2015
STRATEGIC DIRECTION

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Every few hundred years in Western history there occurs a sharp transformation... Within a few short decades, society rearranges itself – its world view; its basic values; its social and political structures; its arts; its key institutions. Fifty years later, there is a new world... We are currently living through such a transformation.”

It is amazing to think that our current Primary students will have no experience of a world without mobile digital devices. If there is an institution within society that holds the most responsibility for change, it is schools. The next 18 months at Mueller will be a time of re-positioning ourselves to respond to this ‘new world’ and deliver education which remains grounded in Christian values and prepares students for the future of critical thinking and digital citizenship.

Over the past semester, we have been working towards forming a direction for the education of your children at Mueller. I am pleased to be able to write to you and give an introduction to what we are working towards – Mueller 2015.
What has been happening in Semester 1?

The first semester has been a busy time of research and preparation for the improvement of Teaching and Learning at Mueller. Behind the scenes we have;

» undertaken a literature review of current teaching and learning frameworks;
» read the latest research in school improvement and highly effective schools;
» surveyed the historical Mueller data for NAPLAN and QCS tests;
» engaged teacher feedback on Mueller distinctives and strengths;
» undertaken surveys on iPad use by teachers and the recent parent survey on overall school performance.

All of these activities have been a time of information gathering. Thankyou for your time in completing the recent Parent Survey. The feedback we received was valuable.

One of the characteristics of highly effective schools is to collect and respond to data. We now have adequate, reliable information to move forward with a strategic plan for the next 3 years at Mueller College. Underpinning the strategic direction for the school is the following driving force:

To provide improved student outcomes through a clear vision for Teaching and Learning underpinned by a desire to maintain our Christian ethos.

What has already been achieved?

While the behind the scenes information gathering has occurred, the day to day education of your children has of course continued. Semester 1 has already seen the continuation of quality projects and implementation of new initiatives. Throughout the semester we have been working to ensure quality instruction is maintained through:

» the numeracy and literacy coaches in the Primary School;
» the introduction of a numeracy coach in the Middle School;
» a new Drafting Policy and Assessment & Assignment Policy in the Secondary School (this will have direct positive outcomes for improving student outcomes as students will receive timely feedback for improvement prior to the final grade being awarded);
» a Mueller Style Guide is currently being written (the purpose is to provide students with a clear assignment writing guide to give them the best opportunities to improve their learning. The Style Guide also provides consistency across all year levels and in all classrooms);
» increased investment of time and expertise in the Year 12 Core Skills Test preparation.
Strategic Directions

The next 3 years at Mueller will be a time of cultural change. Research is clear with regards to highly effective schools, they are characterised by:

» a clear purpose and vision for Teaching and Learning;

» a culture of high expectations (this does not mean every student needs to achieve an ‘A’, instead, every student aims to reach their potential);

» continually looking to improve student outcomes;

» teachers working as a team;

» clear understanding of curriculum;

» highly effective practice driven by leadership.

Mueller is already on the journey. We already tick many of the boxes, however we know that we need to strive for continual improvement.

As I have already written, the driving force for the next 3 years is to provide improved student outcomes through a clear vision for Teaching and Learning underpinned by our desire to maintain our Christian ethos.

Many decisions will be made and projects will be undertaken, however the 4 main areas of strategic direction include:

» Mueller Framework for Teaching and Learning

» A new Departmental Structure in the Secondary School

» Introduction of Mobile Digital Technology

» Targeted improvement in Teaching and Learning
Mueller Framework for Teaching and Learning

The writing of the Mueller Framework for Teaching and Learning has already commenced. The Framework is based on current research into best practice, written to ensure the Mueller distinctive of a Christian education is maintained. The major body of work which has been used is the research done by Robert Marzano titled, The Art and Science of Teaching. The Mueller Framework for Teaching and Learning will be pivotal in the improvement of student outcomes. The Framework will provide consistency of instruction across all year levels and classes, a common language for all students and clear learning goals.

A new Departmental Structure in the Secondary School

There are 2 main factors driving the need for a new Departmental Structure; the Australian Curriculum and implementation of the Mueller Framework for Teaching and Learning. In their position as academic leaders, the key role of the Heads of Department will be to implement strategies to improve Teaching and Learning, ensure consistency across classes and pursue improved student outcomes. The Departments will be structured according to the Australian Curriculum documents.

The existing Primary School structure of Year Level Co-ordinators and Coaches will remain. This is a structure which has already proven itself to be valuable in the Primary School.

Introduction of Mobile Digital Technology

Work has already commenced on achieving this goal. An Information Technology Futures Committee has met regularly since the beginning of the year to develop an implementation strategy. The priority for any widespread introduction of mobile devices is to ensure that the use of these devices is seamlessly integrated within the framework for Teaching and Learning.

The decision has been made that the preferred device is the Apple iPad. The upgrade of the wifi network and technical infrastructure will be aimed at supporting the iPad. The implementation plan includes:

» a comprehensive upgrade of College wifi (completed by Term 3);
» Term 3 iPad trials in a variety of year levels and subject areas;
» introduction of a new Technology specialist subject in Years 5 & 6;
» Term 3 Parent Information sessions on iPad implementation;
» Term 4 evaluation of wifi and iPad trials;
» integration of iPads into the Teaching and Learning Framework throughout 2014.

2014 will be a year where iPads begin to become a compulsory requirement for students at Mueller. There will be parent meetings in Term 3 to further explain the requirements and how iPads will be used.

Targeted improvement in Teaching and Learning

With a renewed desire to improve Teaching and Learning, we will be ensuring that major decisions are aligned with this strategic direction. This will mean that what has always been accepted as ‘the norm’ may not be the case as we move forward. Over the next 3 years changes will occur in timetabling, assessment, reporting, expectations and the calendar. Changes implemented will be focused on improving the Teaching and Learning program.

2015 Strategic Direction

Mueller College

more than a school
Pastoral Care continues to be a strength at Mueller. We are committed to maintaining this genuine concern for your family through ensuring your children are educated in a safe and supportive environment. In order for quality teaching and learning to occur, students need to be in an environment where they feel valued and supported. The Pastoral Care Framework at Mueller will continue to be strengthened as the Heads of Sub-Schools become more familiar with the students.

Lasting change is not a quick process nor will we attempt to make it a quick process. Over the next 3 years there will be successes and areas for improvement. We are however committed to gradual and systematic change to the Teaching and Learning at Mueller in order to improve student outcomes. With the outlined 4 strategic focus areas, we are confident that Mueller will remain a school where students are valued and can receive an excellent education.

You do not have to wait for the next survey to give feedback. All of the College Leadership Team are available to discuss any aspect of your experience at Mueller, or simply send an email. We value your feedback and continued support. If you wish to respond to any aspect of this letter, please contact me.

Regards

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