Dear Parents/Guardians

Much has been happening in recent months and this Bulletin will give an update on these achievements as well as a summary of plans for 2011.

Thank you again, to the many parents who have expressed an interest to be involved in various areas connected with the new school. Parents who nominated themselves for involvement on committees will be contacted as committees commence their work. In recent times we have had excellent parent involvement on the sub-committees for developing the Motto and Logo, interviewing potential uniform suppliers and developing a marketing plan. Much more of course, will happen in 2011. We also have the generous support of parents on the Enabling and Education Brief Committees which have met almost monthly since the beginning of the year.

The following is a summary of planning in relation to the new school.

1. The Education Brief

   Staff from both schools discussed the Brief at a joint staff meeting. They were very supportive of the educational principles and made a number of recommendations for the learning spaces. These will be discussed in meetings with the architects as finer details of the facilities are developed. The Brief will be shared with parents early in 2011.

2. Vision/Mission/Logo and Motto

   The Working Party established after the Reflection Day on 15 September, facilitated by Sr Meg Kahler sgs developed a Motto and Logo for Good Samaritan Catholic Primary School. The Motto and Logo were officially launched on 23 November. In attendance were Frs. Ron Peters and Richard Healy; staff of the two schools; Mr Peter Turner, Director of Schools and CEO staff; several Sisters of the Good Samaritan; representatives of the parishes in the Pastoral Region and members of the Enabling Committee. Fr Ron led those present in a reflection of the Parable of the Good Samaritan and two parents led the reflection on the symbolism of the Logo, meaning of the Motto and the process of developing them. We congratulate the Working Party and school and CEO staff who assisted in the process on the day.

3. Uniform

   On 30 November, four uniform suppliers presented their proposals to a Committee comprising principals, staff and parents of the two schools. We have a preferred supplier with whom we are still in discussion about uniform distribution. The supplier will be working with the Committee, parents and staff to prepare a proposal for the new uniform to the Enabling Committee early in 2011.

4. Building Update

   Building has commenced and although we are currently blessed with unusually wet weather, the new facilities should be completed by term 4 2011. Next year Parent Information evenings will be held at Fairy Meadow to allow parents first hand opportunities to see the buildings.
5. Planning for 2011

On 8 November, key staff from the two schools developed a plan for all aspects of the amalgamation process for 2011. Fr Ron and Ms Jennie Werakso (Principal of St Brigid’s) joined us for part of the day. The Plan includes dates for enrolments, school events, joint staff meetings, professional development, opportunities for student visits, student leadership, moving into new facilities etc etc. A copy of relevant dates for parents is attached for your information. Should you wish to see a copy of the Plan, a copy is available from each school office.

6. The Next Parent Information Evening

This will be held on Tuesday 22 February at St John Vianney’s Fairy Meadow from 7-9 pm. Child minding will be available in an adjoining classroom. The Agenda for the evening will be as follows:

a) Brief Explanation of the Education Brief
b) Presentation of information and group discussion to seek parent ideas on:
   Transport and parking, Uniform, P&F joining together, Transition of students to the new school, Student Leadership, Sacramental Programs, Other topics as appropriate
c) Each group will record their ideas and share them with the large group. These ideas will then become part of the committees’ work in 2011.

7. Staffing

Carolyn Hadley, Head of Human Resources at the CEO, and the Human Resources Committee have had several meetings and briefed the staff of both schools. Training for staff will continue in 2011.

8. Enrolments 2011

A common Enrolment Package has been developed for the three schools in the Pastoral Region. Kinder Orientation evenings have been held for the three schools and numbers for 2011 are very healthy.

9. Diverse Learning Needs

A Committee looking at arrangements for inclusion of Special Needs Students met on several occasions and developed the following statement for inclusion in the Education Brief:

*Good Samaritan Primary School is committed to providing equitable opportunities for all students to access and participate in the spiritual, educational, social and cultural life of the school. These opportunities are provided through a range of curriculum options and adjustments, support services, and the provision of appropriate facilities and equipment to meet the individual needs of all students. The Melbourne Declaration (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, 2008) and its support documents state that the two main goals of contemporary Australian education are that “Australian schooling promotes equity and excellence”; and that “All young Australians become successful learners, confident and creative individuals and active and informed citizens”. All students have the potential to achieve. This occurs best in an environment that is inclusive, safe and welcoming to students, parents, teachers and other community members.*
Inclusivity is an integral part of the Church’s response in the world and in educational settings where there is aspiration for freedom and contribution to the Common Good. It is a liberative process to enable all people to reach their full potential regardless of their individual differences. The effective participation of all students including those with disability, in mainstream classrooms is a priority. Inclusive education focuses on the reduction of barriers to learning and participation for all students to maximize their learning outcomes, and includes placing students in the most appropriate and enabling setting for the time needed to achieve targeted learning outcomes. This may include, for some students, alternative placement for specified time periods in a specialised setting to access some or all of their learning. Inclusive education for all students at Good Samaritan Catholic Primary School focuses on addressing students’ individual strengths and needs.

Diverse learning needs students, therefore, will be enrolled as mainstream students and additional support will be provided for them in the classroom or in the Learning Centre for specialized learning appropriate for their needs.

10. Promotion and Marketing of the New School

Mr Peter McPherson and Ms Elle Holder- Keeping from the Catholic Education office are supporting the school with promotion and marketing. Elle’s skill as graphic artist was invaluable in designing the Logo and both she and Peter are working with the Marketing Committee to promote enrolments for the new school and publicise developments in local media. At a recent meeting of the Marketing Committee a detailed Marketing Plan for 2011 was discussed for implementation.

11. Some important Calendar dates.

Please note the following dates for Parent Information Evenings in 2011
Tuesday 22 February, Tuesday 31 May, and Tuesday 15 November. The meetings will be held at St John Vianney’s from 7-9pm. A full calendar with school events will be published early 2011.

The past year has been a very productive one with much of the planning for Good Samaritan Catholic Primary School becoming a reality and even more work to be done next year. Thank you to the many staff, parents, staff from the CEO, and people from the Pastoral Region and the wider community who have supported us this year.

May you and your families be richly blessed with Christ’s peace and joy at this time of the year.

Kind regards,

Netty Broekman
Project Officer