2007 GOVERNING COUNCIL REPORT

Well, here I am again, putting pen to paper to formulate and present a Governing Council Report for 2007.

At the close of the 2006 year, we, as a community, were a little apprehensive, but still quite optimistic that 2007 was going to be a great year. Rain would come to quench our dry and thirsty land and our river and lakes would be flowing with life-giving water. As 2007 unfolded, some rain came, but not enough to support our community, who relies heavily on our lakes.

2007 has seen many dairies and farms closing or severely cutting back on their herds, which in turn affects employment, and small businesses within this community. This includes our school, with families moving and student numbers declining. We have all felt the impact.

I wish to thank all parents and staff who consistently attend and support our meetings and decisions taken to benefit our school community. 2007 has thrown many challenges at us. Staffing, student numbers and the steady decline of students impacts on the way our budget and staffing will be managed in 2008.

With the threat of losing our Swimming, Aquatics and Instrumental Programs, Governing Council encouraged our community to sign petitions to save these programs. In May 2007, the State Government and Minister of Education & Children’s Services gave some reprieve, announcing that these programs won’t be abolished and the Instrumental Music Program is trialling a new program in 2008. With some trepidation, this still needs a lot of development to be as successful as the Music Program we have managed to offer within this school community in the past.

The Education Department, together with the Health Department, have formed a “Healthy Eating Policy” which will be implemented in all schools at the beginning of 2008. Governing Council, staff and our canteen contractor have been busy reviewing policies, attending seminars, etc. so a smooth transition can be made in 2008.

I have to admit that after attending such seminars and the push for the “Healthy Eating Policy” development due to the statistics of obesity in our preschool and school age students can raise some cynicism as many parents were petitioning this same government and the Minister of Education & Children’s Services to keep our Swimming, Aquatics and Music Programs within our schools at the beginning of 2007. Obviously physical activity doesn’t impact on obesity!

In the middle of the year we were given $169,000 to replace the front entrance doors and roof to our gymnasium. After receiving appropriate quotes, about $60,000 was not used of the $169,000. The Governing Council then campaigned the Department to use $60,000 to clean, paint and fix internal walls of the hall. In our Department’s wisdom, we were refused and the $60,000 was withdrawn. Governing Council is appealing this decision.

Our students from R – 12 are involved in many activities within the curriculum and participating in functions outside of our school community. To list a few, our music programs involving Year 5’s, Middle and Senior School, Choir of 18 students attended the Music Festival in Adelaide, Sailing, Monarto Zoo Program, Active 8 (2008 is our last year of this grant) - staff and Governing Council are actively researching the possibility for another grant that may give the same or similar programs that the Active 8 Program has offered and benefited many of our students in the past.

The “Connecting Spirits” has become an active part within our school. Since the launch of the idea in 2005, Julie Reece (past teacher), Mal Jurges and with a group of families, 8 of our students made the trip to Europe in November 2006. Since then they have been guest speakers and presented their experiences to many and various groups within and outside of our community. The success of this trip has now borne two more trips, one in 2008 and another in 2010.
I would like to take this opportunity to thank all parents who have volunteered their time and have helped in class, on camps and transporting students to many and various functions that all of our students are involved in throughout the year.

Many thanks to Parents & Friends for their input in supporting this school every year, through their fundraising and purchasing items needed by our school.

As Governing Council Chairperson, I cannot stress enough the importance of support. Staff, parents and students must work together and support one another. A successful outcome must have the complete support of all people involved in the education process of our children. We all play an important role in this school community so that it may grow and remain a strong educational facility within this country community.

To be part of a strong, active community, the school actively supports the local community, with the use of the school pool, gymnasium and oval for various sporting and community events. The local Community Band has weekly use of our school’s music room and some of the musical instruments.

We are an important part of this country community. We also need the support of this community and the businesses and clubs within it. We wish to thank all who have supported us in many of our fundraising and sporting ventures, and other functions within our school community.

On closing, I wish to extend my thanks to all staff, parents, students and the greater community for your support and work this year. The needs are great when it comes to the education of our children. I would also like to wish this year’s Year 12 students all the best for your future and may you all be successful in your chosen pathway of life.

I thank you all for your support and a special thank you to Monica Williams for her tireless effort and work in 2007 and may we all be ready to support and give 100% for this school community to remain strong and to grow in 2008.

I wish all staff, students and parents a safe and happy Christmas and holidays and hope to see you all in 2008.

Judy Appelkamp
Governing Council Chairperson
2007