CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT
Presented at the Annual General Meeting
Wednesday, 13 May 2009

For the Period
15 MAY 2008 TO 13 MAY 2009

Scott McKenzie
(Chairperson of School Council)
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Introduction
Once again it is my privilege and pleasure to present, as chair of the school council of Hillbrook Anglican School, the report for the 2008 school year. A year of great change in the leadership of the school.

Last year saw a very successful change of leadership with Geoff Newton taking over from Norm Hunter after his term as one of the foundation Principals. We also saw the appointment of a lay Chaplain for the first time with the appointment of Dr Pene Brook. Throughout 2008, the School Leadership Team worked harmoniously and effectively to continue and expand on the great work that has been done at Hillbrook over many years.

I remain proud to be associated with a school that is so insightful and consistent in its approach to the education of our young people and so successful in doing so.

1.0 The School Council

1.1 Members of the School Council in 2008/09:

- Class A Members: Mrs Sharon Hillcoat
  - Mrs Liz Jarvis
  - Mr Larry Scaroni
  - Mr Matthew Taylor (appointed 2008 AGM)
  - Mrs Sue-Ellen Taylor (appointed 2008 AGM)

- Class B Members: Ms Mary Keyes (Deputy Chairperson)
  - Dr Jayne Murdoch
  - Mr Scott McKenzie (Chairperson)
  - Mr David Briggs

- Principal (ex officio): Mr Geoff Newton

- Archbishop’s Representative (ex officio): The Reverend Jan Crombie

- Company Secretary: Mr David Briggs

- Minutes Secretary: TBA

2.0 The Wider Context: Independent Schooling in Australia - 2008

2.1 National
The trend of an increasing percentage of parents enrolling in independent schools continues, albeit at a slower rate than in previous years.

In 2008, an average of 13.1% of total enrolments in Australian schools were in independent schools, 20.1% were in catholic schools, and 66.8% were in government schools.

Table one shows the annual growth figures for independent school enrolments over the last 15 years.
### 2.2 School Enrolments Across State by Sector

#### QLD Projected Enrolment Change
2008 to 2017 - By Sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>Change (no.)</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Government Schools</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>308,771</td>
<td>364,464</td>
<td>55,693</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>171,079</td>
<td>157,299</td>
<td></td>
<td>-8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>479,850</td>
<td>521,763</td>
<td>41,913</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Catholic Schools</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>73,218</td>
<td>90,233</td>
<td>17,015</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>51,410</td>
<td>56,302</td>
<td>4,892</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>124,628</td>
<td>146,535</td>
<td>21,907</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent Schools</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>50,577</td>
<td>67,601</td>
<td>17,104</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>51,407</td>
<td>72,014</td>
<td>20,607</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>101,984</td>
<td>139,615</td>
<td>37,711</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All Schools</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>432,566</td>
<td>522,378</td>
<td>89,812</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>273,896</td>
<td>285,615</td>
<td>11,719</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>706,462</td>
<td>808,993</td>
<td>101,531</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* As an indication of the trend in growth of enrolments by sector in Queensland, the secondary independent sector is now equal to the Catholic sector with enrolments at 18.8% of total enrolments.
2.3 Hillbrook Enrolment Trends

Continuing high enrolments at Hillbrook certainly reflect the national and state trend, with the forward enrolments continuing to be very healthy as both graphs below show. They are a very strong indication of the confidence in Hillbrook within the wider community. However, 2015 is the year that the ½ cohort of students who started the new prep year in 2007 reach Year 8. This will provide a particular challenge for all high schools, government and non-government. We are looking at ways to deal with this dip in enrolment applications and the consequences for our Year 8 cohort in 2015. The following two graphs show enrolment applications for the next 13 years.

ENROLMENT BREAKUP BY INNER/OUTER REGION 2011-2022


ENROLMENT BREAKUP BY INNER/OUTER REGION 2011-2022

2.4 Hillbrook Student Numbers & Enrolments

Enrolments fluctuate in Years 11 and 12 depending on the loss of students at the end of Year 10. We always seek to maintain numbers around 120 in each year level. We currently have 590 students attending Hillbrook in 2009.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Level</th>
<th>Current Enrolments - Girls</th>
<th>Current Enrolments - Boys</th>
<th>Current Enrolments</th>
<th>Maximum Enrolments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 8</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 9</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 10</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 11</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 12</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>317</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>590</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.5 Independent School Affiliations

In 2008, 85% of all independent schools have a religious affiliation. Anglican schools were the single largest group of independent schools in Australia, as shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affiliation</th>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anglican</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>129,763</td>
<td>25.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Denominational</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>69,861</td>
<td>13.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>53,360</td>
<td>10.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uniting Church in Australia</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>46,796</td>
<td>9.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian schools</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>46,004</td>
<td>9.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lutheran</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>32,989</td>
<td>6.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-Denominational</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16,939</td>
<td>3.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>16,784</td>
<td>3.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moslem</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15,938</td>
<td>3.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10,602</td>
<td>2.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh Day Adventist</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>10,333</td>
<td>2.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8,901</td>
<td>1.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steiner</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>7,367</td>
<td>1.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentecostal</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6,786</td>
<td>1.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assemblies of God</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6,427</td>
<td>1.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek Orthodox</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4,075</td>
<td>0.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montessori</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>3,691</td>
<td>0.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brethren</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3,604</td>
<td>0.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Catholic</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3,553</td>
<td>0.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Orthodox</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2,024</td>
<td>0.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Religious Affiliation*</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4,467</td>
<td>0.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other**</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>11,437</td>
<td>2.20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Other religious includes Churches of Christ, Ananda Marga, Hare Krishna and Society of Friends.
**Other includes special schools, international schools, Indigenous schools, and community schools.

I.S.C.A Snapshots 2008 Secondary School
3.0 **Strategic Thinking & Planning**

The School Council has concentrated on a number of focus areas in its strategic thinking and planning for 2008/09.

### 3.1 Governance

Each year the School Council meets with the School Leadership Team to discuss the strategic direction of the school for a one-day strategic thinking day known as the February Retreat. This year we met again with change agent and human resources facilitator, Arthur Alexander, to identify matters of importance relating to the long-term viability of the school, and more importantly to the high level of education we give our students. The School Leadership Team and School Council, under the direction of Arthur Alexander focused this year on ways to improve the strategic thinking element of the Council’s work as well as identify a number of strategic issues to be addressed throughout 2009.

### 3.2 Priorities

In terms of enhancing its strategic thinking capacity, the Council has agreed to set aside the first hour or so of each meeting to give consideration to the work done by small groups or individuals that have been addressing issues identified at the February Retreat. This has proved to be a successful initiative.

Out of discussions at the February Retreat there were 15 separate matters of strategic significance identified that were subsequently grouped into 3 broad themes:

- **Community** - staffing (age, competence, experience); gentrification of the surrounding suburbs; engaging parents more in the life of the school; need for care and support of staff and students in a rapidly changing environment; remaining responsive as a culture; and staying part of a changing community
- **Culture** - maintaining the character of the school ‘the Hillbrook Way’; benchmarking to add value; affiliation with the Anglican Church; reflecting as is appropriate the changing culture of our community
- **Cohort** - addressing the question of Year 7 at Hillbrook; the 2015 cohort; remaining a moderate fee school; the question of size of the school; the current and future economic crises and their significance for Hillbrook.

These will be further developed throughout 2009.

### 3.3 Moderate Fee Status

Government funding continues to be a key element in Hillbrook’s mission to be a moderate fee Anglican school, accessible to as many families as possible, while still maintaining a high quality of education. Currently Hillbrook parents pay approximately 50% of the cost of educating a student, while government, mainly the Commonwealth with assistance from the State Government, contributing the other 50%. With the recent State election, Independent Schools of Queensland (ISQ) identified a number of funding issues that required urgent attention. We hope these will be addressed this year.

The Hillbrook School Council wishes to make clear its support for a strong public school system in Australia, and that all taxpayers should contribute to supporting this. At the same time, it strongly supports the concept of parental choice of schooling for their children, and believes that parents who pay school fees to achieve this - over and above their taxes - deserve financial support from the government. The School Council supports the position of ISQ and its parent body ISCA on funding independent education in Australia.

Hillbrook will remain Funding Maintained till the end of 2012 under the current model. Work on evaluating the current model is to begin in 2010. Hopefully there will be wide consultation before any changes are implemented.
3.4 Risk Management

Risk management was a topic that the School Council considered at length over the course of the year. We received guidance from our solicitors and from Independent Schools of Queensland (ISQ), identifying over thirty pieces of legislation that schools had to take into account in daily operations. We subsequently reviewed the policy statements addressing this legislation that had been formulated by ISQ to ascertain any deficiencies in Hillbrook’s provisions in this area. We found none. The Council is pleased that the school continues to review its operations to ensure that every effort is made to maintain a safe and healthy working and learning environment at Hillbrook.

3.5 Professional Development

The staff continued in 2008/09 to develop programs using initiatives agreed to in early 2008. The teaching staff revisited the mission statement of the school in January 2009 and the underlying philosophy that has guided us over 22 years. This work provided the context for their current initiatives and priorities. Appendix 1 gives some detail on these. The staff are currently undertaking a curriculum review with an outside consultant using the Appreciative Inquiry model hope to have some preliminary findings by the end of semester. The process is also outlined in Appendix 1.

3.6 Campus Developments

There have been several significant developments in built environment activities.

2008
The School Council resolved to undertake a major upgrade of the Library and Tuckshop. The $3M project commenced late in the year, with the Tuckshop move completed and Library scheduled for completion mid this year. Other minor projects completed in 2008 including the following;

- Refurbishment of 3 classrooms in E Block
- Construction of covered walkway between C and F Blocks
- Upgrade of the Performing Arts Centre audio system and music instrument storage
- Shade roof in Creche

2009
Early this year the Commonwealth Government announced details of its Economic Stimulus Package which included significant investment in Australian Schools. The School Council will submit applications for eligible projects in response to the Commonwealth’s BER Programs. In addition, the School Council also resolved to make an application for capital assistance in this years general round for capital grants.

Below is a summary of the Government ‘Building Education Revolution’ package and the applications submitted/to be submitted by Hillbrook.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>$ Value</th>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Approved</th>
<th>Proposed Project</th>
<th>Commencement Date</th>
<th>Completion Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BER Science &amp; Language Centres</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Pride</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Round Capital Assistance 2009</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Round Capital Assistance 2007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Development Grant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillbrook P&amp;F Association</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The School Council would like to express its appreciation to parents for their continued support of the schools Building Fund as all of these funds will be directed to completion of the new Library and Tuckshop.

In addition, the school would like to record its appreciation for Government capital assistance for projects including:

- PAC audio upgrade
- Tuckshop forecourt roof
- Library deck and entrance
- BER School Pride monies of $200,000.

### 3.7 An Anglican School

Dr Pene Brook left us to take up a position at Radford College in Canberra at the end of 2008. However, despite a nationwide search, we failed to find a suitable replacement. This has lead us to develop a chaplaincy model involving a number of staff to guide the spiritual life of the school. Reverend Jan Crombie continued as our Community Priest and is now with us 1 ½ days a week. Sharon Hillcoat and Jan conduct chapel and many special ceremonies throughout the year and they are ably supported by a number of staff teaching Religious Education.

For further details please see the synod report included in Appendix 3.

### 3.8 Marketing

We continue to market Hillbrook’s strengths based on an educative perspective. Our Connections magazine is published twice a year and focuses on educational issues.

The last two issues dealt with the importance of reading and sustainability. We have also begun producing press releases for the local paper to highlight the academic nature of Hillbrook as well as any significant events that are planned at the school.

Our publications have undergone a transformation with new formats for reports, newsletters, certificates, letterhead and programs for Celebration Evening and Graduation Dinner.

This style guide approach will be applied to all publications, as they are revised, to give a consistent look to all our publications.

Each year the staff invite prospective parents to the school to see how a normal day unfolds. As parents enter the school they are surveyed on how they heard about Hillbrook. Over many years word of mouth has remained the best form of advertising for Hillbrook.
4.0 Year 12 OP Results for 2008

Offers of places at tertiary institutions for the 2008 cohort were very good:

(i) 96% of those who applied to attend University through QTAC received an offer;

(ii) Our benchmark for Overall Positions each year is the percentage of students who received OPs of 10 or better. For 2008 that figure was 50% compared to the overall state figure 44%. In addition, the 1-5 range was very good with 22% compared to 17% for the state.

As a community we congratulate the Year 12 students of 2008 on their results and their tertiary course offers.

Further to these results detailed in Appendix 2 we have included some corresponding OP statistics for a number of schools.

These results were published in the Courier Mail on the 5th May, 2009. It is interesting to note that if the published figures are recalculated to include all Year 12 students attending these schools, not just those receiving an OP, then Hillbrook is clearly outperforming nearly all schools in the state. The recalculated figures are also included in Appendix 2.

5.0 Financial Matters

2008 has been a strong year financially for the school. The Financial Statements will be tabled at this meeting, but I would like to offer some comments here.

All the financial indicators for 2008 were strong and ahead of forecasts:

- The cashflow from operating activities was $1.5M. The overall increase in cash for the year was $400,000, and we invested a further $900,000 in buildings and equipment including progress payments of $400,000 towards the library and tuckshop projects. There were no new loans.
- The school’s asset to liability surplus currently stands at $14.6M.
- The school’s cash reserves currently stand at $3.8M.

The strong financial performance has been achieved through careful management of expenditure, and the Council’s generally prudent approach to school finances. The increase in cashflow will be used to support Campus development initiatives for 2009.

2008 has seen continuing high levels of future enrolments, and on paper the school is fully enrolled until 2020.

As families move, change circumstances, or enrol at other schools, these numbers will fluctuate. Nevertheless, we take these healthy future enrolments as a strong expression of confidence from the wider community.

The combination of these indicators suggest that Hillbrook is strongly positioned in the education environment of Queensland, now and for the future. The School Council needs to continue to think creatively about the future, as well as provide responsible and well planned financial management, but it is gratifying to know that this will occur in the context of a strong financial base for the future.

The major challenge for the future is to continue to balance a high quality of education with maintaining a moderate fee structure. Pressures such as the possibility of diminishing government funding and rising community and parental expectations of schools will continue to challenge our status as a moderate fee school.
6.0 **Relationship with the Anglican Church**

There are three types of schools in the Anglican group in Queensland: Diocesan-owned schools, schools separately owned by the Society of the Sacred Advent, and independently incorporated schools. Hillbrook is one of the four independently incorporated schools.

The School Councils of the Diocesan-owned schools are subject to quite a degree of direction and control by the Diocese. On the other hand the four independently incorporated schools – Hillbrook, All Saints, Canterbury and Matthew Flinders – and the two S.S.A. schools – St Aidan’s and St Margaret’s – have a great deal of autonomy, with their links to the Anglican Church set out in the Church Institutions Canon. Essentially, these schools are affiliated with the Anglican Church rather than owned by it, and their primary accountability is to their respective communities and or companies.

It is a requirement that all Anglican schools report to Synod each year, and the Hillbrook report for 2008/09 is attached at Appendix 3. We have also responded to requests for feedback on the Anglican Schools’ Vision Statement and have sent our Memorandum of Understanding as a result of the Gavin Nicholson report on governance in Anglican schools. A short précis of our actions over the last two years on this issue follows.

6.1 **Memorandum of Understanding**

For a considerable part of 2007/08 the School Council talked about the matters raised by Dr Gavin Nicholson in his report *Governance of Anglican Schools Associated with the Brisbane Diocese*. This included a meeting with Bishop Geoff Smith (Chair of the Anglican Schools Commission) and Mrs Peta Smith (Executive Director of the ASC). At that meeting we indicated that the Council was drafting a Memorandum of Understanding as our response to matters raised in the Nicholson Report.

This MOU was completed and forwarded late in the year to Bishop Geoff. As we believed that an agreement between two groups was a mutual endeavour with each indicating its contribution, we framed the agreement to include provision for what we asked the Diocese to contribute as well as what Hillbrook would provide to meet the interests of the Diocese.

A meeting to discuss the MOU has been scheduled with Bishop Geoff Smith following discussions within the Diocesan Council.

A copy of the MOU is provided in Appendix 4.

7.0 **Educational Issues**

7.1 **National Curriculum Board (NBC)**

The educational landscape is changing rapidly. In recent years the Rudd Government, through the National Curriculum Board (NCB), has accelerated the development of the National Curriculum as part of their ‘Educational Revolution’.

The full impact of this will be seen in 2011 with the implementation of the new curriculum for Maths, English, History and the Sciences. The NCB is representative of all states and sectors. At this stage assessment is not on its agenda. This is of particular interest to Queensland which has a long history of school based assessment and the many benefits that derive from this collegial and cross sector system.

There is a more detailed summary of the National curriculum in Appendix 5.
7.2 National Testing

Another development of great importance is the increasing use of high stakes testing of students. The NAPLAN tests for year 3, 5, 7 and 9 are now mandatory across all sectors. High stakes testing has always been and remains a source of contention within the education sector. Schools and systems devote time and resources to ensuring their test results are acceptable and this focus can often be to the detriment of real and lasting learning.

The Federal Government also intends to publish league table information for every school in the country. A copy of the draft of what this may look like is included in Appendix 5, along with a number of articles on both issues.

8.0 Parent Involvement

8.1 P&F Presidents Report for 2008 - Anne Brown

It has been a busy and rewarding year for the P&F. We began the year with a Welcome Chapel Service and barbeque for new families. We also began a revision of our Constitution, due to changes to the model rules from the Office of Fair Trading. Thanks must go to our Secretary, Glenys Mann for the hours she spent working on this document until we adopted the new Constitution in June.

In March, we were thoroughly entertained by Jazz artist (parent) Denise Paterson and three backing musicians for our special social evening, ‘Hillbrook Under The Stars’. Thank you to Jacey Young for organising our contribution in April to provide dinner to the cast and crew of the musical ‘The Wizard of Oz’.

This year the Education Advisory Committee planned various informative parent evenings. These included:

- Year 8 Information Evenings
- A Technology evening focusing on Networking Sites and On-line games
- An Eating, Sleeping, Learning seminar with psychologist Di O’Malley
- Surviving Year 12 (for current Year 11 parents)

A Safe Driving Course for students was also offered through the EAC.

Thank you to (teacher) Simon Roberts for preparing the Parent Outdoor Program again this year. Parents attended a variety of camps including 19 parents participating in an eight day trip to walk the Milford track in New Zealand in April.

We are fortunate that our Tuckshop and Uniform and Stationary Shop, under the banner of Business Operations Committee (BOC), provide enough funds to the P&F to prevent us from having to fund-raise in other ways. Thank you to our convenors Ann Bannan, Rosemary Smith and Julie Garvey for their efforts this year. The funds raised enable us to contribute to the various school departments. This year, we have donated over $23,000 to purchase a variety of resources to enrich the learning of our students.

The P&F have also donated $100,000 to the school to help with the Tuckshop refurbishment.

The P&F greatly appreciates the contribution from volunteer parents in the Tuckshop, Uniform and Stationary Shop, and at working bees throughout the year. Special thanks to Rob Glover for organising the working bees again this year.

I would lastly like to thank the members of the P&F Executive for their tireless efforts throughout the year:
- Lynette McCririck (Treasurer), Glenys Mann (Secretary), Scott McClintock (Vice President), Marlene Koelmeyer (Assistant Treasurer), Jayne Murdoch (School Council and EAC), Joanne O’Brien and Judy Hitchcock (BOC), Grahame Whiting, Lenore Whitfield, Jim Nolan and Norm Hung.

Special thanks must go to Geoff Newton for his monthly attendance at our meetings, reports and input into all our discussions. Thank you also to Stephanie Munday-Lake and Jason Sharland for their support this year.
9.0 Leadership at Hillbrook

The School Council is an extraordinarily effective group who take responsibility for the governance of Hillbrook. As is said ‘the buck stops here’, and so it is with the Council. There are many issues and problems that emerge. The Council addresses these in a highly professional way, ensuring that matters of strategic significance are considered along with the more routine matters of finance, enrolments and the daily operations of the school.

In doing so the Council recognises the high quality of leadership provided by the School Leadership Team - Geoff Newton, Stephanie Munday-Lake, Jason Sharland and David Briggs. This team had its ‘first year’ without a founder as principal and maintained and strengthened the culture that is widely known as ‘the Hillbrook way’. We are most fortunate to have people of such calibre to lead an enterprise that has such a profound influence on the present and future lives of our sons and daughters.

Leadership at Hillbrook permeates the whole work of the school, it is a core element of the culture of the school. At all levels, teachers and other staff exercise leadership that focuses attention on the leaning and development needs of our young people. Also from within the student body itself many are called on to demonstrate leadership and all are offered opportunities to do so.

I can assure you that Hillbrook is in good hands.

10.0 Conclusion

2008 was a significant year for Hillbrook as Geoff Newton took over the reins from a long-serving Principal, and began to make his mark on the school. He has been very ably supported in this by a very effective leadership team, administrative and teaching staff. We have among the best that are available to guide the ongoing development of our young people.

I take this opportunity on your behalf and on the behalf of the families who entrust their children to our care, to offer our most heartfelt thanks for their dedication, their skill and their care.

11.0 A Personal Note

As I indicated at the beginning of this report I am proud to continue to be associated with a school with such a splendid record of service to the students who attend it. I have great confidence that this school will continue to go from strength to strength and have no doubt that the distinctive nature of Hillbrook will continue to evolve over the year in the best interests of those students.

Scott McKenzie, Chairperson
Hillbrook Anglican School
School Council
APPENDIX 1
Engaging & Challenging our Hillbrook Learners

Initiatives
[as identified during the Appreciative Inquiry Process during 2007/2008]

- Integrating Higher Order Thinking Skills
- Raising Academic Expectations

Discovering

- Interviews with Subject Co-ordinators and Class Teachers
- Reviewing Curriculum
- Data Analysis
- Recommendations

Designing & Delivering

- Implementation of accepted Recommendations
**Who are we?**

**Mission Statement**

We at Hillbrook believe that the fundamental purpose of a high school is to be a bridging institution, providing a creative combination of challenge and support as young people move from childhood through the difficult and exciting years of adolescence, and on into young adulthood. We strive to foster an integrated balance of personal, spiritual, intellectual and physical growth; we aim to empower people to live confidently, capably, sensitively and creatively in the global community, and to contribute to its direction.

(1993)

**Themes**

- An understanding of Adolescence
- A focus on the Teaching/Learning process
- A Community
- A Thinking-Centred School

(1995)

**Core Values & Beliefs**

- Trust & Respect
- High Expectations
- Acceptance
- Challenge
- Fairness
- Dignity
- Rigour
- Social Awareness
- Openness
- Community
- Tolerance
- Generosity
- Student-Centred
- Spirituality

(2007)

**Appreciative Inquiry Initiatives**

**Adolescence**

- Empowering adolescents to develop as individuals.
- Deepening of appreciation of others.

**Teaching/Learning**

- Raising academic expectations.
- Developing ourselves personally and professionally.

(2008)
Who are we?

Theme: Adolescence
Initiatives:
- Empowering adolescents to develop as individuals.
- Deepening of appreciation of others.

Who are we?

Theme: Teaching/Learning
Initiatives:
- Raising academic expectations.
- Developing ourselves personally and professionally.

Who are we?

Theme: Community
Initiatives:
- Enhancing trust and respect.
- Fostering sustainable practices.

Who are we?

Theme: Thinking
Initiatives:
- Integrating Higher Order Thinking.
- Deepening our integration of Multiple Intelligences.

Who are we?

External Community
- Queensland Studies Authority
- Education Queensland
- National Curriculum Board
- Independent Schools Queensland
- Queensland College of Teachers
- Anglican Schools Office
- COAG
- MCEETYA
- NSSAB
- Minister for Education

Who are we?

School Community
- School Council
- Teachers
- School Leadership Team
- Subject Co-ordinators
- Chaplaincy
- Student Management Team
- Support Staff
- Enrichment Centre
- Counsellor
- Resource Centre
- P&F
- Student Representative Council
- Green Justice
Review of past actions

• We completed a curriculum review in 1995 (there are only two people left that were involved in that process).
• A whole community review was undertaken in 1999.
• The School Council undertook a strategic thinking exercise and developed Shaping our future in 2000?
• We then engaged as a staff in revisiting the curriculum review in 2003 to see if it remained relevant.
• Appreciative Inquiry process commenced in late 2007.

Current Issues for Hillbrook

• Refreshing of the Shaping Our Future document
• Teacher Registration and Continuing Professional Development requirements;
• The new EBA and Accomplished Classroom Teacher; and
• Continuing the Appreciative Inquiry process.

Staff Profile

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<th>% of Staff</th>
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Priorities for 2009

All of us make Professional Judgements, and have Professional Responsibilities. Our community however is underpinned by a number of common priorities, namely:

- ‘High Expectations’
- ‘This Doesn’t Happen Here’
- ‘Broken Windows’

This means that we should keep in mind the following:

- Using appropriate and respectful language;
- Uniforms and following up on those who don’t wear it well;
- Grounds Duty and ensuring that we meet our duty of care;
- Timeliness to class, to chapel, to assembly and in the return of forms;
- Using teaching and learning time in ways that are meaningful and appropriate;
- Phones off in class, computer games only in the allowed times - never in class times, bags outside of the classroom.
- Maintaining classrooms that are conducive to learning - clean, and tidy and ready for the next class.
- Modelling respect and maintaining collegiality, with respect for the professionalism of colleagues and for the school priorities;
- Maintaining positive relationships with students where a professional distance is maintained; characterised by informality with dignity, ‘friendly but not friends’. Always using language that is respectful and appropriate;
- Checking the staff room Notice board, marking the roll and reading the notices and
- Coming to the Staffroom each morning before school, as well as trying to make it for lunches or morning teas & contributing to the cleaning roster.
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<th>Number of students who received an OP</th>
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<th>Percentage of OP/IBD students who received an OP 1 to 15 or equivalent</th>
<th>Percentage of QTAC applicants receiving a tertiary offer</th>
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YEAR 12 2008 OVERALL POSITIONS (OPs)

HILLBROOK ANGLICAN SCHOOL

NUMBER OF STUDENTS - 116 (57 Boys, 59 Girls)

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### Year 12 2007: DESTINATIONS

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### Year 12 2006: DESTINATIONS

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APPENDIX 3
Introduction

We have set out this year’s report under three headings, academic focus, strategic focus and the spiritual and community life of the school. We feel it gives some understanding of the complex nature of education as we strive to prepare students for the future.

Hillbrook is a school founded on a clear vision, which has been reaffirmed at a number of junctures in our history. At each of these points, the School Council, the School Leadership Team, our staff, students and community have consistently returned to four core beliefs that form the essence of our founding vision, namely:

**Growth**
All who come to the school - students, staff, and parents - will grow in ways that reflect the many dimensions of what it means to be human.

**Balance**
There will be a dynamic balance of expectations, learning experiences, commitments, and behaviour that characterises daily life at Hillbrook, as expressed in our motto “In Balance We Grow”.

**Accessibility & Inclusion**
Hillbrook will be a moderate-fee school with a spirit of community and collaboration.

**Anglicanism**
As Anglicans, we approach spirituality as a pilgrimage - a voyage of exploration and discovery - through a creative balance of scripture, tradition, reason and experience. Our Christianity will have a strong human focus, with particular emphasis on the many practical opportunities to act it out.

We hope that you see evidence of these four beliefs in the words that follow.

Spiritual and Community Life of the School

The Anglican dialogue at Hillbrook School was kept well and truly alive in 2008 in a dialogue-engagement of a small working group of the School’s Chapel Committee and School Leadership Team with Bishop Geoff Smith’s paper “A Vision for Anglican Schools in the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane” (ASC’s paper December 2007). The subsequent “Engaged Response” was a further response (through the School Council) to dialogue with the Anglican Schools’ Commission and a final submission to the Commission August 2008.

It would seem appropriate to shape this report to Synod in the critical reflective framework of that response as “expression of Anglicanism”.

The development and nurture of Community life

The provision of Anglican worship is apparent in the daily chapel life of the school, and in the continuing building of relationship with the local parishes. In particular, the Grovely Anglican Parish, through the formal appointment of the Rector, the Reverend Jan Crombie, as Hillbrook’s Community Priest in 2008. This position was worked in conjunction with the Chaplain, Dr Pene Brook, who concluded two years of ministry with Hillbrook at the end of 2008. An exciting model of chaplaincy was created through this shared-ministry model. This has stood us in good stead with the lack of school chaplain applicants in Australia at present.

Despite an Australia wide search we have started 2009 without a chaplain. We have, as a consequence strengthened the model of chaplaincy used in 2008 with Rev. Jan Crombie at school for one and a half days a week, supported by a team of teachers.

Hillbrook “Chapel time” continues to be a living, spiritual connection of life and world story with the God story. All staff are invited to lead chapel through the year, either associated with their subject area or of a focus close to their hearts. In this way, the areas of the Anglican Marks of Mission are holistically covered, with strong emphasis on social justice and the safeguarding of the integrity of creation. Students are fully involved with Chapel time - with music, drama, liturgy planning and participation in the readings and prayers.

The Tree of Life Chapel at Hillbrook continues to be a central, sacred space in the school. The chaplaincy committee meets regularly to consider the care and development of both the physical space, and the spiritual agenda. 2008 was an exciting year in this way as the Committee broadened its brief into the Chaplaincy of the school, joining regularly with the School Leadership Team to consider these issues. It was from such dialogue the “Engaged Response” to the ASC’s paper was drafted, tested and formed. The committee is also the support group for the Chaplain, and the connecting group for many events of the School’s life. The public 5pm Sunday services continued regularly in the year around different themes related to both school life and the Church calendar. The Holy Week and Christmas services are growing in numbers each year. Rev’d. Jan also offered weekly morning Eucharist for a small, growing number of the school family.

One of the highlights of the school year continues to be the annual service in St John’s Cathedral which is the culmination of “service beyond self” that each student participates in, at varying levels depending on year level. It is especially significant for Year 11 students who take on major community service. All students then offer their giving to God through this wonderful Cathedral service of celebration and thanksgiving. In 2008, The Very Reverend Peter Catt was the guest preacher.

Involvement in School Leadership

Dr Pene continued the strong pastoral and leadership role of Chaplain in school affairs, with both staff and students trusting and relying on her guidance and care. She initiated, together with School Council, stronger relationship with the Anglican Schools’ Commission. The chaplaincy committee also included that relationship in its brief, together with growing relationships with local parishes. The committee itself includes members from three local parishes. As mentioned earlier, the School Leadership Team met regularly with the Committee. The Chaplain has a key leadership role in Hillbrook School, planning and leading all ceremonies and services.

The provision for school governance

Dr Pene brought strong theological reflection models into both the formation and praxis of the school framework. With the chaplaincy committee and the School Leadership Team, conversations of many models of governance were begun and continue. In particular, the Anglican identity of Hillbrook continues as a reflective discussion, dialoguing with the mission of the School. Reverend Jan Crombie continues to be the Archbishop’s Representative on the Hillbrook School Council.
The Provision of Religious Education

Hillbrook School provides Religious Education that encompasses the criteria outlined in the “Engaged Response”:

- Is grounded in the Trinitarian faith;
- Is integral to the school;
- That is academically rigorous and assessable;
- While grounded in Christian foundations, recognises diversity and is affirming and inclusive in form and content;
- Encourages the development of moral values and reasoning and nurtures the notions and practice of the gospel values of justice, compassion and forgiveness;
- Is relevant to the student’s beliefs and experiences;
- Encourages students to think reflectively and critically about faith and the existential questions of human life;
- Is relevant to the life of the school;
- Is well resourced;
- Is taught by teachers who are encouraged to pursue further professional development; and
- Is the basis for opportunities for varied expressions of Christian service within and beyond the school community.

The Provision of School Staff

The Hillbrook Staff continue to nurture, and be nurtured in, the Anglican faith. The Chaplain is a key leader in all staff gatherings, as well as the more ‘hidden’ role of pastoral care. Professional development in “Anglican Ethics” was a highlight of 2008, with the Reverend Dr Don Saines leading several sessions. Hillbrook staff are fully involved in all facets of the school life, living out both the ethos of the School and the Church.

The Provision of Outreach opportunities and activities reflecting Gospel values

The School community continues to engage in many areas of social justice and human need beyond its own community. This engagement is central to the forms of service expected at each student year level, as well as a natural response to critical areas as they arise in national and international life.

In conclusion

It is appropriate to include the critical reflection framework that was formed in 2008 as part of the “Engaged Response” as we continue to visit and identify the expressions of Anglican identity and practice in Hillbrook School.

1. How and why does the school live as a Christian community? How does it encourage and express the incarnational journey as it strives to depict, teach, communicate and live as an Anglican school?
2. How are the Marks of Mission expressed in the life of the school as an educational institution as well a community of faith and what difference does this make to the daily life of the community?
3. How are the fruits of the Spirit evident in the curriculum, the organisational structure, the policies, the practices and the experiences of community members?
4. Is there congruence between the schools’ Christian rhetoric and praxis?
5. How central is an Anglican identity and a sense of ‘belonging’ to the diocesan family?
6. How do we keep this Anglican identity as “living” and open to transformation?

Parent involvement

Parents continue to be central to the life of Hillbrook. The P&F association continues to raise funds for school equipment and is heavily involved in educational forums, extra curricular activities such as our outdoor education programme, running the tuckshop and uniform shop. We would like to acknowledge and thank them for their efforts.
Academic life

Each year the teaching staff agree on a small number of broad priorities that we will work on collectively to assist our students. In a complex organisation like a school, it’s a way for us to hold the ‘big picture’ together. In 2009 the priorities are:

- Trust and Respect and “There’s a place for me here”… which research links with connectedness of students to the school, and improved academic learning;
- ‘Broken Windows’ and ‘This Doesn’t Happen Here’… addressing the small things before they become big things; and
- High Expectations... ‘I believe in you’, and ‘You can do it’, leading to self-belief and motivation and improved academic learning.

Curriculum focus

We have also reviewed and refined the four core themes that underpin our curriculum. These remain central to life at Hillbrook. Under each theme we have 2 initiatives that are the focus for staff and classroom practice.

An understanding of Adolescence
- Empowering adolescence to develop as individuals;
- Deepening of appreciation of others;

A focus on Teaching/Learning
- Developing ourselves personally and professionally;
- Raising academic expectations;

A Community
- Enhancing trust and respect;
- Fostering sustainable practices;

A Thinking-Centred school
- Integrating Higher Order Thinking;
- Deepening our integration of Multiple Intelligences;

Strategic direction

We welcomed a number of new members to the School Council this year. The representative model of the School Council continues to serve the school well. As well our continued strategic thinking we have engaged in developing a memorandum of understanding with the Anglican Church as part of our commitment to our ongoing membership of the wider Anglican community. The members for this year are:

- David Briggs
- Jayne Murdoch
- Liz Jarvis
- Mary Keyes
- Matthew Taylor
- Sharon Hillcoat
- Geoff Newton
- The Rev Jan Crombie
- Scott McKenzie
- Larry Scaroni
- Sue-Ellen Taylor
Strategic focus
The way in which our core beliefs are expressed and enacted is important. We use the Appreciative Inquiry framework, a positive and inclusive approach to strategic thinking and planning which both nurtures what is done well and identifies where improvement is needed. The process is based on 4 elements and is schematically represented below:

Discovering who we are and how others perceive us is the starting point, but all four elements are each contained within the other, forming a process of ongoing reflection, projection and action.

With this process in mind the School Council has identified 3 focal points for exploration.
- Governance;
- Human Capital, and
- Sustainable Competitive Advantage, educationally and financially.

Finances
The school has had a strong year financially and all the key indicators are healthy. Cash flow from operations was able to support investments in buildings, plant and equipment of $900,000. The school’s audited financial statements will be presented at its Annual General Meeting in May. The draft 2008 financial statements indicate the school’s asset to liability surplus stands at $14.6 million. The school’s cash surplus stands at $3.8 million with $2 million set aside to fund the construction of a new library and tuckshop precinct in 2009.

The school continues to enjoy high levels of future enrolments.

Capital Works Program
This year sees some significant construction happening around the school:

.Library - main extension, due for completion at the end of Term 2.
.Tuckshop & surrounds - completed at the start of 2009.
Finally, we have enjoyed a great year as a school community and look forward to the many challenges and successes that are part of our continuing mission. The strength of any community is in its people. We will end with a quote that illustrates the strength of this.

‘The infinite human resource we have for generating change is our collective imagination.’

David L Cooperrider and Diana Whitney

Principal: Mr Geoff Newton, BSc DipEd GradDip Computing, GradDip Educational Admin, MA (L'Ship & M'ment)
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING:
Hillbrook Anglican School and the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane

This document outlines the commitments of Hillbrook Anglican School and the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane in relation to matters of mutual interest for the period 2009 - 2013.

Hillbrook Anglican School

During the years leading up to the founding of the school, and on the school’s opening in 1987, it was made clear by the Diocese that Hillbrook was to be separate from the Church’s responsibilities. To ensure this, the school was established as a separately incorporated company limited by guarantee. This meant that all the establishment arrangements required by State and Commonwealth Governments, the significant processes to be worked through to receive Commonwealth and State funding, financial projections and longer term planning were the responsibility of the steering committee and the founding School Council. Assistance from the Diocese consisted of agreeing to longer term repayment of the loan that was taken out to purchase the property from the Diocese at market value, and a Letter of Comfort, but not agreeing to stand guarantor, from the Church to banking institutions.

From the beginning there has been a vision of a school functioning as a community with a distributive leadership model that includes the School Council, the staff, parents, through to student leadership. This commitment to the benefits of shared leadership and responsibility has seen Hillbrook through 21 years of achievement, resulting in a prosperous school and energized school community, entering 2009 with on-paper full enrolment through to 2019.

Hillbrook’s culture is grounded in its motto, In Balance We Grow, and in four key themes that have been reaffirmed by the school community over the years:

- A thinking-centred school;
- A focus on the teaching/learning process;
- An understanding of adolescence; and
- The school as a community.

In addition a number of key principles have been used as a guide. Among them are:

- A co-educational school founded by teachers, with teachers having significant responsibility for the strategic direction of the school;
- Collaborative structures and culture;
- A distributed leadership model which fosters among all of the school community a strong sense of ownership and accountability;
- Affiliated with the Anglican Church, but not owned by it;
- An open and inclusive enrolment policy;
- A moderate fee school;
- An educative approach to Anglicanism incorporating a strong human focus, approaching spirituality as a pilgrimage – a life-long journey of exploration.
and discovery – through a creative balance of scripture, tradition, reason and experience.

As a result of this culture and our 21 years history, the Hillbrook School Council seeks to maintain this relationship. The Council meets its obligations under corporate and common law, Commonwealth and State legislative and statutory requirements, the Australian Securities & Investments Commission, and the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board. As well by virtue of this Memorandum of Understanding, Hillbrook School Council recognizes its accountability to the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane to take appropriate action to protect the reputation of the Church and to promote its Ethos and Mission.

**Anglican Diocese of Brisbane**

The Diocese recognizes Hillbrook Anglican School as a separately incorporated organization in which it has no direct financial interest and for which it has no legal financial responsibility. However since the school has chosen to be associated with the Diocese and incorporates ‘Anglican’ in its name, the reputation of the Anglican Church is at stake as public perception will generally be that the school is an Anglican institution. In the event of any untoward incident or financial default the Church as a whole, and the Diocese of Brisbane in particular will be seen by the public as bearing responsibility.

The Diocese, in this Memorandum of Understanding, offers a range of services and support to Hillbrook Anglican School as part of the community of Anglican schools in the Diocese.

**Mission Alignment**

*The Anglican Ethos and Mission will be specifically considered in school decision-making at all levels and presented at all appropriate opportunities.*

Hillbrook policies will articulate explicit support for the Church by:

1. acknowledging the school’s role in promoting the Mission of the Anglican Church,
2. continuing its long tradition of Religious Education as part of the school curriculum, including integration with Outdoor Education and Personal & Spiritual Development,
3. maintaining the School Chapel as a focus for significant activity within the life of the school, including making provision for worship involving the whole school community,
4. involving Church representatives in the selection of the Principal, and consulting with the Archbishop prior to any announcement of the appointment,
5. employing a Chaplain (clergy or lay), and
6. giving due consideration to commitment to the Mission of the Church in selecting directors of Hillbrook Anglican School Limited.

In its turn the Diocese recognizes the School as a partner in the Mission of the Church by:

1. providing/facilitating pastoral and spiritual support for the Council and school staff, and professional development on the Mission of the Church,
2. inviting the School to participate in discussions on Church matters of mutual interest, including representation on Synod,
3. encouraging open communication among schools, Diocese, parishes and others promoting the Mission of the Church,
4. assisting the school to find and appoint people for religious leadership positions within the school,
5. providing assistance for the school in encouraging students to consider teaching, chaplaincy and other ministries as vocations within the Church.

Responsibility and Accountability

The School Council and the Principal are responsible for all decisions made and actions taken in the operation of the school. This includes ensuring that decisions and actions do not pose an unacceptable risk to the school, its stakeholders and its mission. The school has a particular responsibility to the Diocese to ensure that events in the school will not adversely affect the wider Mission of the Church.

This will be evidenced by:

1. fulfilling our commitment as outlined in Mission Alignment above,
2. acknowledging the risk to the reputation of the Church in its operations – financial and otherwise – and committing to take such actions as to minimize this risk,
3. undertaking proactive and comprehensive governance to ensure transparency and accountability in all is endeavours,
4. complying with all statutory reporting requirements of both Commonwealth and State governments,
5. communicating with the Anglican Schools Commission on matters that arise that might increase the reputational risk of the Diocese.

In its turn the Diocese will:

1. provide opportunities for the School to share the experiences of other schools,
2. promote professional development activities in relation to governance, finance and risk management and related matters,
3. provide industrial relations and HR assistance and advice for the school,
4. collaborate with the School on matters which have the potential to affect the reputation of either the School or the Church.

**Reporting and Communication**

*The School will provide reports to the Diocese in keeping with the commitments above by:*

1. providing, in a timely manner, financial statements and enrolment statistics as tabled at the Annual General Meeting each year, as well as half-yearly interim reports,
2. communicating with the ASC on any matters that arise that might increase reputational risk,
3. reporting to Synod each year,
4. encouraging the representative of the Archbishop on the School Council to provide a second channel of communication to the Diocese.

In its turn the Diocese will:

1. provide opportunities for the School for some participation in decision-making of the Diocese, through representation on Synod and on the Anglican Schools Commission.

**To these provisions, on behalf of the Hillbrook School Council we give our commitment:**

Chair, Hillbrook School Council  Principal, Hillbrook Anglican School

**As does the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane, giving its commitment and accepting the commitment of the School:**

Chair, Anglican Schools Commission
Dear Bishop Geoff

As you know our School Council has been talking about the matters raised by Dr Gavin Nicholson in his report *Governance of Anglican Schools Associated with the Brisbane Diocese* for some time. One part of our discussions involved a meeting with you and Mrs Peta Smith earlier this year. At that meeting we indicated that we were drafting a Memorandum of Understanding as our response to matters raised in the Nicholson Report.

We have completed our discussions and enclose our proposed Memorandum of Understanding. This describes our commitment to the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane.

As we believe that an agreement between two groups is a mutual endeavour with each indicating its contribution, we have framed this agreement to include provision for what the Diocese will contribute as well. Further we have taken the liberty of drafting what we believe to be appropriately the Diocese’s contribution.

We recognize that this agreement is a matter for further negotiation and look forward to finalizing this matter to best meet our mutual interests.

Yours sincerely

Scott McKenzie     Geoff Newton
Chair of Council     Principal
Hillbrook Anglican School Limited     Hillbrook Anglican School
6 FEB 2009

9 January 2009

Mr Scott McKenzie  
Chair  
Hillbrook School Council  
PO Box 469  
EVERTON PARK QLD 4053

Thank you for your letter of October 31, 2008 regarding a draft MOU between Hillbrook and the Diocese. Thank you also for the work you have done on the draft. The MOU was tabled at the December meeting of the ASC but due to a large agenda, was not discussed. The draft MOU is on the agenda for the February meeting of the ASC and will certainly be considered then.

My own view is that the 'Hillbrook draft' is an excellent piece of work which provides a really positive platform not just for further discussion but action as well. I look forward to us being able to settle the MOU quickly this year and in fact potentially using the 'Hillbrook draft as a significant starting place for covenants or MOU’s with other schools.

Thanks again for the work of all who were involved in the production of the document, and for taking what is an important initiative.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

The Right Reverend Geoff Smith  
Chair, Anglican Schools Commission.

Cc Mr Geoff Newton
APPENDIX 5
The National Curriculum Board (NCB) has reached a major milestone in developing the Australian curriculum. This publication summarises the work of the Board from its inception in April 2008 to May 2009.

The writing of the curriculum for English, mathematics, the sciences and history, the first phase of the Board’s work, will begin in May. Consultation about the broad shape for languages, geography and the arts, the second phase, will take place during 2009.

During May the National Curriculum Board’s work will be taken up by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) which will be based in Sydney.

To ensure timelines are met for the development stage of the curriculum for the four learning areas, the curriculum unit of ACARA will remain in Melbourne until December 2009.

Engagement with a wide range of people has contributed greatly to the directions set for the Australian curriculum. On behalf of the Board, I would like to express appreciation of the support and participation of those who have contributed to the Board’s achievements.

Chair of the National Curriculum Board, May 2009

MILESTONES 2008/09

27 June 2008
National forum to discuss keys questions about shaping Australia’s curriculum. Initial ideas were then built on at forums held in each state and territory (June - November 2008).

August 2008
Lead writers appointed to support writing initial advice papers.

12 September - 3 October 2008
Small expert advisory groups including lead writers met to support the development of the draft initial advice papers.

13 - 17 October 2008
Initial advice papers discussed at national forums.

14 - 18 October 2008
Nominated teacher professional association groups met to support lead writers to shape the direction of framing papers following consultation at national forums.

20 November 2008
Framing papers released for consultation.

28 February 2009
Consultation on framing papers closed. Submissions read and analysed. Consultation reports developed for the Board endorsement.

6 May 2009
Shape of the Australian Curriculum publications made available on the Board’s website.

Mid May 2009
The writing of the curriculum for the four learning areas begins.
CONSULTATION

Partnerships with education authorities (national, state and territory, government, Catholic, independent and local school authorities), parent bodies, professional education associations, academics, business, industry and community groups have been integral to establishing the directions for the design and development of the curriculum.

In developing the Australian curriculum thus far, there has been substantial consultation with the education profession and general community about:

- the shape of the national curriculum
- how the curriculum areas (English, mathematics, the sciences and history) should be framed
- equity and diversity, learning for the 21st century, the nature of learning (K-12), Indigenous education, sustainability issues
- ICT, literacy and numeracy continua

Consultation processes have included:
- submissions in response to discussion papers
- national, state and territory forums
- meetings with key education and professional bodies
- meetings with subject and cross-curriculum experts
- online surveys and feedback systems (feedback@ncb.org.au)

Following closure of the consultation period, work has focused on:
- analysing submissions
- developing formal consultation feedback reports
- publishing reports on the website with an action plan detailing how the feedback would be addressed.

Consultation report for The Shape of the National Curriculum: A Proposal for Discussion

The Shape of the National Curriculum: A Proposal for Discussion was developed following the initial national forum in June 2008 at which key groups and individuals across Australia discussed key questions about shaping the curriculum. Initial ideas were then built on at forums held in each state and territory.

Notes taken at these forums, surveys completed at meetings or received through the Board’s website and formal written submissions provided valuable feedback about the broad directions for the curriculum.

The paper’s consultation report provides an analysis of responses from education authorities, professional associations, teachers, academics, business, industry and community groups. Affirmations and significant issues raised are identified.

Following a brief overview of the consultation process, feedback is described about:
- understanding the contemporary context of curriculum goals of education
- principles to underpin curriculum
- specifications for curriculum development
- curriculum content - general comments, knowledge, skills and understanding, literacy and numeracy, general capabilities and achievement standards.

All submissions will be retained on a database for ongoing analysis to support the development of the curriculum.

To view the full consultation report visit the website www.ncb.org.au
Consultation reports for English, Mathematics, Science and History framing papers

The framing papers for English, mathematics, the sciences and history were released for public consultation from 20 November 2008 to 28 February 2008.

The framing papers proposed broad directions for what teachers should teach and young people should learn from Kindergarten to Year 12. They sought to generate broad-ranging discussions about the proposed directions for the curriculum.

Community contribution to the consultation process included opportunities to complete specific framing paper online surveys and/or lodge submissions. Surveys and submissions were received from individual teachers and other educators; school and curriculum authorities; professional and subject associations; and business, industry and community groups.

The consultation report for each of the learning areas includes:

- an overall introduction and background to the development of the framing papers
- an outline of the methodology used to collect and analyse the data
- a summary of respondents including demographic data
- analysis of quantitative and qualitative feedback including the source of the data
- recommended actions in response to the feedback

To view the consultation reports for each of the respective learning areas, visit the website www.ncb.org.au

HOW THE CURRICULUM WILL BE DEVELOPED

Curriculum development includes four stages:

**Curriculum Framing Stage**
Development of a broad outline of the K-12 curriculum for each learning area.

**Curriculum Writing Stage**
Development of the K-12 curriculum for each learning area.

**Implementation Stage**
Schools use curriculum for teaching and learning.

**Evaluation and Review Stage**
Data collection on the use of the curriculum. Review of curriculum and modification as appropriate.

The timeline for the writing of national curriculum is set out on the following page.

The timeline can also be viewed on the website www.ncb.org.au. It will be updated to reflect the progress of the national curriculum development.
# TIMELINE FOR CURRICULUM WRITING

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## Writing teams and advisory panels

Writing teams and advisory panels have been selected from across Australia and will play a key role in developing the curriculum.

Appointed writers have learning area and/or curriculum development experience and teaching and/or education related history.

K-12 learning area and cross curriculum advisory panels will assist curriculum writers by providing advice on draft materials at key stages in the development process.
PUBLICATIONS

The Shape of the Australian Curriculum

The Shape of the Australian Curriculum paper outlines proposals in relation to:

- goals of education for young Australians
- principles and specifications for development
- curriculum content
- achievement standards
- implementation of the curriculum.

The paper has been developed following analysis of extensive consultation feedback on The Shape of National Curriculum: A Proposal for Discussion released in October 2008, and reflects the decisions the Board directs after considering the consultation report.

A full copy of the Board’s The Shape of the Australian Curriculum is available on the Board’s website www.ncb.org.au

THE SHAPE OF THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

English, Mathematics, Science and History

The publications for the Shape of the Australian Curriculum for English, mathematics, the sciences and history have been developed following consultation feedback reports about the framing papers.

**English**

The national English curriculum is built around three interrelated strands that together support students’ growing understanding and use of the English language.

- **Language:** Knowing about the English language
- **Literature:** Understanding, appreciating, responding to and creating literature
- **Literacy:** Growing a repertoire of English usage.

The curriculum aims to develop students’ knowledge of language and literature and to consolidate and expand their literacy skills.

More specifically, it aims to support students to:

- understand how Standard Australian English works in its spoken and written forms and in combination with other non-linguistic forms of communication
- learn Standard Australian English to help sustain and advance social cohesion in our linguistically and culturally complex country
- respect the varieties of English and their influence on Standard Australian English
- appreciate and enjoy language and develop a sense of its richness and its power to evoke feelings, form and convey ideas, persuade, entertain and argue
- understand, interpret, reflect on and create an increasingly broad repertoire of spoken, written and multimodal texts across a growing range of settings
- access a broad range of literary texts and develop an informed appreciation of literature
- master the written and spoken language forms of schooling and knowledge
- develop English skills for lifelong enjoyment and learning.

To view The Shape of the Australian Curriculum: English, please visit www.ncb.org.au

**Mathematics**

A fundamental goal of the mathematics curriculum is to educate students to be active, thinking citizens, interpreting the world mathematically, and using mathematics to make predictions and decisions about personal and financial priorities.

The mathematics curriculum ensures:

- access to mathematic skills, knowledge, processes and understandings for all students
- that the interaction between the content and proficiency strands enables a focus on the thinking, doing and reasoning of mathematics
History
The national history curriculum aims to support students to develop knowledge and understanding of the past in order to appreciate their own and other's culture, to understand better the present and to contribute to debate about planning for the future.

The national history curriculum aims to support students to:
• develop significant historical knowledge and understanding through the use of the skills of historical inquiry
• appreciate the longevity and richness of Australian Indigenous history
• appreciate the distinctive as well as the shared nature of our past
• develop a critical perspective on received versions of the past and learn how to compare different accounts so that the conflicts and ambiguities are appreciated
• build their capacity to respond to modern-day issues in an intelligent and informed manner
• become active and informed democratic citizens.

To view The Shape of the Australian Curriculum: History, please visit www.ncb.org.au

Science
The aim of the Australian science curriculum is to provide students with a solid foundation in science knowledge, understanding, skills and values on which further learning beyond school can be built.

In particular the science curriculum should develop in students:
• an interest in science and a curiosity and willingness to speculate about and explore the world
• the ability to engage in communication of and about science
• valuing of evidence, scepticism and questioning of scientific claims made by others
• identification and investigation of scientific questions and drawing together evidence-based conclusions
• the ability to make informed decisions about their own health and wellbeing
• an appreciation of science as a human endeavour which can be applied to daily life.

To view The Shape of the Australian Curriculum: The Sciences, please visit www.ncb.org.au
What you will see in the new report
Federal government funding and independent schools

Bill Daniels, executive director of the Independent Schools Council of Australia, provides an overview of federal funding arrangements for independent schools to 2012.

As in previous funding quadruplets, federal funding for non-government schools in 2009-12 is mainly delivered through one central piece of legislation. However, where previous legislation covered recurrent and capital funding for both government and non-government sectors, the Schools Assistance Act 2008 pertains only to non-government schools.

The legislation enacts the Rudd government’s 2007 election promise that no non-government school would lose funding under a Labor federal government. Its effect has been to preserve the 2001-08 funding arrangements for non-government schools as a still point within an otherwise radical wash of change in federal funding for schools and national education policy generally.

Non-government schools are, however, not immune from that change.

Schools Assistance Act 2008

Passed in December last year, the Schools Assistance Act 2008 delivers certainty in federal funding to independent schools for the 2009-12 quadrennium. Key features include:

- General recurrent, capital and targeted programs. The SES funding model of general recurrent assistance for non-government schools has been retained. Similarly funding for capital grants and pre-existing targeted programs, including literacy, numeracy and special learning needs, languages education, new arrivals, country areas and short term emergency assistance have been incorporated into the Act.

- Indigenous education. The legislation integrates formerly segmented funding arrangements for Indigenous students attending non-government schools into a streamlined single per capita payment. It also provides additional funding for non-government schools that have significant numbers of Indigenous students. The maximum rate of general recurrent funding will now automatically apply to non-government schools in remote and very remote areas that have 50 per cent or more Indigenous enrolments and to non-government schools in other areas that have 80 per cent or more Indigenous enrolments.

- Funding agreements. As with previous legislation, the Act contains conditions of funding and accountability requirements:
  - Funding agreements to be in place with the Commonwealth
  - National student assessments
  - National reports on the outcomes of schooling
  - Reports on individual school information
  - Reporting to parents
  - Publication by schools of information relating to schools
  - Implementation of the national curriculum
  - Acquittal of grants
  - Reports on programs and financial operations
  - Access to accounts, records and documents for monitoring purposes
  - Participation in evaluation of programs
  - Failure to comply: provisions including repayment, reduction and delaying of payments.

Federal-state relations

The Rudd government is significantly changing the financial framework between the federal and state governments, working primarily through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). COAG has agreed to a new form of payment – National Partnership (NP) payments – to fund specific projects and to facilitate and/or reward states that deliver on nationally significant reforms. The financial arrangements will include incentive payments to reward performance. The first NPs will begin in 2009.
There are a number of NPs that relate to the schools sector and which will apply to independent schools:

- Quality teaching – $550 million over five years aimed at improving teacher quality
- Literacy and numeracy – $540 million over five years aimed at improving literacy and numeracy standards as determined by the 2008 NAPLAN tests
- Low SES school communities – $1.1 billion over five years to target and assist the educational need of students from low socio economic school communities
- COAG is also considering the development of an NP to improve Year 12 retention rates.

The funding arrangements regarding the NP payments are yet to be finalised and details – including the outcomes for independent schools – are still under negotiation. NP payments will only be made to state and territory governments and, in order to access them, non-government school groups will need to work with their state or territory government. However, the states will also have to demonstrate to the Commonwealth how they propose to engage and include the non-government sector under these arrangements.

While ISCA welcomes the funding initiatives under the NP program, we are particularly interested in how the sector will gain access to the funds and the impact of these reforms on non-government schools.

Infrastructure initiatives

The federal government has continued to implement policies that form part of its ‘education revolution’. The National Secondary School Computer Fund and the Trade Training Centres in Schools Program are core education policies that are available to government and non-government schools. While these programs bring significant and welcome investment into schools, they also involve extensive consultation between the Government, education organisations and schools to ensure their successful implementation.

The Government recently announced Building the Education Revolution (BER) package, will provide $14.7 billion over three years aimed at school capital funding projects. Part of the federal government’s economic stimulus strategy, the BER package consists of three main programs:

- Primary Schools for the 21st Century – to build or upgrade large scale infrastructure, such as libraries and multipurpose halls in every primary school, special schools and K-12 schools
- Science and Language Centres for 21st Century Secondary Schools – to build around 300 new science laboratories and language learning centres in high schools with a demonstrated need for upgraded facilities
- Renewing Australia’s Schools – provides up to $200,000 to every Australian school for maintenance and renewal of school buildings and minor building works.

All schools are eligible for funding in the BER package. The funds have been allocated to states and school sectors on enrolment shares and non-government schools will be able to apply for funding through block grant authorities (BGA). BGAs will also administer and monitor the progress of capital projects funded under the initiative.

These programs represent a massive capital injection into Australia’s school infrastructure. For the independent sector, which sources some 82 per cent of its capital spend through private contribution, this represents a unique opportunity to renovate, upgrade and in many schools provide new facilities.

SES review

The federal government is committed to an extensive review of schools funding policy during 2010 and 2011. While the review will clearly encompass the funding arrangements for independent schools, its full scope and scale are as yet unclear.

This review has the potential to significantly modify Commonwealth funding of schools. However, it will occur in the context of a federal election, which is expected to be called in 2010. While ISCA is confident of continued bipartisan support for funding of non-government schools, it is also conscious that political factors associated with the impending election may have some bearing on the outcomes of the review.

ISCA is firmly committed to maintaining an active involvement in the review.

Conclusion

The passage of the Schools Assistance Act provides a solid base of federal funding for non-government schools for the next few years. This does not mean though that the current funding arrangements will continue after 2010. Clearly long term trends and future demands have the capacity to alter policy. It is ISCA’s priority to meet these challenges and to ensure that the independent schools sector is well represented as it continues to deliver quality education outcomes at an affordable cost.

ISCA will publish online a funding accountability checklist for independent schools once regulations covering the Schools Assistance Act have been finalised. Check the ‘Information for schools’ section at www.isca.edu.au.
Students With Disabilities

In 2006-7, AHISA’s Chief Executive represented the three associations covering secondary principals across the three sectors in a DEST project on *Investigating the Feasibility of Portable Funding for Students with Disabilities*. The report dated June 2007 has recently been released and a link is included below. *Investigating the Feasibility of Portable Funding for Students with Disabilities* (2007) has been published on the Department's website. Please refer to the URL below:


The key findings follow:

**Executive Summary**

This document is the final report of the project *Investigating the Feasibility of Portable Funding for Students with Disabilities*. The work was commissioned by the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) and undertaken by the Faculty of Education, Monash University between October 2006 and June 2007.

The project investigated Australian Government funding for school students with disabilities (SWD) in the context of complementary funding from state and territory governments and funds from other sources. The project focused on the way in which funding was allocated, particularly its *portability*, that is, the extent to which disability funding followed students as they moved between schools—within or between sectors (government, Catholic and independent), states and territories, type of school (special or mainstream), and level of school (primary and secondary)—and the difficulties caused for students, schools, parents and system authorities if and when the student and their funding become separated.

**Key Findings**

1. The different funding models for SWD can be located on two major dimensions—whether funding is:
   a) allocated directly to parents or to schools/sectors; and
   b) based on assessed categories of disability (categorical) or estimates of the proportion of students with disabilities in the population (census).

2. In Australia, the model reported by all sectors is *Direct-to-Schools*. No instances were reported of direct funding of the parents of SWD. Both across and within sectors funding was variously directed to school districts, clusters of schools, or individual schools. In all cases, assessment and diagnosis of disability was a fundamental pre-requisite for SWD funding.

3. Comparisons of the levels of disability expenditure on SWD in the different jurisdictions and sectors are confounded by lack of consistency in definitions of disability, funding arrangements
that deliver varying amounts of total expenditure to schools, varying exclusions/inclusions of on-
costs and different approaches to the individually targeting funds and more broadly shared
resources among SWD, borderline SWD and regular students.

4. In general, stakeholders are more concerned with the level of funding rather than its portability,
despite some difficulties with portability of funding between states and sectors and even within
states and sectors. Improvements in funding models cannot compensate for inadequate funding.

5. Parents are very concerned about their ability (or inability) to decide how disability funds are spent
for their child. Issues of portability are second to concerns over educational provision. Parents of
children with higher levels of disability generally have greater concerns with funding arrangements
in all areas of provision than do parents of children with lower levels of disability. Similarly parents
of children with autism-spectrum disorder are more concerned about funding and related issues
than other parents of SWD. Parents of SWD attending Catholic schools are less likely to be
concerned about funding and provision issues than are parents of SWD attending government or
independent schools.

6. Portability of disability funding is restricted when a child moves from the government to the non-
government sector.
   a) SWD attending non-government regular schools receive substantially less government
disability funding than SWD with similar needs attending government regular schools.
   b) SWD attending non-government special schools also receive substantially less government
disability funding than SWD with similar needs attending government regular schools. The
substantially higher costs of special schools are met by higher other private income (including
from charitable trusts) and higher Australian Government and state and territory payments.

7. Key organisations concerned with the education of school students with disabilities were
considered about:
   a) Two aspects of the categorical model:
      ◦ category creep—the model creates incentives to seek more funds by classifying students
        at a higher level of disability; and
      ◦ the focus on individual students with the (unintended) consequence of separating SWD
        from other students, leading to their stigmatisation and reducing their access to
        mainstream curricula.
        Changes are sought which put a greater emphasis on inclusivity and promote the cultural
        change required to achieve this.
   b) While portability of funding is an issue of lower priority than many others, there was support
      for change based on the difficulties some SWD can experience when moving intrastate,
      interstate or to a different education sector. A common view was that essential to portability
      are: parity of funding across sectors and states; and standardisation across states of
      definitions of disability and the levels of funding attached to each category.
   c) Views about voucher-based funding models varied. Schools, school-based organisations and
      school authorities mostly believed that funds should be paid to schools, not parents, because
      of the greater expertise of schools and the potential for more efficient use of shared-
      resources and greater accountability. Parents and parent organisations believed that a
      voucher model might deliver parents a stronger role in deciding how the disability funds
      allocated for their child are spent. However, the Australian Council for State School
      Organisations (ACSSO), the national parent body for public schools, did not support vouchers
      as a suitable option. Other concerns about a voucher-based model were based on its
      potential to lead to difficulties in the relationships between schools and parents, to reduce the
quality of support overall, to place pressures on parents that would encourage them to take
on higher levels of debt, and lead to an increase in school fees.

8. The report assesses the advantages and disadvantages of four funding models that lie on a
continuum: at one end all funds are allocated directly to parents; at the other, all funds are
allocated directly to institutions. Between these two extremes are many possible permutations and
combinations.
   1) An educational allowance model. Funds would be issued directly to the parents or guardians
      of SWD to be used for any purposes as determined by recipients. Funds would normally be
      distributed on an annual basis prior to the beginning of each school year (e.g. January) or
      through stages during the school year.
   2) A limited voucher model. Funds are allocated to parents and guardians of SWD in the form of
      a voucher which can be redeemed for an approved range of services.
   3) A student outcomes model. The model is based on the development of a yearly plan for each
      SWD setting out personal and educational goals. The plan would detail how the student, the
      student’s parents/guardian, school and relevant others (eg health care professionals) will
      work together to achieve the goals.
   4) A program model. Funding is allocated directly to schools or institutions to use in
      collaboration with parents to support their students with special education needs. Loadings
      are allocated to parents.

9. The report makes five recommendations:
   1) That the nine objectives of a funding model for SWD (indicated in Section 7) be adopted as
      the goals of reform of the current arrangements.
   2) That reform be undertaken in stages and managed to ensure smooth transitions to new
      arrangements.
   3) The first stage of reform should be devoted to:
      a) Increasing the overall level of funding available for students with disabilities in schools.
      b) Securing national agreement on definitions of disabilities and associated funding.
      c) Providing parity of funding across sectors.
   4) That the Australian Government increase the level of Strategic Assistance (per capita)
      payments for non-government schools under the Schools Grants element of its Literacy,
      Numeracy and Special Learning Needs programme.
   5) That increases in Australian government funding for SWD in non-government schools be tied
      to a requirement that schools consult with the parents/guardians of each student on the best
      uses of the funding.

10. The report suggests that a further stage of this project should explore the ways in which Individual
    Education Plans (IEPs) can be better used to involve parents of SWD in their child’s education
    and to deliver improved learning outcomes efficiently.
Building the Education Revolution Update

KEY DATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Early May</td>
<td>P21 Round 1 successful applications announced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 May</td>
<td>Round 2 NSP (Final Round) program applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 May</td>
<td>Final date for P21 Round 2 applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late May</td>
<td>NSP Round 2 successful applications announced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 May</td>
<td>Final date for Round 1 (only round) SLC program applications</td>
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Update

The Building the Education Revolution Taskforce has had a rewarding couple of weeks with the announcement of successful schools in Round One of the National School Pride (NSP) program. The next announcement of successful schools for the Primary Schools for the 21st Century initiative is imminent.

National School Pride (NSP) Program

On 5 April 2009, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Hon Julia Gillard MP, announced the successful schools under Round One of the $1.3 billion NSP program.

NSP will deliver much needed funding for minor infrastructure and school refurbishment projects and immediate support for local jobs, with many of the NSP projects beginning in April 2009.

There has been an extremely positive response from schools to the announcement of the first round of NSP funding. Primary School Principals have described the funds as “tremendous” with comments on how important it will be for children to be able to work in an environment that is welcoming.

Adelaide’s Trinity Gardens school Principal Vicki Stokes said the school’s $150,000 would be spent on resurfacing the quadrangle, painting and carpeting, and likened the NSP funding to “a gift from heaven”.

NSP funding will support a wide and diverse range of projects including the construction of netball and basketball courts, building outdoor learning centres, installing wireless broadband and the refurbishment of dance/drama studios.

Goondiwindi State School in Queensland is creating a Secret Garden designed for Year 1 to 3 students. The BER funding for this project will cover the cost of landscaping, installing garden beds and plants, watering systems and providing student seating in the Secret Garden for early year students.

NSP work begins

We’re not sure how Holy Spirit School, in Cranbrook Townsville (pictured below) managed to convince local tradesmen to work over the Easter holidays, but we do know work on replacing two of the school’s classroom roofs is completed and here’s the picture to prove it!
The NSP funding has come along at a very opportune time for us as the School Development Committee had recently met to discuss our priorities for repairs over the next 10 years’ Holy Spirit School Principal Paul Lucas said.

‘The NSP funding has enabled us to do the work a lot quicker than expected and we are grateful for this wonderful gift,’ he continued.

Applications for Round Two of NSP close on 8 May 2009 with remaining eligible schools able to apply for funding.

### Primary Schools for the 21st Century (P21)

P21 has now completed processing and assessing applications for Round One.

The response to Round One was excellent and we appreciate the efforts of the Education Authorities in organising, compiling and managing their applications.

Successful applicants will be announced by the Minister for Education soon.

If schools do not get their applications submitted in Round One, opportunities in Rounds Two and Three will closely follow.

### Science and Language Centres for 21st Century Secondary Schools (SLC)

The third exciting element of the BER is $1 billion to build around 500 new, or refurbish existing, science laboratories and language learning centres in secondary schools across Australia.

As there will be only one round for SLC, we encourage schools to submit proposals to meet the deadline of 31 May.

School performance reporting

Allan Shaw, AHISA’s chief executive, reports on developments in national reporting requirements for schools.

The Australian Government’s massive injection of funds to Australian schools under its ‘Building the Education Revolution’ program and the extremely narrow timelines schools have in which to develop and execute BER projects are focusing the attention and energies of school leaders on capital infrastructure. At the same time, progress in the development of the national curriculum is keeping this issue alive in schools. It is not surprising then, that the schools sector has had little chance to engage with the Government’s intentions in relation to measuring and reporting on school performance.

AHISA played a leadership role in the independent sector’s response to the National Curriculum Board’s drafting papers. It is now imperative that we show leadership in the issue of measuring and reporting on school performance.

Government direction

On 24 February 2009 national Principals’ associations were briefed by Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) staff on a range of federal education initiatives, including progress to date on the National Schools Reporting Framework. The briefing revealed the federal government still has major steps to make before the framework meets the requirements of either educators or parents.

The national reporting agreed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), and which applies to both government and non-government schools, includes the following elements:

- Streamlined and consistent reports on national progress, including an annual national report on the outcomes of schooling in Australia
- National reporting on performance of individual schools to inform parents and carers and for evaluation by governments of school performance
- Provision by schools of plain language student reports to parents and carers and an annual report made publicly available to their school community on the school’s achievements and other contextual information.

These elements are not entirely new to independent schools, which for some years have been contributing data to national initiatives such as the Australian National Report on Schooling (ANR) and the federal education department’s Financial Questionnaire. Under funding agreements with the Commonwealth for the 2005-08 funding quadrilateral, schools were also required to publish information on a range of school performance measures. Of particular concern to the sector under the new arrangements are the proposed changes to reporting of national literacy and numeracy test data (NAPLAN), which could invite the compilation of simplistic ‘leagues tables’, and the likelihood that only very narrow measures of school effectiveness will be used.

Queensland’s former Minister for Education, Rod Welford, has publicly expressed disquiet over the linking of NAPLAN results to performance reporting:

‘What national testing has done – for good or evil – is it has converted them from purely diagnostic tests to high-stakes assessment of school performance and at one level, assessing the performance of a whole school on the basis of a narrow set of tests around literacy and numeracy, is unfair to schools,’ Mr Welford said.

‘Now that the test has been elevated to a high stakes test that is being used to judge achievement, rather than diagnose what needs to be taught in the future, teachers will have to take a different approach. They will have to, prior to the test, teach all those things they believe it will cover.’

The National Schools Reporting Framework will be the domain of the new Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). Enabling legislation for ACARA was passed in 2008 and the Authority is in the process of being established.

ACARA will have oversight of NAPLAN and the national schools data collection on student background characteristics. It will be responsible for the public reporting of the data it collects. At the February DEEWR briefing, Principals were advised that ACARA will be setting up individual web pages for each Australian school as a means to make nationally comparable school level performance data publicly available. It is proposed that a section of each web page will be available for schools to add in their own information.

Independence Volume 34 No. 1 13
Research programs confirm a strong correlation between student achievement and a high level of school climate.

Measuring effectiveness

DEEWR has advised school performance indicators may cover:

- Enrolments
- Student attendance
- Teacher expertise
- NAPLAN results
- Measures of gain/growth
- Comparison to like schools
- Parent/student/teacher satisfaction.

Schools already have some grasp of what several of these indicators might entail as they were required to report them under their former funding agreements. Previously, however, the 'what' and 'how' of reporting 'gain/growth' – or 'value adding' – was left to each school to determine. DEEWR's advice at this stage is that value adding will be determined by cohort progression in NAPLAN. Given the apparent dip in literacy achievement that traditionally occurs between Years 3 and 7, this single scale measure is not only inadequate to describe value adding by schools but will assuredly concern and confuse parents. The newspaper headlines and embarrassment of state education ministers seen each year when national testing data are published are an example of the communications problem such a measure entails.

DEEWR also advised the measures that will be used to define 'like' schools are not yet determined. While the Government and many educators have been insistent that school comparisons are only meaningful if like is compared to like, this concept appears to be of little interest to parents.

In recent research by the Australian Parents Council, which entailed a survey of 1000 non-government school parents, 64 per cent of parents said their child's performance should be compared with students in all schools but only 22 per cent said the comparison should be with children in 'like' schools. Only 25 per cent said family income of a school's students should be taken into account in making comparisons between schools.

In a survey undertaken in October 2008 by DEEWR, 92 per cent of parents ranked 'The school's approach to literacy and numeracy' as an important factor in judging school performance and 72 per cent rated 'School's performance in national testing and student outcomes' as important. Only 63 per cent of parents rated 'Comparing the performance of the school with that of others with similar student populations' as important.

Parents surveyed in the APC research thought the most important factor to judge a school's performance was 'How happy the students seem to be'.

What we see in these results is a disconnect between governments and parents: the Australian Government wants measurable school outcomes; parents want happy children who are achieving to the best of their ability. Schools want what parents want, too, and for the sake of our students we need to bridge that disconnect.

In May 2008, the federal Minister for Education, Julia Gillard said:

'I believe the proper objective of the nation's education system is to ensure our students' intellectual development, moral strength, happiness and general wellbeing. The human experience of education itself must be the focus of our school system. Perhaps I could sum it up in this idea: students are individuals who need to be guided and nurtured to bring out their best, as part of a wider community in which they recognise their rights and responsibilities.'

According to this and like statements we have to believe the Minister fully appreciates the real business of schooling. Schools recognise they must be accountable to governments and, through them, to the wider community. How this is achieved in a manner that does not undermine the business of schooling needs further consideration.

At time of writing a meeting of the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) was due to consider the National Schools Reporting Framework. Whatever may be decided at that meeting, there will be the opportunity to engage in debate over school performance measures and their definition. For instance, DEEWR has indicated that while household characteristics are currently being considered as the criteria for defining 'like' schools, affective domains (eg socialisation, student mental health and wellbeing) could be considered if national impetus warranted it.

Developing appropriate measures

Complaining will not make this happen. Schools need to be active in the development of a set of measurable indicators of school effectiveness that captures a much fuller and more accurate picture of how schools support the learning and wellbeing of their students than benchmarks test results. Several starting points are already available.

The PISA, TIMMS and PIRLS international research programs have been collecting data on school climate factors as diverse as teacher morale, teacher-student relations, instructional time, school disciplinary climate and whether students' academic performance is considered for school admission. While
these research programs confirm a strong correlation between student achievement and a high level of school climate; it is important to note that the measurement of these factors often depends on the perceptions of Principals, teachers and students. It is easy to imagine that Principals’ responses might be less reliable if they knew that the public ranking — and possibly even the funding — of their school could be affected by how they rated their own school’s climate.

School climate is an important measure of school effectiveness. Analysis of Longitudinal Survey of Australian Youth (LSAY) data shows approximately one-sixth of the variation in Year 9 literacy and numeracy achievement can be attributed to differences between schools, and that a little more than half of this between-schools variance can be explained by differences in school climate and student composition (ie school SES and the proportion of students from language backgrounds other than English).^6^ School climate is of particular importance to independent schools. It is what we spend a lot of time, energy and dollars on developing because we know it ‘adds value’ to our students. LSAY data offer some possibilities for measuring school climate and value adding that are less dependent on Principals’ perceptions.

Analysis of LSAY data on Year 9 literacy and numeracy achievement against tertiary entrance scores showed a causal link between schools’ ‘achievement environment’ and tertiary entrance performance and, further, significant differences between school sectors in student achievement growth.^7^ This research found that students attending independent schools scored, on average, 8.5 tertiary entrance score points higher than students in government schools after discounting for student SES and the level of their achievement in Year 9 literacy and numeracy tests. This difference was reduced to 3.4 tertiary entrance score points after discounting for ‘aspects of the school environment’: academic environment; socioeconomic context; the level of student engagement; classroom climate; and satisfaction with school. In other words, school climate based on these measures is worth around 5 tertiary entrance points.

AHISA has written to the Minister to make a case for a broader approach to measuring school performance, pointing out that whatever measures are chosen by the Government and published by ACARA will strongly influence what the public views to be of importance in schooling. What is measured and reported upon is regarded as important. By implication, what is not measured and reported upon is not regarded as important.

We have suggested that the basic skills in literacy and numeracy need to be seen in the broader educational context, including measures of:
- Student engagement
- School culture
- Parent satisfaction and engagement
- Teacher performance and engagement.

AHISA has also supported other education organisations in a call for legislation to ban the creation of leagues tables from schools performance data.

More needs to be done. AHISA is seeking to establish a sub-committee to guide and coordinate the Association’s response to the issue of schools performance measurement and reporting. Further analysis of the international and national data sets mentioned above could be a useful start to the sub-committee’s considerations. Most importantly, we will again be looking for the breadth and depth of comment from members that informed our response to the issue of the national curriculum.

The inflow of federal dollars to independent schools for capital expenditure is worth celebrating. But unless we remain vigilant on all items on the national education agenda we may leave ourselves open for unpleasant morning after surprises.

Notes
3 Results from the AFC and DEEWR studies are published in ‘DATA CHECK 1’, on page 18 of this journal.
4 Address to the Christian Schools Group, Canberra, 26 May 2008.
5 PIRLS research has found that in some countries, the Principal’s index of school climate explains between 12 and 21 per cent of the variation in reading performance. Noted in International Reading Association’s School Factors Discussion Leader Guide. Accessed at http://www.reading.org/Libraries/Reports_and_Standards/visa_pirls/pirls501_school_factors_discussion_guide.slb.aspx
TERMS OF REFERENCE

Purpose

To provide advice and make recommendations to the Premier and the Minister for Education and Training and Minister for the Arts, on the state of the primary education system in Queensland, in the areas of curriculum, with particular reference to literacy and numeracy, assessment and teacher quality.

Professor Geoff Masters, Chief Executive Officer, ACER, is to undertake the following review process and provide advice and recommendations on completion of this work.

Review Process

- Review existing analyses of this and provide further analysis if required.
- Review other research material that provides comment on Queensland’s school performance.
- Review results from Year 2 net 2007 against NAPLAN 2008.
- Conduct a literature review drawing on best practice from international research and practice.
- Undertake consultation as required.

Findings

- Make findings based on the above in relation to curriculum, assessment and teacher quality in Queensland primary schools.
- Identify best practice examples in schools where performance is above expectation and identify reasons for this performance.
- Identify any other themes common to school practice in the lowest performing schools.
- Identify any themes common to student performance in the highest and lowest achievement bands.

Scope

- All primary schools.
- All sectors of education, state and non-state.
- The literacy, numeracy and science curriculum in Queensland’s schools.
Recommendations

- Make recommendations for the ‘scaling up’ of appropriate best practice examples for whole of system benefit.
- Confirm existing strategies that are/will be successful in raising student performance
- Make any further recommendations on new strategies /initiatives that may be adopted in Queensland primary schools, including recommendations for on-going monitoring of performance

Queensland Education Performance Review Steering Committee

This body will utilise broad-ranging expertise and high-level consideration to provide strategic leadership and oversight to the project. The Committee’s membership will include the following.

- **Chair**: Ken Smith, Director-General, Department of the Premier and Cabinet
- Annette Whitehead, Executive Director – Social Policy, Department of the Premier and Cabinet
- Rachel Hunter, Director-General, Department of Education, Training and the Arts
- Jenny Cranston, Deputy Director-General – Education, Department of Education, Training and the Arts
- Mike Byrne, Executive Director, Queensland Catholic Education Commission
- Dr John Roulston, Executive Director, Independent Schools Queensland
- Kim Bannikoff, Director, Queensland Studies Authority.

Project timelines and milestones

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 1</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Establishment and initial meeting of the Steering Committee</td>
<td>December 2008</td>
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<td>Development of a preliminary report containing analysis of results and short-term initiatives that may be implemented by new school year</td>
<td>through January 2009</td>
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<td><strong>Delivery of preliminary report</strong></td>
<td><strong>End-January 2009</strong></td>
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<td>Phase 2</td>
<td>Consultation with major stakeholders</td>
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<td>Preliminary findings of consultation to be considered by the Reference Group and Steering Committee</td>
<td>End-March 2009</td>
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<td>Development of review recommendations</td>
<td>April 2009</td>
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<td><strong>Final report</strong></td>
<td><strong>End-April 2009</strong></td>
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