2006 Annual Report

SCHOOL NAME
MATER DEI CATHOLIC COLLEGE

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1. School Profile

1.1 Introduction

Mater Dei Catholic College was established in 2004 on a greenfield site in the south of this city by the Diocese of Wagga Wagga as a co-educational college to serve the Catholic community in the city of Wagga Wagga. The original student enrolments came from the closure of two previously single gender schools and a senior co-educational school some of which had existed in the city for up to 130 years under various names and governing bodies. The first intake of students included Years 7, 8, 9 and 10. This extended to Year 11 last year and then 12 this year, so that in 2006 the College is a 7 to 12 college.

Staffing for the College has been from the pool of teachers and support staff at the closing schools, and from national advertising.

1.2 Student Profile

The following information describes the student profile for 2006:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>LBOTE*</th>
<th>Indigenous</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>304</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>671</td>
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*Language background other than English

This profile represents the joining of students from three previous schools which closed their doors at the end of 2003, and growth to Year 12 this year.

The balance of male and female students over the whole College is reasonable. However there are individual year groups which are made up of a larger number of female students, and others by male students.

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

www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au

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

1.4 Staff Profile

The staff groupings within the College are such that every staff member has a structure whereby they are able to have a voice in matters which are relevant to their part in the education and management of students and the curriculum. The College Executive members are each a part of further groups which meet on a cyclic basis; Curriculum Committee, Student Welfare Committee and Technologies Committee. These meetings are in addition to the monthly Staff Meeting and the weekly Executive Meeting.

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.

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<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>54[52.6FTE]</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
1.5 Teacher Attendance and Retention Rates
The federal Schools Assistance Act 2005 requires that each school report on the average attendance rate of staff members in a given school. The end figure is determined by calculations including certain periods of absence due to sickness, personal carers leave, leave without pay, special leave and accident/workers compensation leave. An attendance rate of 98% was achieved in 2006 by staff at Mater Dei Catholic College, Wagga Wagga.

1.7 Student Retention Rates
As Mater Dei Catholic College has only been established for 3 years, there are limited relevant figures for retention rates at this time. 2006 is the first year in this College’s life, where there have been Year 12 (HSC) cohort of students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Years 7-10</th>
<th>Years 10-12</th>
<th>Years 7-12</th>
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<tr>
<td>Apparent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Actual</td>
<td>502</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>671</td>
</tr>
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2. Catholic Life and Mission

2.1 Catholic Heritage
Mater Dei Catholic College is a College, with a three year history, born out of the rich tradition and spirit of the Brothers, Sisters and lay people who served Catholic Education in the Wagga Wagga district for over 130 years. Then, as now, the College attempts to meet the needs of the students for the present and into the future. The aim is to educate our students to take their place in society through a process which, in faithfulness to our mission statement, “is founded in Catholic faith, justice and love (and ) is inclusive, learner centred and seeks excellence and wisdom”.

Gospel values, as demonstrated by the College patron Mary, Mother of God, as well as by Nano Nagle and Edmund Rice, are articulated in the Mission Statement and are at the centre of all endeavours.

2.2 Liturgical Life
Due to the distance from a church and the lack of a dedicated space, reverent and joyful, celebration of College Masses takes place in the Performing Arts Centre. The focus is the spread of the Gospel and within that we celebrate all of the many gifts and talents that each one brings to our College and offer those gifts to the service of the College community.

In 2006 the Opening Mass picked up the theme of the College’s Mission statement. Families and invited guests were present to witness the presentation of badges to the student leaders. As part of the liturgical life of the College the tradition of a “Mater Dei Mass” on Mary’s birthday, 8th September is continued as part of a day of thanks and celebration.

Ashes were distributed within Homegroups as part of a liturgy on Ash Wednesday. Students were reminded of the somberness of the occasion by the music that was played as students moved to their Homegroups.

Prayer has been a regular part of Homegroup, College assemblies and Year assemblies, with relevant seasons, feast and current events being recognised. Prayers in class, Homegroups, Year Groups and in College assemblies are offered for the needs of those around us, individuals and groups, near and far.

In recognition of the Aboriginal People a liturgy was celebrated to begin Naidoc Day. The anniversary of Pope John Paul’s historic speech to the Australian people in 1996 was acknowledged. The symbol of water in a coolamon was used to bless the students and guests. The liturgy set the tone for a celebratory day on this occasion.
Eucharistic celebrations in Homegroups each week is on a roster basis. Homegroup Masses increased in attendance as we dedicated time on Thursday to enable students to attend without forfeiting their lunchtime. The College Chaplain has enjoyed the opportunity of talking to more of the students. The College celebrated the first graduating Year 12 group in an evening liturgy with families and College staff. The end of year for Year 10, an Advent liturgy, and a Eucharistic liturgy for Staff were celebrated in the last weeks of the year.

Opportunities for Reconciliation were provided by the College Chaplain, parish priests and the Diocesan Bishop during Lent and Advent in preparation for Easter and Christmas respectively.

2.3 The School in the Life of the Parish and Diocese

We have endeavoured to include the Bishop and clergy from the feeder parishes in our celebrations, to indicate that they are always welcome.

The Year 7 students, through their initial unit of study in Religious Education, reflect upon the nature of the College as a faith community and the place of the College in the wider faith community.

The principal and College captains attended the special Mass at St. Michael’s Cathedral, which acknowledged Mary McKillop as patron of the Diocese of Wagga Wagga.

Members of the College community participated in the Sunday Liturgy in the Sacred Heart Parish at Kooringal, through providing music, choir and readers.

This year a letter was sent to a meeting of the Wagga Wagga Deanery Clergy encouraging a closer connection between feeder parishes and the College. Clergy were encouraged to increase their involvement in College celebrations, discuss ways in which they may support youth in their parishes and ways of linking those families interested in sacraments and parish participation to the relevant parish.

2.4 Religious Curriculum

The Sharing Our Story syllabus is based on Stage outcomes and key concepts in eight major content areas in the Secondary area.

1. God
2. Jesus
3. Church
4. Sacraments
5. Scripture
6. Christian Life
7. Prayer
8. Religion and Society (Secondary)

Learning in one Stage consolidates, builds on and develops learning in previous Stages of study.

The new Studies of Religion Syllabus was introduced to Year 11. Our first Year 12 students sat the HSC in Studies of Religion. For Year 7 -10 (and for some Year 12s) there was a continuation of work with Sharing our Story - developing units of work and assessment tasks.

The Catholic Schools Office called on all schools in the Diocese to present an assessment item for each student in Years 7-10, with an analysis of that unit of work. A favourable report on the teaching and learning at Mater Dei Catholic College was received with some recommendations.

In the final Term, with support from the Catholic Schools Office, the Religious Education staff refined the Years 7-10 Scope and Sequence, further developing Units of Work, and reworking the Assessment Schedule for 2007.

2.5 Catholic Worldview

At Mater Dei Catholic College all aspects of education as an expression of the Catholic worldview are considered. All staff members are encouraged to apply this worldview which translates into a Christ-centred orientation that permeates
all aspects of school life including relationships, structures, celebrations and routines, as well as the formal curriculum.

Staff members attended an inservice on Retreats and Reflection Days facilitated by Christine Carlton in Orange NSW, in early November.

Chris Doyle, an independent presenter lead Reflection Days for Years 11 and 12. Year 12 went overnight to Harrietville, Victoria and Year 11 were at a local venue for the day. In his bold style Chris challenged the students to think about what they want from life and to realise that they are responsible for bringing it to fruition.

All Year groups and staff members were again involved in either a Reflection day or Retreat experience to further assist in their faith formation. The Year 7’s day was held on All Saints Day, Year 8 - 23rd November and Year 9 – 29th November. Year 10s participated in preparation for, and followed with, a day of community service. Reflection, research, consultation and planning of a program for Year 7 to 12 that will build on students’ formation from year to year has begun.

The College has a St Vincent de Paul group which assists with Meals on Wheels and has raised money for support of local charities. The single greatest financial contribution was again in excess of $2000 to Micah House (SVDP). The Student Council has been involved in fundraising for Catholic Mission through various activities on nominated days. The Student Council also organised the “Shave for Ben Harper” Appeal.

2.6 Parent Participation

Because parents are the primary educators of their children, they are informed by the Principal and the Religious Education Coordinator of various aspects of the Catholic life and mission of the College. The focus of upcoming units of study in Religious Education is posted in the newsletter. Greater use has been made of the College internet facilities with Religious Education classes being created in "myclasses" for each year group. Parents were informed of this opportunity and were able to access on the website, assessment tasks and information to support their son/daughter’s learning.

Parents, relatives and friends have been given an open invitation to attend liturgical celebrations which are noted in our College newsletter.

Parents are also informed of the scripture readings for the upcoming Sunday Masses as well as being given information as to other current celebrations within the liturgical life of the Church.

Where their talents and skills are relevant to the curriculum, parents have been invited to speak with students. For example, a grief and loss counsellor spoke to students in relation to the Year 10 unit, “Death and New Life”.

2.7 Professional Learning in Catholic Life and Mission

The Diocesan Policy on Professional Development Requirements for the accreditation of Teachers of Religious Education can be found at the Catholic Schools Office website www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au

The Catholic Schools Office has compiled a list of tertiary institutions offering courses which meet the diocesan requirements for the teaching of Religious Education. This document can also be found on the CSO website. This year two members of the College’s staff began a Certificate in Theology course through Broken Bay Institute.

Professional learning to further develop teachers’ expertise has again this year taken the form of working collegially to resource and deliver the Sharing Our Story syllabus, as mentioned in the
Religious Education Curriculum section. Teams of teachers met for half a day for each year group to prepare programs that were more relevant to the College community. Members of staff attended inservices in Sydney to further their knowledge and pedagogy in relation to the Studies of Religion course.

3. Pastoral Care

3.1 Diocesan Policies

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

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

3.2 School Implementation of Diocesan Policy

We have been careful at MDCC to ensure that College Policy aligns with and supports Diocesan Policy. The Diocesan Mission Statement and TCTA: Principles and Practices for Learning and Teaching in the Diocese of Wagga Wagga continue to be important documents.

The MDCC Welfare Policy flows from a Vision statement that emphasizes the development of a nurturing community which:

- Is founded in Catholic faith, justice and love.
- Is inclusive.
- Is learner-centred.
- Seeks excellence and wisdom.

More specifically the MDCC Mission calls us, as nurturers, to:

- Care for each individual ......
- Foster right relationships ......

- Provide particular attention to those most in need.
- Build a welcoming, safe and supportive school environment.

In TCTA: Principles and Practices for Learning and Teaching in the Diocese of Wagga Wagga we are asked to contribute to the building of:

...caring and effective learning communities, where the spirit of support and challenge work in harmony, where relationship is the glue that holds the community together and where Gospel values such as respect, acceptance and inclusion are the foundation upon which everything is built.

TCTA outlines many effective learning and teaching practices that are particularly relevant to the development and application of a Welfare Policy.

Effective teachers:

- Engage students in meaningful inquiry and research;
- Use mistake-making and error as an important part of the learning process;
- Honour the intrinsic motivation of students;
- Use language that actively promotes self-responsibility;
- Teach appropriate problem-solving strategies and skills and constructive ways of resolving conflict;
- Build unity and a sense of belonging in the classroom;
- Help students develop as principled, ethical human beings, displaying values such as respect, fairness, courtesy, responsibility and kindness.

Welfare Committee

The Welfare Committee consists of Assistant Principal, Student Welfare Coordinator, Year Coordinators, Special Needs Co-ordinator, School Counsellor and Diocesan Behaviour Support Consultant (when available). This group meets regularly to:
• Discuss the welfare of individual students;
• Plan whole school and Year Group welfare initiatives;
• Evaluate initiatives and strategies employed;
• Oversee, with the Principal, the continued development and evolution of the MDCC Welfare Policy.

Thursday morning whole-staff welfare meetings initiated in 2005 have continued through 2006. In addition, Wednesday morning is now set aside for meetings with teachers of students who are involved in the Behaviour Support Model and require Individual Behaviour Plans.

Welfare Policy
The MDCC Welfare Policy details the way in which College staff and outside agencies provide pastoral support to students and families. Under headings ‘Caring for students’ ‘Student Behaviour’ and ‘Referral procedures’, the document outlines an approach to welfare that flows from a variety of Diocesan documents.

TCTA: Principles and Practices for Learning and Teaching in the Diocese of Wagga Wagga, focuses on the Diocesan vision of helping children grow into adults who are:

- Spiritual, inquirers, thinkers, reflective, adaptable, knowledgeable, communicators, collaborative, principled, caring, global citizens and healthy.

Students who have the opportunity to construct moral meaning/understanding, devise and justify ethical principles and learn (with others) how one ought to act in a community are better supported in their growth to adulthood than those who only have the opportunity to do (or not do) what they are told.

Students in each Year Group have again had the opportunity to create, with other members of the MDCC community, norms of behaviour that will allow an answering of the question: ‘How do we treat one another at MDCC?’

There has been a deliberate effort to focus on this inclusive approach rather than on a more formal, traditional approach of pre-determined rewards and sanctions for particular student behaviours. This approach is proving to be very reliant upon parents being informed and involved in the steps toward responsible behaviour choices by students.

3.3 Pastoral Care of Families

Year Co-ordinators, Special Needs Co-ordinator, KLA Co-ordinators, Welfare Coordinator, Counsellors, Assistant Principal and Principal are regularly in contact with parents/carers and actively seek ways to better support families.

Family Support begins with a meeting of appropriate staff and family members. This mix varies according to need and the wishes of family members. Access to school based and outside agency services and expertise is organised at these meetings.

3.4 2006 Initiatives

With the employment of Gerard Sullivan as Diocesan Behaviour Support Consultant and Lucille Miles as MDCC Welfare Co-ordinator, the emphasis during 2006 was on the development of a behaviour support model for the College. Welfare staff attended a full-day inservice on behaviour support, with a particular focus on the use of Individual Behaviour Plans, progress concern interviews and Behaviour Intervention & Support plans.

The Behaviour Support Model allows suitable documentation and supervision of the progress of students with behaviour support needs. The model has also been supported by CSO’s (Judith Norris) work with KLA Co-ordinators which has focused on the nature of the KLA Co-ordinators’
supervisory role. Student behaviour 'Blue Forms' which are completed by teachers and KLA Co-ordinators, now record strategies employed by teachers to manage challenging behaviour as well as strategies subsequently initiated by the particular KLA Co-ordinator. This has better allowed KLA Co-ordinators to support teachers in the management of challenging student behaviours and has allowed better communication between KLA Co-ordinators and Year Co-ordinators.

During 2006 the 'No Blame' approach to bullying was used extensively by Year Co-ordinators to address bullying incidents in Years 7-10. Year Co-ordinators regularly evaluate the process and are unanimous in identifying it as the most appropriate and effective model they have encountered.

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

www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au

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

4. Excellence in Teaching and Learning

4.1 Curriculum Overview

MDDC was established in 2004 as a Year 7-10 school. In 2005 the first group of students entered Stage 6 to undertake Preliminary courses. In 2006, the first cohort of 78 students completed their HSC year.

Preparation of the first cohort of students for the HSC involved a great deal of collegial support within the staff. Several teachers were working with HSC students for the first time and were mentored by those having had previous experience. Three staff members participated in HSC marking and one teacher sat on an HSC exam committee. Students were given a considerable amount of support by teachers who were very generous with their time. Many tutorials were made available to students beyond school times, including vacation times. Students had opportunities to attend subject specific Study Days, careers Market Days and university Open Days. More time was made available to the Careers Adviser and many parents and students have accessed the resources in the Careers centre.

Stage 6 students have been able to access a wide range of courses including VET courses delivered on site and at TAFE. There has been an increase in students wishing to take up VET courses which has seen a growth in the number of students commencing courses in their Preliminary year.

The Stage 4 and Stage 5 Curriculum consist of Religious Education and mandatory courses across all eight Key Learning Areas. In the current year, in the Stage 4 Mandatory language area, students predominantly study French. A single class of students, both from indigenous and non-indigenous backgrounds, has undertaken a course in Aboriginal Languages. The course had mixed success with some students immersing themselves enthusiastically both in the language and cultural aspects of the course. Students from the class visited a neighboring primary school to share their skills and also participated in the Welcome for NAIDOC Day celebrations. Mandatory courses are complemented by students’ choice of two electives from within the TAS, Creative Arts, PDHPE and HSIE KLAs. Courses in Physical Activities and Sport Studies as well as Photography and Digital Media have been successfully introduced as elective courses in 2006. Significant modifications were made to the timetable in 2006 to better cater for a
Year 7-12 structure. The previous structure was based on parity of time which gave courses in Stages 4 and 5 equal access to time. This restructuring has meant some courses are allocated more than the minimum face to face time, these courses coming from the English, Mathematics and Science KLAs.

Students with additional needs are integrated within mainstream classes and supported by a Special Needs teacher and Teacher assistants, including an Aboriginal Student Support person. Considerable time is devoted to identifying and assessing students with additional needs. This is then followed by meetings with parents and teachers to develop Individual Educational Programs. Students requiring significant support with literacy are withdrawn as part of a more intensive program. During the year staff have been presented with information about specific learning disorders from the Diocesan Learning Support Coordinator.

4.2 Approach to Learning and Teaching

Learning and Teaching at the College is guided by the principles and practices set down by the Wagga Wagga Diocese Catholic Schools Office in the document *Today’s Children, Tomorrow’s Adults*.

Students at all times are encouraged to have learning as their focus, to become independent learners and to reflect on how they best learn. Learning and teaching practices aim to provide effective learning for students in an environment where they feel safe and valued.

Throughout the year considerable time has been devoted to evaluating current student behaviour management strategies. KLA Coordinators in conjunction with the Welfare team have initiated procedures to provide consistency and to streamline current practices. Students are to focus on their own learning while not disrupting the learning of others.

4.3 Significant Initiatives

The establishment of this new college in 2004 on a green site provided an opportunity to introduce Agriculture into the curriculum offerings. A small group completed the HSC course in 2006, with another group to follow in 2007. There is also one Stage 5 class.

Students have the opportunity to continue Music as an elective beyond the mandatory course. Students also have the opportunity to participate in an extensive instrumental music program on site. This program is also available to students from a neighbouring Catholic primary school and involves teaching by staff from the Riverina Conservatorium of Music. Students from both the instrumental program and classroom music are getting performance experience within the school and the wider community. Their musical talents were showcased across a weekend of music which included an evening dinner program, participation in a parish Mass and then followed by a concert.

Throughout the year, the *Literacy Link* project has continued whereby each week a brief *Literacy Link* is presented to all students during a nominated lesson. The same information is included in the weekly newsletter which is distributed to families.

This year minor changes were made to formal reports to parents to bring them in line with government guidelines.

4.4 Student Achievement

**Literacy** – In the ELLA test, the college results were above state means in all sections of the test. Performances by boys and girls showed little variation.

**Numeracy** – Students at MDCC performed above the state mean in each category of the SNAP test, with boys being marginally stronger than girls.

**School Certificate**

In 2006, 90 students completed the School Certificate across eighteen
different courses. The School Certificate results showed that the students were performing close to the state mean in most courses. Students completed the online Computing Skills Test. Results from this test show that all students fall into the Competent or Highly Competent categories.

**Higher School Certificate**

In 2006, seventy eight students from the college presented for the HSC. Students completed courses of study in thirty three subjects. These included three VET courses delivered on site and others accessed through the TVET program. Students achieved commendable results in a range of subject areas both in the theory and practical components. Individual results in the HSC have made it possible for many of the students to access tertiary education (thirty six place offers) and for others to find placements in the workforce. Results from this first student cohort have provided benchmarks which provide challenges to ensuing cohorts and teaching staff. The intention is to achieve learning gains for each student.

**Targets for 2007**

In 2007, attention will be focused on a range of curriculum areas which impact on student outcomes. Efforts to improve literacy and numeracy will be ongoing. A range of strategies and resources will be developed from the Success for Boys Literacy modules and projects undertaken with targeted funding. ELLA and SNAP data will be used to identify students who are not reaching national benchmarks along with specific areas of weakness across the year group.

Following a Parent Forum in 2004, the school Executive and members of the CSO leadership team committed to a project in 2006 focusing on effective teaching. In 2007 KLA Coordinators will put into practice the knowledge gained from this project which focused on them as Leading Learners.

In 2007, the John DeCourcy HSC Analysis package will be used to examine closely our first HSC data. This package will be invaluable in providing feedback on the first cohort of HSC students for this college. It is anticipated that the information provided will form the basis for strategies to improve learning gains for Stage 6 students.

Attention will be given to supporting teachers in differentiating the curriculum to ensure it is accessible by all students. In conjunction, consideration will need to be given as to how best to report on students accessing a modified curriculum.

**4.5 Information, Communication and Learning Technologies**

Year 10 students completed the Computing Skills Assessment as part of the School Certificate. The results affirm that students are becoming competent users of computers. KLAs continue to incorporate ICT into courses and to access computers where appropriate and desirable.

**4.6 Professional Learning**

In 2006, the Success For Boys project provided the focus for whole college staff professional development. A number of the modules were unpacked with the focus being on how this relates to our college. During the year, five teachers have been trained to deliver the Rock and Water program which will be implemented in 2007 at Stage 4 level.

Several staff members were given the opportunity to be part of the regional marking opportunities for ELLA and SNAP. One member of staff is currently part of an HSC exam committee and three have been HSC markers. Individual teachers have had the opportunity to attend inservice days in areas specific to their KLA.

In conjunction with a secondary consultant from the CSO, the Executive undertook to support a project whereby KLA Coordinators and the Executive
members would explore how to be Leading Learners. The project involved regular meetings throughout the year, one-to-one professional conversations between Coordinators and Executive members, and ongoing dialogue with the consultant who acted as facilitator. All Coordinators completed a Team Management survey and received a Profile which provided information about work preferences. This provided a starting point for consideration and discussion of approaches to leading and interactions with others in the workplace. The knowledge gained through this project will continue to inform participants as to how they can be Leading Learners.

5. Extra Curricula Program

During 2006 with our first cohort of Year 12 students, due advantage was taken of the leadership potential of a group even one year older. The profile for leaders was raised with their greater participation in planning and conducting particular events at the College. Of particular note were; the very successful fundraising event in support of a local person who had by accident become a quadriplegic; and a night of live music performances within the College courtyard area which not only entertained many of our students, but again raised funds which were allocated to purchasing an Honour Board for the College. Leaders more often took responsibility for conducting assemblies and organising participation in our House competitions. Leaders attended the visit to NSW Parliament and the Governor’s residence during July.

The established Performance Music program continued to expand with more than 150 students now involved in some part of this. Events throughout the year which highlighted the talents of students included; a full and public musical (over two weeks); the Wagga Jazz Festival over two full days; a club dinner program of selective performances, charity appearances within Wagga Wagga; two Eisteddfods; and two full concerts of group and individual performances. The benefits from this program have extended into the curriculum with all of the HSC Music course candidates from this College being part of the performance program. It is expected that the members involved in 2007 will be even greater than for 2006.

The College Parent Council has continued to contribute to the planning and development of this new community. Of particular note for the group in 2006 has been the very thorough planning and oversight of the erection of substantial bus stop shelters at the College. The funding for this project was provided by the Federal Government through the “Investing in our Schools” program.

The greater use of our oval area for fixtures was a focus for 2006. During the year there were many ‘first’ time events held there. The first competition games in Soccer, Touch Football, Rugby Union and Rugby League all occurred during the year. While it was used for training in each of these sports, it was also used for AFL training by our senior team, which went on to win the two major schools trophies for the Riverina, one of which had been previously held by a school for more than twenty continuous year.

Other achievements by students with sporting ability include; track and field representation at the Junior Olympics; diving and swimming place-getters at State level; record holders (for age) in cycling, long jump, triple jump, State representation in Touch football, Tennis and Gymnastics; representation at State and National levels in Junior Paralympics, Dressage at the Royal Easter Show and representation at regional level in Golf, Ballroom Dancing and Physical Culture Competition.

Students continue to participate in Public Speaking, Debating, Chess competitions, Tournament of Minds, National competitions for Mathematics, English, Science, Art and Design, and to participate in provided tutorials for Maths and English.
The ever increasing complexity of education delivery has been evident throughout 2006 at Mater Dei Catholic College. There will be equally complex challenges in the coming year for continuing and for new students, and for the staff team.

6. Strategic Initiatives

6.1 2006 Priorities and Achievements

- The principal priority for 2006 has been to move the first cohort of students through to and past the HSC. This has required establishing appropriate time lines, reporting mechanisms, staffing and attitudes.

- The achievements relevant to this have been to establish appropriate study and learning approaches from staff and students, provide suitable modelling for other year groups following, and to gain very commendable results in the HSC. 10.3% of our candidature achieved a Band 6 or more, 46% achieved a Band 5 or better and there were 36 university place offerings for our 78 students.

- To adjust our reporting formats to comply with government requirements, but continue to provide parents and students with a report which accurately indicates an individual’s achievements in courses of study and their progress towards interdependence within society.

- The College has been able to maintain an appropriate breadth of curriculum offerings for students at Year 11 (Preliminary) stage, and at Stage 5 (electives).

- Parents have been better informed by our development of and their use of a College website (www.mdcc.wagga.catholic.edu.au). Information contained on the site ranges from general introductory passages and images to specific calendars and assessment schedules.

- Introduce and then utilize the “Success for Boys” program. Staff response to this program has been very positive, and led to a team undertaking further training in a related program – “Rock and Water”. The focus on boys learning during 2006 initiated a change within our timetabling, where a Year 8 cohort were arranged into some single gender classes (2 x boys only, 1 x girls only, 1 x co-gender) for Semester 2. The intention in this was to gather information about how this group of students best learned the same course content. A written report is being compiled by the four teaching staff who were involved in this initiative. It can be used to then inform the whole staff about this cohort of students and their learning.

- A final priority during 2006 has been to ensure, with peer support and mentoring, that each of the new teachers on staff (5 in all) obtained their accreditation by the end of the year. This goal has been achieved with all 5 obtaining accreditation from the new Teachers’ Institute.

6.2 2007 Priorities and Challenges

Welfare:

- To increase staff leadership in relationship building with students.

- Bring about a ‘focus’ for each year level.

- Introduce practices which manage rather than process students.

- Provide staff with the opportunity for spiritual renewal.
- Work with Year level students groups to develop their ‘norms’ of behaviour and expectation.

**Curriculum:**
- Introduce Metal/Engineering VET for Stage 6.
- Introduce the new Studies of Religion course, Stage 6.
- Increase computer access across all KLA’s.
- Introduce the ‘Rock and Water’ program to Year 8 boys.
- Analyse the 2006 HSC data to find ways to increase the learning gains for students.

**Professional Developments:**
- Ensure staff are qualified in all mandatory requirements.
- Update the Assets Register, and assess needs for learning.
- Plan for and execute the middle management renewal program for individual staff who have reached the three year timeline in a position of added responsibility.
- Promote and inform staff of the World Youth Day preparation programs.
- With each, (and collectively) KLA Coordinator, dissect the HSC data using John DeCourcy’s analysis software.
- Conduct a Values Forum (link this to students’ “norms”).
- Conduct a Drug Education Forum.

**Resources:**
- Purchase 60 further computers to enable greater access by all.
- Review the problems associated with Performance and classroom Music using areas located at the rear of the Performing Arts Centre.
- Assess suitable areas for storage of HSC projects.
- Re-assess the use of available teaching spaces.

**Other:**
- Examine the amount of time some students commit away from the classroom (sport, extra-curricular).
- Promote greater participation by Year 10 students in the work experience opportunities.
- Evaluate the ‘Careers’ provision at Mater Dei College.
- Develop and implement the change over from Maze software systems to SAS2000 software systems where appropriate.
- Evaluate the support by parents, and therefore the need of a Parents and Friends association at the College.

7. **Parent Participation**

Parent participation continues to be via a variety of structured opportunities. The range is wide, beginning with the College Parent Council, the Parents and Friends Association, the College Canteen roster, Parent/Teacher meetings, particular events such as the Investiture ceremony for College leader (at which parents of leaders present to them their badges of office), College Awards Night, Sports Awards Night, and committees established to organise specific events. In 2006 a parent committee successfully planned and presented...
an evening of music performances (by students) at a dinner function.

Individual parental involvement is critical in our Student Welfare programs. Every emphasis is given to the concept that a students’ care is best provided with parents, the College staff and the student cooperating in a triangle of communication and co-dependence. This is best exemplified in the development of students IP’s where that is a necessary part of that student’s education at Mater Dei College.

Again in 2006 a Welcome-to-new-families was made in the context of a Barbeque at the College after four weeks of Term1. Attendance was high with more than two hundred people present. Every staff member was introduced to new families and opportunity given for students to introduce their parents to staff members involved in their classes.

Parents continue to give generously of their time and experience in supporting teams and groups of students involved in the variety of extra-curricula opportunities.

A significant change in a summer uniform choice was achieved with parent and student input over most of 2006.


See Appendix A
APPENDIX A

This data shown below is a summary of Diocese of Wagga School System income and expense and includes income and expense of all system schools.

System Income 2006

- School Fees: 14%
- Other Fee Income: 5%
- State Government Recurrent Grants: 21%
- Commonwealth Government Recurrent Grants: 57%
- Capital Income: 3%

System Expenses 2006

- Salary and Related Expenses: 73%
- Non Salary Expenses: 20%
- Capital Expenditure: 7%
The total income and expense of the school, that is included in the above, is shown below.

**Income**
- Capital Income: 5%
- School Fees: 27%
- Commonwealth Government Recurrent Grants: 44%
- State Government Recurrent Grants: 22%
- Other Fee Income: 2%

**Expenses**
- Salary and Related Expenses: 77%
- Non Salary Expenses: 17%
- Capital Expenditure: 6%