2005 Annual Report

School Name: St Francis De Sales Regional College Leeton

Contact Details:
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1. School Profile

1.1 Introduction

St Francis De Sales Regional College is a Catholic Co-educational Day and Weekly Boarding School providing a comprehensive education across Years 7-12, for students from Leeton, Narrandera and surrounding rural areas in the Riverina.

The purpose of the College is to contribute to the Church’s Mission to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to offer to the Catholic Community and others within our Region an educational foundation for life – meaning development towards the physical, intellectual, social, emotional and moral growth of the students.

St Francis College is registered with the New South Board of Studies as a systemic school within the Diocese of Wagga Wagga.

1.2 Student Profile

The following information describes the student profile for 2005:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>LBOTE*</th>
<th>Indigenous</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>369</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>745</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Language background other than English

1.3 Enrolment Policy

The Diocese of Wagga Wagga has established an Enrolments Policy which is implemented by all schools in the Diocese. The full text of this policy can be found at

http://cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au/policies.htm

The implementation of this policy is monitored by the Catholic Schools Office.

St Francis College has permission to vary this policy. The College’s Policy has siblings being offered enrolment as its first priority. The rest of the policy is then in line with Diocesan Policy.

1.4 Staff Profile

The NSW government requires that this report detail the number of teachers in each of the following categories:

a) have teaching qualifications from a recognised higher education institution

b) have qualifications from a recognised higher education institution but no formal teacher education qualifications

c) have relevant successful teaching experience and appropriate knowledge but no formal teacher qualifications.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>51.71</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>53.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.5 Retention Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2005 Years 7-10</th>
<th>Years 10-12</th>
<th>Years 7-12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apparent</td>
<td>549</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual</td>
<td>542</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>745</td>
</tr>
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</table>
2. Catholic Life and Mission

2.1 Catholic Heritage
St Francis De Sales Regional College is a Catholic School. The school is a community of faith based on belief in God and a Christian way of life. The spirit and values of the Gospel determine the atmosphere of the school and underpin all that is done and said.

This spirit is apparent to those who enter the College and in all our dealings with students, between staff, and with parents and members of the wider community.

The religious orientation of the College as a Catholic school relies on the presence of a committed staff who understand, give witness to and accept the ethos of the school.

2.2 Liturgical Life
St Francis College is committed to providing liturgical experiences which reflect the life of the community, celebrate God among us and which affirm the leadership of men and women in ritual and ministry. Liturgy reflects the rhythmic cycle of the Church's seasons; it reflects the spirituality present in the natural seasons; it reflects stages in the life journey of the individual; it responds to events, developments and crises which touch the human community.

Mass is celebrated in the College Chapel twice a week for Boarders and others who would like to attend. As a whole College the student, staff and parents gather to celebrate the Eucharist on significant occasions such as the start of the school year, the end of the school year, commissioning of leaders and Founders’ Day.

Year Group Retreats are held throughout the year. These days provide students with the opportunity to reflect on their lives and the place of God within them. The College is strongly committed to its Retreat program, which is constantly being updated and changed to meet the different demands each Year Group brings. It is an expectation that every student attend Retreat each year.

Students and staff uphold a vibrant prayer life by participating in prayer each morning during the Pastoral period and the opportunity exists for students to attend an active Prayer Group which is held weekly. Staff gather each morning for prayer and each year begins and ends with a special and meaningful Staff Liturgy.

2.3 The School in the Life of the Parish and Diocese
Year Groups are organised to prepare Saturday Night liturgy on a regular basis in both Leeton and Narrandera parishes. Many of the boarding students play a significant role in liturgy in their own parishes. The College has the services of a Chaplain who is the assistant priest at St Joseph’s Leeton; the priests of Leeton Parish celebrate the Boarding Masses, the Narrandera Parish priest is also active in the liturgy and retreat programs of the College; parents in the Hay parish encourage St Francis students to take on responsibilities during weekend liturgies in Hay.

Religious Education Curriculum

The Religious Education Department bases its teaching on the principles enunciated in Sharing Our Story, the Diocesan Education program, the Studies of Religion syllabus, CSO policies, as well as the Goals agreed upon by the College Staff in its Vision Statement.

The College follows ‘Sharing Our Story’ for all students in 7 – 10, Studies of Religion (1 & 2 Unit) in 11 & 12. Students have the option of choosing Studies of Religion in Year 12 or Stage 6 of the ‘Sharing our Story’ program.

Religious Education is assessed and reported to parents in semester reports.
2.5 Catholic Worldview

St Francis De Sales Regional College is committed to the promotion of social justice. The College supports community organizations such as Caritas Australia, the Pontifical Missions and the St Vincent de Paul Society. There is a strong history of generous donations to causes with which the College has a connection e.g. students working voluntarily in orphanages in Africa, associates who work with the Afar people, as well as connections with our sister town Luro in East Timor. The newly formed Social Justice Group work in collaboration with the Pastoral Care teams and Religion teachers to educate and urge the students to be involved in fund raising for these worthy causes. Students are also exposed to immersion experiences in social outreach through attendance at the ‘Street Retreat’ during their Senior years of schooling.

2.6 Parent Participation

The school works in partnership with families and parishes in providing the students with liturgical experiences, which are meaningful and ritualistic. The majority of the principal liturgical feasts are planned and celebrated within the school community to which parents are invited. Parents are invited to attend the Leadership Commissioning and Graduation Masses and they play a role in these liturgies.

2.7 Professional Learning in Catholic Life and Mission

Teachers of Religious Education have been involved in Professional Learning to implement Sharing Our Story for 7 – 10. Teachers have also attended courses designed to assist with the implementation of the new Studies of Religion program for 2006.

Some staff have indicated they will be studying through the Broken Bay Institute in conjunction with the Wagga Wagga Diocese to receive their Graduate Certificate in Theological Studies. This has been part of the support and encouragement required for all teachers of Religious Education to meet Diocesan requirements.

The Diocesan Policy on Professional Requirements for the Accreditation of Teachers of Religious Education can be found at:

http://cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au/policies.htm
3. Pastoral Care

3.1 Diocesan Policies

The Diocese of Wagga Wagga has established Pastoral Care and Discipline Polices which are implemented by all schools in the Diocese. The full text of these policies can be found at: http://cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au/policies.htm

The implementation of these policies is monitored by the Catholic Schools Office.

3.2 School Implementation of Diocesan Policy

The College expresses its position on “Pastoral Care” with the following Pastoral Care credo:

- The St Francis de Sales Regional College Leeton Community believe that Pastoral Care is an all-pervasive force that animates the school community, and generates a safe and secure environment.

- The College believes that each person is created in the image of God and empowered by the spirit.

- The College believes that all are motivated by the example of Jesus and hence everyone endeavours to live out His values of love, justice, care, tolerance and hope.

- The College values each person for who they are, while at the same time challenging them to be relational people.

- The College recognises that each person is called to contribute his/her gifts to the creation of this learning community, where each person’s life journey is recognised, nurtured and celebrated.

- When Pastoral Care is effective, it enables all to create a hope-filled and affirming environment that is St Francis College.

The College Pastoral care is modelled on Jesus whose love, care and compassion for each individual, particularly the marginalised, sought to bring them to their completeness as human beings (created in the image of God). (C6 Psalm 23; Matthew 18: 12-14)

Pastoral Care at St Francis reflects the ideals, values and emphasis of the Josephite and Marist educational philosophies. These form the basis of the College Vision and Mission statement, which embraces all aspects of school life: spiritual, academic, physical, emotional and social. It values the individual gifts of each person and facilitates their growth to their fullest potential.

Pastoral Care at St Francis is an integral process of education and life skills that is based on relationships and affirmation. Pastoral Care fosters the creation of an atmosphere of trust, where the dignity and worth of each person is continually affirmed. Consequently it is supportive and celebratory, preventative and esteem building.
3.3 Pastoral Care of Families

The College acknowledges that Parents/Caregivers are the first and foremost educators of their children. The College takes very seriously, the responsibility entrusted upon it at St Francis by parents/caregivers to provide a learning environment for their children.

Teaching, Boarding and Ancillary staffs, work in close collaboration with families to ensure open lines of communication and clear understandings. All students and in turn their families, have a hierarchical structure in which these relationships are fostered. Boarding School Supervisors, Pastoral Care Teachers, Class Teachers, Year Co-ordinators, Pastoral Care Worker, Counsellor, Pastoral Care Co-ordinator/Assistant Principal and Principal, all have an opportunity to liaise with families regarding the Pastoral concerns of students.

Regular parent information evenings are held to ensure all parties are clear on the policies and processes, and to explain any special programs.

3.4 2005 Initiatives

- A full review of the College “Mutual Respect and Discipline Policy” was conducted in 2005 by a team including the College Counsellor, Assistant Principal and all 6 Year Co-ordinators.

- Professional Development, led by Mr David Anderson, was undertaken by all staff in the area of “Learning Communities”, in order to move into line with Diocesan practices.

- A range of co-curricular activities for students and staff in the Pastoral Care areas of Drug Education, Relationship Building and Resilience was held.

- The building of the sense of spirit, ecumenism and faith was continued.

3.5 Resolving Issues

The Diocese of Wagga Wagga has established a Complaints Handling Policy which is implemented by all schools in the Diocese. The full text of this policy can be found at http://cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au/policies.htm

The implementation of this policy is monitored by the Catholic Schools Office.
4 Excellence in Teaching and Learning

4.1 Curriculum Overview

St Francis College offers a diverse and challenging curriculum. Students are prepared for the award of the NSW School Certificate and Higher School Certificate within an environment that is strongly influenced by the College’s Pastoral Care programme, and where students are encouraged to develop their own self confidence and self discipline as they further their studies.

The College is proud of its academic record.

In junior years (Stages 4 and 5) students study Religious Education and subjects from the eight Key Learning Areas of English, Mathematics, Science, Human Society and Its Environment, Languages Other than English, Technological and Applied Studies, Creative and Arts and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education. As well as the study of mandatory subjects, students in Year 9 and 10 choose from a broad selection of practical and non-practical electives for Stage 5.

Senior students (Stage 6) have a wide range of subjects to choose from, with English and Religion being the only mandatory subjects. The full range of subjects on offer is available in the College prospectus. Students may choose to follow an Academic or Vocational Pathway. Students choosing a Vocational pathway study courses that are accredited by industry and have clear links to students’ post school destinations.

The Curriculum offered to students of all ages is meant to be enjoyable, yet challenging. Success in learning can be best gained by a partnership in learning between students, parents and teachers working together towards the best educational outcomes for our students.

4.2 Approach to Teaching and Learning

In accordance with the St Francis De Sales Regional KLA Policies for Learning and Teaching and Today’s Children, Tomorrow’s Adults (Diocese of Wagga Wagga, 2000) the College staff promote learning communities that are based on the six essential learning and teaching practices: meaningful learning, communication, collaboration, self-responsibility and human development. One of the goals associated with these practices is the underlying notion of differentiating the curriculum, which is aimed at providing a fair outcome for students of differing abilities and interests.

4.3 Significant Initiatives

- Boys’ Education
- Information Communication Learning Technologies
- LYNKS structured workplace learning for Year 10
- Study sessions for boarding students and staff
- A thoroughly planned and conducted careers education program
- Differentiating the Curriculum

4.4 Student Achievement

Literacy

Literacy continues to be a major focus of the College. Once again all Year 7 and Year 8 students sat for the ELLA (English Language and Literacy Assessment) Test. The trend of improvement between Years 7 and 8 has continued for the majority of students.

School initiatives in this area have included; the assistance of a literacy support teacher, targeting students with identified literacy problems, the ongoing professional development of staff through school based projects and targeted external professional development, for example ELLA marking. The culmination of a very successful year for the College was the achievement of a National Literacy and Numeracy 2005 Award.
Numeracy
The College places great emphasis on numeracy. SNAP (Secondary Numeracy Assessment Program) testing continues to provide information that assists programs offered to improve outcomes for students at risk. SNAP also helps with identifying students who are gifted in this area. The “Counting On” Program implemented in 2004 continues to assist Year 7 students who are identified as experiencing numeracy problems.

School Certificate
It is pleasing to report that the School Certificate results indicated a significant improvement in the results across all KLA areas. The students achieving Band 6 (above 90%) had nearly doubled and the students achieving Band 5 (above 80%) increased by 30%. Students were under-represented in the lower bands.

Higher School Certificate
The results for 2005 confirmed the trend for St Francis College to more consistently achieve a greater number of students in Bands 5 and 6. This consolidation is a reflection of the various initiatives introduced at the college. These included staff participation in HSC marking and other targeted professional development activities. Of particular satisfaction was the achievement of Band 6 results in subjects where this had not previously occurred. These subjects included Visual Arts, Design and Technology, Advanced English and Music. One Design and Technology student had her major work selected for the Intech Display at the Powerhouse Museum and a Music student was chosen to audition for the Encore Concert in Sydney.

Targets for 2006
- To continue the push for students to achieve Band 6 in the HSC and SC
- To encourage teachers to attend HSC marking sessions
- To maintain and expand upon the numeracy and literacy activities initiated by the SLANG (St Francis Literacy and Numeracy Group) Staff Committee
- To improve literacy outcomes as a result of Boys Education Initiatives
- To improve the number of Stage 4 students achieving above the benchmark in ELLA and SNAP tests.

4.5 Information, Communication and Learning Technologies
St Francis De Sales College has made progress with implementing Information Communication Skills into the Curriculum. The College budget allows for the expansion and upgrading of ICT hardware and software. The teaching staff is participating in Professional Learning to implement a technology based Learning Management System into classroom practice.

4.6 Professional Learning
The staff at St Francis College is regularly involved in a diverse mix of professional development. The whole staff participated in the ‘Building Learning Communities’ professional learning held over 4 days. Information Communication Technology skills were, through Castnet training assisted by staff from the Catholic Schools Office. Many teachers have attended subject specific professional development courses.
5. Extra Curricula Program

The St Francis College Extra Curricula Program saw students participate in a wide variety of students. Sporting Activities available to students in 2005 included: Australian Rules football, Rugby League, Soccer, Netball, Cricket, Basketball, Hockey, Tennis, Touch Football, Swimming, Athletics and Cross Country. Students were able to access Diocesan and State Representation in a range of sports.

A highlight of the 2005 school year was the Musical Production, Buralga, an original show written, produced, directed and choreographed by teachers at the College. The production involved students across years 7-12 working with staff, students from St Joseph’s Leeton and members of the wider College Community.

Throughout 2005 students were involved in Vocal Ensembles, an Instrumental program, Rock Bands and Eisteddfods.

Students also participated in Mock Trial, the Art of Speech, Debating, Tournament of the Minds, Subject Competitions, Study Days, Drama Performances, Visual Arts Workshops, the LYNKS Program, Aged Care Visits, Science Fiction Club, Chess and Scrapbooking.
6. Strategic Initiatives

6.1 2005 Priorities and Achievements

- Achieving Band 6 in the HSC in subjects that had not previously reached band 6
- The award of a National Literacy and Numeracy Week Highly Commended
- Staff skill level in Information Communication Learning Technologies increasing
- Study of our Catholic Heritage by staff
- Staff Retreat
- College Musical production
- Completion of Shade Areas
- Beautification of College Grounds
- All classrooms now air conditioned
- College Security Systems improved

6.2 2006 Priorities and Challenges

- Continued Staff learning and implementation of Information Communication Learning Technologies
- Development of a wireless network throughout the College
- Commitment to providing improved access to Technology throughout the College.
- Values and Drug Education
- Teachers to HSC Marking
- Science and literacy project
- Success for Boys project
- Differentiating Curriculum
- Jubilee year celebrations
- Registration and Accreditation
7. Parent Participation

The Parents of St Francis De Sales Regional College are welcomed and encouraged to participate in the life of the College. The College Council acts as an advisory council to the Principal and the Parents and Friends Association works tirelessly to raise additional funds for the College.

Parents are invited to:

- Working bees
- Be guest speakers
- Parent Information Nights,
- Swimming, Athletics and Cross Country Carnivals
- Participate in Musical productions
- Yr 10 and 12 Graduations
- College Masses for special occasions
- Parent/teacher Interviews

School Data

**Income**

- School Fees: 8%
- Other Fee Income: 5%
- State Government Recurrent Grants: 21%
- Commonwealth Government Recurrent Grants: 66%

**Expense**

- Salary and Related Expenses: 85%
- Non Salary Expenses: 15%
System Data

System Income

- Commonwealth Government Recurrent Grants: 59%
- State Government Recurrent Grants: 22%
- Other Fee Income: 5%
- School Fees: 13%
- Capital Income: 1%

Total System Expenses

- Salary and Related Expenses: 78%
- Non Salary Expenses: 20%
- Capital Expenditure: 2%