic Church in 2008. Our Year 10 and Year 11 students who attended found it to be a life changing experience. They were overwhelmed by the number of people in attendance, the joyful atmosphere and the amazing liturgies. They certainly gained an appreciation of the universality of our Church.

Retreats and Reflection Days continue to be a feature of the College calendar and continue to evolve. In 2009, like the Year 10s, Year 9 students will experience the skills of an outside team called NET Ministries. The Year 11 and 12 retreats continue, although in 2008, the Year 11 retreat was held in Warrnambool as we continue to investigate new venues to cater for our growing numbers.

The power of prayer and liturgy for both student and staff has certainly been reinforced during 2008. The College Community experienced great challenges as we mourned the loss of parents and our friend and colleague, Dennis Wilson. These challenges really highlighted the effectiveness of the bonds we share as a community and our reliance on our connection with God in prayer and ritual.

Philip Morison
Principal
Our 2008 College Theme; Ignited by the Spirit, Excited by the Journey, called us to listen to the call of the spirit throughout the year. A significant drive for this came from our World Youth Day Pilgrims which included 160 students and 24 staff. This was a truly life changing experience for so many teachers and staff. I also believe the aftermath of the experience has, and will continue to be, life changing for our school community.

From the 2009 Opening Mass until the final Thanksgiving Mass our theme was a valuable tool to explore the reality of the Gospels in our lives. In 2009 we conducted an extensive review of the Catholic Identity element of our college and this was a very affirming process for our Faith Team and College Community. The achievements in this area are the result of a very strategic plan over the last five years. Kate Fogarty (Director of Catholic Identity) made an enormous contribution to our College Community over the last three years. Her deep commitment to our faith, limitless energy and great work ethic, have enabled her to lead great initiatives in our College. Kate left us at the end of 2008 to become Co-Principal at St Joseph’s College, Echuca.

In 2008 we trialled a Teacher Advisor Program. This required more regular reporting to parents and closer mentoring of students throughout the year. The program was seen as very successful in the guidance and support provided for students and parents. In 2009 this program has been extended to all students at Years 8 and 10.

After many months of negotiations, we were partners in a consortium to build a Trade Training Centre for the students of Bendigo. The $10.2M proposal to the Australian Government has been accepted and will provide state of the art facilities for students wishing to study in trade shortages such as Agriculture, Horticulture, Engineering, Building and Construction, Hospitality and Automotive. The submission includes a proposal to build a $2.5M Agriculture and Horticulture centre at La Valla.

In the last 12 months we lost two students, Sarah Slattery (Year 10) in May and Rachael Zimmer (entering Yr 12) in January. Our College Community once more rallied behind families, students, staff and parents grieving over the sudden loss of a young person.

In 2009 we have moved to a Vertical Pastoral Care program. The centre of this change was the creation of six new Pastoral Houses. The naming of the new houses was done to acknowledge the unique nature of our school in this place at this time and from within our own heritage. The houses are Backhaus, Champagnat, Jaara, MacKillop, McAuley and Vincent.

We have also been blessed to have two new appointments to Senior Leadership positions. Ms Giselle Talbot, Deputy Principal – Staff, and Miss Rachel Lechmere, Director of Catholic Identity, have already begun to make significant contributions.

In 2009 our College Theme is: Let their stories change our heart. This has been a very powerful theme during Term One when our focus is on the work of Caritas around the world. It is a theme which our students are finding challenging and relevant to their daily lives. I look forward to the remainder of 2009 as the stories of Jesus, and many others, call all of us at Catholic College Bendigo to change our hearts.

Darren McGregor
Principal
Catholic College Bendigo
Students: 1,767.2 Staff: Teaching 142
Non-teaching 75 Religious 3
HEAD COUNT 220 = 192.2 FTE

Emmanuel College, Warrnambool
Students: 1064 Staff: Teaching 86
Non-teaching 47 Religious 1
HEAD COUNT 134 = 112.6 FTE
Mercy Education Secondary Incorporated

Excludes Depreciation

### Recurrent Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>11 months ended 31 December 2007</th>
<th>12 months ended 31 December 2008</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuition</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>27.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other private income</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>3.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>General recurrent grants</td>
<td>66.2</td>
<td>68.8</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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Income: 72,529,338

### Recurrent Expenditure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>11 months ended 31 December 2007</th>
<th>12 months ended 31 December 2008</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salaries and on-costs</td>
<td>67.9</td>
<td>73.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Curriculum costs</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>8.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other recurrent costs</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>14.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transfer of funds to capital</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>3.1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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Expenditure: 72,529,338

### Capital Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>11 months ended 31 December 2007</th>
<th>12 months ended 31 December 2008</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fees</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>51.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital grants</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>18.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital loans</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>6.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Funds transferred from recurrent</td>
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<td>23.8</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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Income: 10,259,381

### Capital Expenditure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>11 months ended 31 December 2007</th>
<th>12 months ended 31 December 2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loan repayments</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>28.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital expenditure</td>
<td>79.8</td>
<td>71.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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Expenditure: 10,259,381
### ACADEMY OF MARY IMMACULATE, FITZROY
- **Chair:** Mr James Baker
- **Deputy Chair:** Ms Anne Walsh
- **Principal:** Sr Mary Moloney rsm
- **MSEI nominee:** Mr Adrian Fuller
- **Minute Secretary:** Mr Paul Romanin (Business Manager)

### SACRED HEART COLLEGE, GEELONG
- **Chair:** Mrs Anne Mathieson
- **Principal:** Sr Joan Wilson rsm
- **MSEI nominee:** Mr Kenneth Best
- **Minute Secretary:** Mrs Suzanne Skidmore (Development Manager)

### OUR LADY OF MERCY COLLEGE, HEIDELBERG
- **Chair:** Mr Pat Heagerty
- **Deputy Chair:** Mrs Trish Van Lint
- **Principal:** Mrs Julie Ryan
- **MSEI nominee:** Mr Robert Di Giacomo
- **Minute Secretary:** Ms Kay Vaughan

### SACRED HEART COLLEGE, KYNETON
- **Chair:** Mrs Rosemary Scarlett
- **Deputy Chair:** Mr Paul Strang
- **Principal:** Mr John Arthursom
- **MSEI nominee:** Sr Kaye Evans rsm
- **Minute Secretary:** Mr Timothy Walsh (Business Manager)

### MOUNT LILYDALE MERCY COLLEGE, LILYDALE
- **Chair:** Mr Kevin Dwyer
- **Deputy Chair:** Mrs Ann Newcomb
- **Principal:** Sr Madeleine M Fox rsm
- **MSEI nominee:** Mrs Gai Basso
- **Minute Secretary:** Mr Paul Tyndall

### ST JOSEPH’S COLLEGE, MILDURA
- **Chair:** Mr Chris Ellis
- **Deputy Chair:** Mrs Jane Kelly
- **Principal:** Mr Darren Atkinson
- **MSEI nominee:** Mr Darryl Pearl
- **Minute Secretary:** Mr Tony Finn (Director of Religious Education)

### ST ALOYSIUS COLLEGE, NORTH MELBOURNE
- **Chair:** Mrs Ann-Maree Wubben
- **Deputy Chair:** Mr Jeffrey Hanlon
- **Principal:** Mr John Davidson
- **MSEI nominee:** Ms Pauline Ashton
- **In attendance:** Ms Anne Henderson

### CATHOLIC COLLEGE BENDIGO
- **Governors:** Sr Kathleen M Tierney rsm
- **Congregation Leader – Sisters of Mercy:** Melbourne Congregation
- **Most Rev Joseph Grech DD:** Bishop of Sandhurst
- **Provincial Superior – Marist Brothers:** Melbourne Province
- **College Council:**
  - **Chair:** Dr Dennis O’Connor
  - **Principal:** Mr Darren McGregor

### EMMANUEL COLLEGE, WARRNAMBOOL
- **Governors:** Sr Kathleen M Tierney rsm
- **Congregation Leader’s nominee:** Mr Peter Richardson cfc
- **Board of Management:**
  - **Chair:** Ms Felicity Melican
  - **Deputy Chair:** Mrs Linda Wilkie Bell