

2020 AGM

I would like to extend a warm welcome tonight to parents, staff, our principal Ronan and our Parish priest Father Roshan. Thank you for making the effort to be at our 2020 St Mary's AGM. On a personal note I would like to thank Wayne Girando for delivering my speech last year and hence this is my first report as board chair.

When 2020 got under way we probably didn't realize how different a year it would be. Ronan began the year as our permanent principal after spending a year as interim, and the school board remained a relatively unchanged team from the previous year. Things turned on their head pretty quickly with the advent of COVID-19 which meant, after only one meeting, we were unable to meet again until the end of term 2. A stint of home schooling was in the middle of this, with, I am sure most parents will agree, a mix of highs and lows.

I know it is usually Ronan's job to thank the staff, but I would like to extend a quick thank you for all the extra work that was put in by teachers and staff at that time. I know we were a bit daunted by what was in front of us with respect to home schooling and none of us knew how long this would go for. The learning packs, communication and support were first class so a huge thank you from the parents.

As always the board has had plenty to focus on this year. I won't detail everything that has been happening but our major project going forward is the next phase of the capital development plan. Last year the CDP was about identifying areas of priority in the school for upgrade and from there, following the process, to see if we were eligible for funding. Only a certain amount of funding is granted each year in WA so, in some ways it can be a long shot. Fortunately, our application was successful.

Certain other things to do with this CDP have been ticked off during the year which will hopefully see some physical progress early in 2021. The main challenges for a school of our size is always funding. If money is required, whether it is for repairs, upgrades, IT or building renovations it needs to be found within the budget. So, while we have a grant to do this work and our school finances are in good order, we still have to be watchful and keep our books balanced going forward.

I am sure Ronan will update you on a few of the other things that have been happening throughout the year.

Now for a few thank you's.

I would like to thank the P & F for the effort put in to fundraising throughout the year. When COVID hit, I am sure Kirsten and her team thought they might be having a quiet year. That has definitely not been the case. I am sure term 4 could not have had any more packed into it. The money they raise does not go unnoticed by the board and we appreciate the projects that they fund. Just as importantly the P & F keeps our school community active and involved in what happens at our school.

Thanks to all our board members, Wayne, Aliesha, Janis, Charlie and Emma. We have been a team for a couple of years now and I think we are working well together. Thanks to Kirsten as the P & F representative on the board, you have been an awesome addition and your input has been great. Our board will remain the same next year with Janis taking on the treasurer's role from Aliesha who will stay on as a board member.

I would like to single out Emma in particular as she puts a huge amount of time into many areas of the school. This includes the board, from meeting to minutes and everything in between. One of the reasons we are able to apply for grants to do capital works is because of our strong financial position and this is in no small amount due to work put in by both Emma and Ronan.

Which brings me to Ronan. It's been a challenging year in more ways than one but I think your leadership has guided us through with no great difficulty. You and your family have shown a willingness to be involved not just at St Mary's but within the wider community of Boyup Brook. This can only be a good thing for our small school. You certainly have great ambitions for making our school the best that it can be and we look forward to continued growth and improvement well into the future. This passion you show also means there is never a dull moment at our board meetings. Thanks Ronan.

Thanks everyone. That concludes my report.