2007 Annual Report

SCHOOL NAME

MATER DEI CATHOLIC COLLEGE

CONTACT DETAILS:

PRINCIPAL: MR CLEM WELCH
ADDRESS: PLUNKETT DRIVE
          WAGGA WAGGA 2650

PHONE: (02)6922 5069
FAX: (02)6922 5659
EMAIL: info@mdcc.wagga.catholic.edu.au
WEBSITE: www.mdcc.wagga.catholic.edu.au
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 in 2005 and then 12 in 2006, so that in 2006 the College became 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 2007:

<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>283</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>666</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Language background other than English

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](http://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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>54[51.7FTE]</td>
</tr>
</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 97.4% was achieved in 2007 by staff at Mater Dei Catholic College, Wagga Wagga.

1.7 Student Retention Rates
Student Attendance
The average student attendance rate for 2007 as a single percentage is 92%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RETENTION RATES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STUDENT DESTINATION
The HSC class of 2007 had 12 applicants apply for early entry into Charles Sturt University. 9 of the applicants were successful in gaining early entry into the course they applied for. 60% of the students have been successfully accepted into further study. Universities include Charles Sturt University (Wagga Wagga), University of Wollongong, Canberra University, ANU, Monash University (Melbourne) and Melbourne University.

Many of these student have chosen to defer their degree until 2009. Of the other students, many have accepted apprenticeships in Plumbing, Electrical and Hairdressing or Traineeships in Office Management and Retail. The Dux for 2007 is currently studying Medicine at NSW Uni.

As Mater Dei Catholic College has only been established for 4 years, there are limited relevant figures for retention rates at this time. 2006 was the first year in this College’s life, where there have been Year 12 (HSC) cohort of students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2007</th>
<th>Years 7-10</th>
<th>Years 10-12</th>
<th>Years 7-12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apparent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual</td>
<td>538</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>666</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Catholic Life and Mission

2.1 Catholic Heritage
Mater Dei Catholic College is a College with a four 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. We aim to educate our students to take their place in society through an education that we see as part of a life-long 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 our patron Mary, Mother of God, as well as by Nano Nagle and Edmund Rice are articulated in our Mission Statement and are at the centre of all our endeavours. We accept the challenge, as they did, to reach out to Christ, present in the poor.

2.2 Liturgical Life

The Liturgical life of the College expanded this year. Homegroup Masses continued each Thursday enabling all students to attend a small group Mass at least once during the year. The College Chaplain, then stayed on to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation with students in Religious Education classes. A decision was made to spread Reconciliation across the year. The students enjoy this opportunity to speak with the chaplain who is accepting and compassionate in his approach. Other priests from the Wagga Wagga parishes are often enlisted to help.

The Opening Mass for the beginning of the College year was conducted in the Blue Rooms with Bishop concelebrating with a parish priest and the College chaplain. Several families and invited guests were present to witness the presentation of badges to the student leaders.

In the Lenten Liturgy the story from Palm Sunday to Crucifixion was recalled with the Year 7 students re-enacting scenes, accompanied by poignant songs. Another community Eucharistic celebration was added to the College calendar with the introduction of a Mass for Founders Day. In this liturgy both Nano Nagle and Edmund Rice were remembered as founders of Religious Orders who came to Wagga Wagga to set up Catholic schools. Several of the Presentation Sisters attended and received rousing applause as they acknowledged the students following the Mass.

Other liturgical highlights include Ash Wednesday where ashes were distributed within Homegroups in the context of a liturgy. Graduation Mass was concelebrated in the PAC by Bishop with a parish priest and the College chaplain. The contribution of the Aboriginal People was recognised with the College celebration of NAIDOC. Mater Dei Day was celebrated on 31st August. In the Gospel of Matthew, read at this Mass, Jesus asks his disciples for feedback on who he was? On this day we asked the community of Mater Dei Catholic College, “Who are we?” “What is important to us?” and “For what do we wish to be recognised?”
2.3 The School in the Life of the Parish and Diocese
We have endeavoured to include our Bishop and the clergy from the feeder parishes in our celebrations, to indicate that they are always welcome to visit.

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

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

The College Chaplain supported one of the students to prepare to receive their first Eucharist in one of the local parishes.

2.4 Religious Education Curriculum
In regard to curriculum work continued in teams to further develop and better resource units of work. The Catholic Schools Office purchased To Know, Worship and Love resources to support student learning in Religious Education. The Board of Studies endorsed the new courses of study for Stage 5 and Stage 6. The new courses highlight relevant terminology, glossary terms and Catholic values. The Catholic Schools Office also financed visits to Sydney to work with teachers from Parramatta Diocese on developing units of work that reflect the new Board Of Studies endorsed courses for Stages 5 and 6. The Stage 4 course in the same format is now available for use in 2008.

Kildare Catholic College and Mater Dei Catholic College, worked closely to plan a Studies of Religion study day for Year 12 students from across the Diocese. Guest Speakers included:
Islamic Tradition: Mehmet Ozalp -- President, Affinity Intercultural Foundation
Jewish Tradition: Rabbi Geoffrey Cohen - NSW Board of Jewish Education
Christian Tradition: Dr. Peter Mudge – Parramatta CEO - Co-Author Living Religion Edition
John McGrath – Head of Mission Services in the Catholic Schools Office, Diocese of Broken Bay. Chair of the Studies of Religion Syllabus Advisory Committee of the Board of Studies, NSW.
Feminist Theology: Dr. Heather Thomson – Academic Dean, St. Mark’s National Theological Centre, CSU Canberra
Other workshops covered:
Aboriginal Spirituality & Land Rights
Religion in Australia Post 1945
Buddhist Tradition
HSC Marking Advice
Studies of Religion Essay Writing Techniques
This supported the Year 12 students as they sat the HSC exam for the new Studies of Religion Syllabus.

Several guest speakers spoke with classes during the year. A highlight was a bioethicist from the NSW Right to Life association who spoke with Year 10 RE, Year 11 Exploring Early Childhood and Year 12 Community and Family Studies students. Some of the themes covered included: the beginning of human life – from conception to the birth of the child, the unique relationship between mother and child, the debate about when human life begins, care of women with an unexpected pregnancy, and choices and consequences in decision making.
2.5 Catholic Worldview

At Mater Dei Catholic College we consider all aspects of education as an expression of the Catholic worldview. We encourage all staff members 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.

On Holy Thursday the College staff participated in a day with a visiting retreat presenter in which they explored their own spirituality and the importance of spirituality for the College community. The day provided an opportunity for staff to nourish their spirit by having time together and time for personal reflection. It was a unifying and uplifting experience. Later in the year Religious Education staff participated in a reflection day lead by a Marist Brother from Brisbane.

The Creative Arts Department joined forces with the Year 8 team to offer a two day experience for Year 8 students. Students participated in single gender groups. They spent a day and a night at Laurel Hill exploring their creativity, and a day at a site closer to home exploring the theme “Be the Best You Can”. These activities were reflected on back at the College with the support of Catholic Schools Office personnel.

Year 10 students were involved in a Community Service project again this year. Last year this event happened at the end of the year and was a little lost in other proceedings. This year the project began sooner and spread the effort across the year. Students went out into the wider community in class groups rather than the whole year group. Five days were designated across the year – a day for each class to experience community service. On their return they shared their experience with the College community.

The focus for the Year 7 day was leadership. The students worked their way through three sessions. The Gospel reading for this day was “The call of the disciples”. Reflection and discussion was on the ways in which we are called to lead. Students were also involved in co-operative games and the “Why Try” program.

The experience for Year 9 students involved the focus of challenges we face, and how we respond.

Presenting and participating in a day of reflection requires great commitment from staff and students for it to be a positive experience. The atmosphere and spirit of these days has been reflective of this commitment.

Religious Art (a set of Aboriginal Stations of the Cross) was purchased and displayed in the College following the Easter break. Sandy Warren, a local Wiradjuri elder and grandmother of some of our students, was present to acknowledge the display and pray with the College community.

The College has a St Vincent de Paul group. This group has been very active in fundraising and also supported the Meals on Wheels program in Wagga Wagga. This year they organised a very successful Christmas Appeal in which students brought in gifts and non-perishable food items that more than filled a large box trailer.

In Term Three MDCC applied to the National School Chaplaincy Program. The application was successful. This will provide funds for someone to work two days per week in the area of pastoral care and spirituality. This will be extra to the work that the chaplain does in our College.
2.6  **Parent Participation**
As parents are the primary educators of their children, they are informed by the Principal and the Religious Education Coordinator, through the weekly newsletter, of various aspects of the Catholic life and mission of the College. The focus of upcoming units of study in Religious Education is also posted in the newsletter. Use of the College internet facilities with on-line Religious Education classes in “myclasses” for each year group has continued. Parents are informed of this opportunity and are able to access assessment tasks and information to support their son/daughter’s learning.

Parents, relatives and friends have again been given an open invitation to attend any liturgical celebrations which are noted in our College newsletter. Parents are also informed of the scripture readings for the upcoming Sunday as well as being given information as to other current celebrations within the liturgical life of the Church.

2.7  **Professional Learning in Catholic Life and Mission**
Three Religious Education staff members studied with the Broken Bay Institute, through the support both of the College and the Catholic Schools Office. Two of those staff completed their Graduate Certificate in Religious Education.

A new 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](http://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. The policy states:

> All teachers of Religious Education in Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Wagga Wagga are expected to have accreditation to teach Religious Education in a Catholic school in the Diocese of Wagga Wagga, or to complete the necessary requirements within five years of their initial employment. The following up of this requirement will be the responsibility of the Service Leader: Religious Education who may request the assistance of the Service Leaders: Leadership and Catholic Schools Office staff.

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 students and families of the College community.
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](http://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 and expanded to include Years 7-12 by 2006. The student population in 2007 was approximately 670 students.

In 2007, the second cohort of students presented for the HSC. Results from the 2006 HSC provided valuable feedback, particularly for teachers who had not delivered Stage 6 courses previously. Considerable time has been devoted to analysing results which will help inform and shape the way courses are delivered in the future. One teacher participated in HSC marking and one was involved in a School Certificate exam committee. It is hoped that with the support of the school, more people will have the opportunity to be involved in the marking process which is seen to be valuable professional development.

Stage 6 students have been able to access a wide range of courses including VET courses delivered on site and at TAFE. This year the opportunity for students to complete some TVET courses delivered in blocks during school holidays has meant less disruption and time out of school. One student successfully completed Retail under the school-based traineeship program incorporating regular part-time work and the theory component.

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 studied French. In 2008, students will have the opportunity to select either French or Indonesian. Mandatory courses are complemented by students’ choice of two electives from within the TAS, Creative Arts, PDHPE and HSIE KLAs.

Students with additional need are integrated within mainstream classes and supported by a Special Needs teacher and 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 for these students. Students requiring significant support with literacy are withdrawn on a regular basis as part of a more intensive program. Assessment and reporting practices have been adjusted to cater for students who are accessing Life Skills programs.

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.

As part of an ongoing process KLA Coordinators, in conjunction with the Welfare team, continue to evaluate and refine procedures to provide consistency and to streamline current practices to create a better learning environment. Students are encouraged to focus on their own learning and at the same time not disrupt the learning of others. Reference is regularly made to norming documents prepared at the start of the year with input from the students at each Year level.
4.3 Significant Initiatives

Students from the College have participated in an environmental project which has involved planting trees in a neighboring suburb. This project will continue into next year. One of the HSC students undertook, as part of his Design and Technology course, to establish a green corridor along a boundary of the college. This required considerable planning and commitment on behalf of the student and has provided the college with a well-landscaped area.

In 2006, a number of staff were trained to deliver the *Rock and Water* program. This was introduced with great success in 2007 to Year 8 boys who were withdrawn once a week in small groups. Parts of the program were delivered to the girls.

Students have the opportunity to continue Music beyond the mandatory course and also have the opportunity to participate in an extensive instrumental music program on site. This program is also accessed by students from a neighboring primary school and involves teaching by staff from the Riverina Conservatorium of Music. Students from both the instrumental program and classroom music regularly perform at school and community functions. The Music program has been expanded to include a weekly strings program in two primary schools. Throughout the year, a campaign was started to attract sponsorship from individuals and businesses to purchase musical instruments for the program. Parents and friends were entertained with a range of musical items at a social event towards the end of the year.

As part of an ongoing focus on literacy in the school, two teachers were trained in the *Stepping Out* program. The teachers then delivered two of the modules to the whole school staff on a professional development day. Further modules from the program will be delivered in 2008. The Catholic Schools Office facilitated training for representatives from the college in how to "unpack" the ELLA and SNAP results. Relevant feedback was also provided to feeder schools.

In 2007, efforts have been made to improve and refine assessment in the school. KLA coordinators agreed on a proforma for presenting assessment details for individual tasks. The purpose of this is to have information communicated in a clear and consistent manner.

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, however girls were stronger in the Writing section.

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

Results from both of the assessments have indicated that there are some students who have not reached the National Benchmarks. This was more evident in Numeracy compared to Literacy.
School Certificate
In 2007, 111 students completed the School Certificate across a range of 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 indicated that all students fell into the Competent or Highly Competent categories.

Higher School Certificate
The first cohort of MDCC students completed the HSC in 2006. Students achieved commendable results in many of the courses. The results, along with statistics from a range of additional reports, have highlighted strengths and areas on which to build.

Targets for 2008
In 2008, there will be a focus on enhancing the learning culture in the school. A priority will be to examine teaching practices and to identify the qualities of effective teaching. This will require collaboration between Executive, middle management and teachers. KLA coordinators will be called upon to continue their work as Leading Learners, a project initiated in 2006.

Attention will be given to supporting teachers in differentiating the curriculum to ensure it is accessible by all students. This will include delivery of Life Skills in Stage 6.

Along with the introduction of a new software package for the timetable will be the need to introduce a new Reporting package. This will provide an opportunity to review existing report formats.

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 access computers where relevant. Access to computers has placed demands on existing facilities. The college has increased the number of computers available to staff and students.

4.6 Professional Learning
In 200, the Stepping Out literacy project provided a focus for professional development. Two modules were delivered to all staff with further modules to be unpacked in 2008. Individual teachers have attended a variety of subject specific professional development courses including instruction on how to unpack and use ELLA and SNAP data.
5. Extra Curricula Program

During 2007 with our second cohort of Year 12 students, greater advantage was taken of the leadership potential of a group of senior students. The profile for leaders was raised with greater participation in planning and conducting particular events at the College. Of particular note were; the very successful fundraising events in support of local charities; and a night of live music performances within the College courtyard area which not only entertained many of our students, but again raised funds allocated to purchasing resources for the students courtyard area. Leaders 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 College Captains were invited and accepted the invitation, to give the Dawn Service address on ANZAC Day. These and the other College leaders then took part in the ANZAC March through this city. The address was well received by all ages of ex-service personnel and reported widely in the local media.

The established Performance Music program continues to expand with more than 160 students now involved in some part of this. Events throughout the year which highlighted the talents of students included; 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.

The College Parent Council has continued to contribute to the planning and development of this new community.

The greater use of our oval area for fixtures has continued in 2007. During the year there were many events held there. 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 be runners-up in the local competition.

Other achievements by students with sporting ability include; track and field representation; 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, 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 again throughout 2007 at Mater Dei Catholic College.
4. Strategic Initiatives

4.1 2007 Priorities and Achievements

- The principal priority for 2007 has been to develop and introduce a program aimed at combating bullying and harassment throughout all year levels. This involved having all students participate in establishing accepted behaviours, viewing and discussing a DVD presentation and completing a follow-up questionnaire on the program. Parents have also been included in this program with a Values Forum conducted on 31/10/07 for parents to view a DVD specifically for parents, also for discussion and some recommendations were made to follow up in 2008. 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, 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.

- 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.

- 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 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.

- Successfully introduced 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 2007 initiated a change within our timetabling, where a Year 8 cohort were each cycle in our tumbling timetable a group of boys were withdrawn from classes to undertake the “Rock and Water” program over the 10 units. Staff were allocated to this program during Terms 2, 3 and 4. Significant changes in individual student behaviours and application to study have been observed and appreciated.

4.2 2007 Priorities and Challenges

Welfare:

- To increase staff leadership in relationship building with students.

- To continue to deliver “Rock and Water” to Year 8 male students.

- To consolidate practices which manage rather than process students.

- Provide staff with the opportunity again for spiritual renewal.

- Work again with Year level students groups to develop their ‘norms’ of behaviour and expectation.
Curriculum:

- Expand Metal/Engineering VET for Stage 6.
- Consolidate the new Studies of Religion course, Stage 6.
- Increase computer access across all KLA’s. (additional hardware)
- Analyse the 2007 HSC data to find ways to increase the learning gains for students.

Professional Developments:

- To monitor staff qualifications in all mandatory requirements.
- Update the Assets Register, and assess needs for learning.
- 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 during 2008.
- With each, (and collectively) KLA Coordinator, dissect the HSC data using John DeCourcy’s analysis software.

Resources:

- Change rooming for IT classes to better facilitate junior class access to computers.
- Review problems associated with Performance and classroom Music using areas located at the rear of the Performing Arts Centre.
- Establish suitable areas for storage of HSC projects.
- Re-allocate 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.
- Address the ‘Careers’ provision at Mater Dei College.
- Complete the change over from Maze software systems to SAS2000 software systems.
- Renew the support by parents, and therefore the need of a Parents and Friends association at the College.
5. **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 2007 a parent committee again 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 2007 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 commitment in 2007. this change-over should be finalised by the close of 2008.
6. **Financial Report**

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.

### Income

- **Total**: 55.2%
- **State Government Recurrent Grants**: 21.1%
- **Commonwealth Government Recurrent Grants**: 5.1%
- **Other Fee Income**: 14.3%
- **School Fees**: 14.3%
- **Capital Income**: 4.3%

### Expenses

- **Total**: 18.3%
- **Salary and Related Expenses**: 73.6%
- **Non Salary Expenses**: 8.0%
- **Capital Expenditure**: 18.3%
The total income and expense of the school, that is included in the above, is shown below.