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From the Chair

It is with a degree of trepidation that I take over the role as Chair of ASBA following the very successful term of Michelle Houwen from the WA Chapter. During Michelle's term, the Board focussed on strategic tasks relating to professional development, communication and long term funding. These tasks have translated into key operational activities for the Board that have resulted in a renewed focus and drive of the Board.

During the past 6 months, the Board has achieved a number of key strategic objectives including the appointment of an Executive Officer. Pip Jones commenced in this role in August 2014 and is already providing the Board with sound administrative and operational support.

With the assistance of David Borean from Waterfront, ASBA has secured long term strategic partnership agreements with AON, Camp Australia,

Commonwealth Bank, Ricoh and Spotless. This will result in benefits for both ASBA and its chapters commencing in 2015. Special thanks to Michelle Houwen and Jenny Self for their outstanding work in bringing this initiative to fruition.

Shaun Sargeant and the PD Standing Committee are to be commended for the new strategic agreement with AIM (Australian Institute of Management). This arrangement provides professional development opportunities for ASBA member schools at AIM membership rates. ASBA has also agreed to financially support ASBA members who undertake the Diploma of Management through AIM. This arrangement is similar to the one already on offer to ASBA members with the Governance Institute of Australia. Check the ASBA website for details.

The Board will meet late October at The Southport School in Queensland and the focus of the meeting will be Board

PROFILE

Kathy Dickson was elected Chair of ASBA in April 2014 following a period as Deputy Chair and Director of ASBA Ltd. Kathy is the Bursar at Sydney Church of England Grammar School (Shore) and is currently on the NSW Chapter Committee. She is on the ASBA 2017 Conference Committee and Chair of the ASBA Associate Committee.

governance. This strategic objective will round off our focus for 2014 with planning already under way for 2015.

As this year comes quickly to a close, I extend a vote of thanks to each of you for your interest and involvement with your local ASBA chapter during 2014. I would also like to thank the hard working ASBA Directors for their support and commitment during the year.

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National Chairman, ASBA Ltd

ASBA Executive November 2014 Chairman

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Cover photograph: A young student from The Southport School, Queensland

ASBA Members as at November 2014

The Bursars' Association of New South Wales Inc
Association of School Bursars and Administrators (VIC) Inc
Association of School Business Administrators (QLD) Inc
Association of School Bursars and Administrators (WA) Inc
Association of School Business Administrators (SA&NT) Inc
Association of School Business Administrators (TAS) Inc
Association of School Business Administrators (ACT) Inc
Association of School Bursars and Administrators (NZ) Inc

Understanding Commonwealth funding of independent schools in 2014

Since the first payment advice was sent to schools, the Australian Government has often presented school funding as if all schools are being funded according to the new Schooling Resource Standard (SRS) in 2014.

In reality, in the independent sector only a few schools are being funded according to the SRS funding model. The vast majority of independent schools are in transition i.e. their funding is either increasing or decreasing over time towards the value of their SRS entitlement.

Schools in transition are not receiving the loadings as outlined in the legislation because they are not receiving funding based on the SRS funding calculation. Some schools receive less and some receive more. In the independent sector, nearly 80% of schools are 'below the SRS', so 80% of independent schools are receiving less than the "full loadings".

In 2014, the only additional money that schools in transition will receive over and above their 2013 funding is either a proportion of their additional funding entitlement, a funding safety net of 3% or indexation of 3%, as outlined below.

THE SRS FUNDING MODEL

The SRS funding model was introduced in 2014 after several years of negotiation between the then Australian Government, state and territory governments and the non-government school sectors. The aim of negotiations was to create a national funding model for all schools. This proved to be impossible. Due to the different negotiation processes and 'deals' struck, there now exist a multitude of different

funding paths for schools depending on school sector and location.

The SRS funding model is extremely complex, and misunderstandings regarding the delivery of the additional funding abound. Funding entitlements for schools have been presented in such a way that it is almost impossible for schools to understand how they are being funded. The rhetoric that all schools are being funded according to the SRS funding model, when most are not, has led to confusion not only for schools but also for the wider community, which may be under the impression that schools are receiving higher levels of support than they actually are.

The SRS funding model has two main components.

1. Base funding

The base funding in the SRS funding model is a per student amount which aims to measure the cost of effective and efficient provision of schooling. The base amount will be indexed annually by 3.6% to reflect estimated increases in the costs of all schools. In 2014, the base funding amounts are;

Primary – \$9,271

Secondary – \$12,193

The amount of base funding a non-government school receives is reduced by the school community's 'capacity to contribute', measured using the previous

funding model's SES scores. Some independent schools are entitled to as little as \$1,854 per student.

2. Loadings for disadvantage

There are six loadings designed to address different areas of disadvantage. These are;

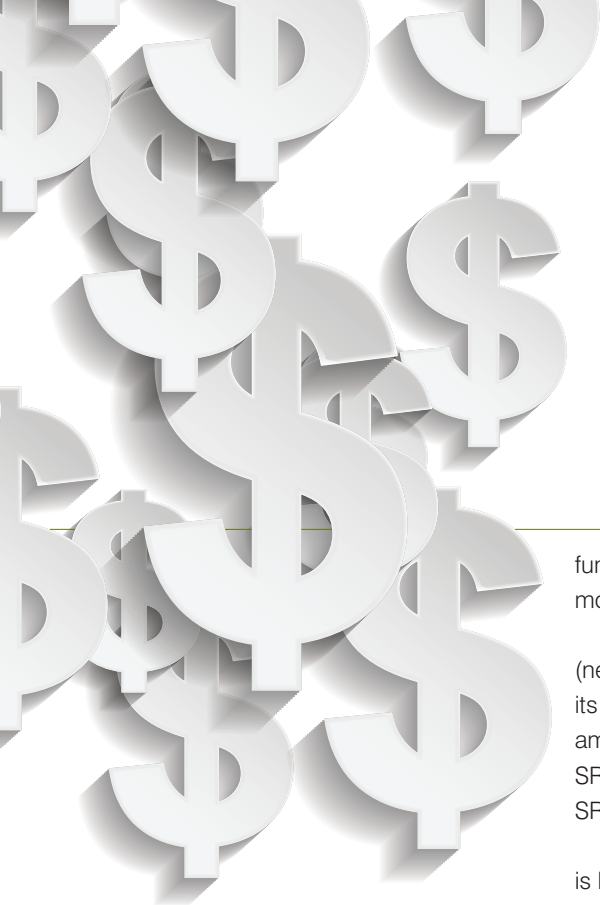
- Size
- Location
- Low SES
- English Language Proficiency
- Students with Disability
- Indigenous students

The loadings are intended to be fully publicly funded.

However, only new schools will be immediately funded under the new funding model. Funding for all pre-existing schools will transition from the previous funding model to the SRS funding model.

WHAT IS THE TRANSITION?

The SRS funding model was originally envisaged to include a transition period of 6 years from 2014 to 2019 to enable the full introduction of the new model, with the bulk of additional funding being available to schools in the last two years of the transition. The Coalition Government has committed to the first four years, only 2014 to 2017.



Unless this policy changes, a school's transition to its SRS will cease in 2017 irrespective of where a school is along its transition path. Hence the majority of independent schools will never receive the greater part of additional funding under the new funding model.

WHAT IS TRANSITION FUNDING?

To calculate the funding path of a school, first a comparison is made. This comparison is between a school's indexed 2013 total public recurrent funding¹ (an estimate of what a school would have received in 2014 under the previous funding model) and what the Department of Education calculates its 2014 funding would be if the school was

funded according to the SRS funding model.

If a school's calculated SRS funding (new per student amount) is higher than its indexed 2013 funding (old per student amount), then the school is 'below the SRS' and will transition up towards the SRS over time. (see Graph 1 below)

If a school's indexed 2013 funding is higher than its SRS funding, then it is 'above the SRS' and it will transition down towards the SRS over time. (see Graph 2 below)

CALCULATING TRANSITION FUNDING

If a school is 'below the SRS' in 2014, its funding is based on its indexed 2013 total public recurrent funding plus a percentage of the gap between the old and new funding entitlements. The 'percentage of the gap' is referred to as 'additionality', and varies between states and territories and from year to year². For example:

School A is 'below the SRS'

- **Additionality in school A's state in 2014 = 10%**
- **Old per student amount = \$6,000**
- **New per student amount = \$9,000**

- **Difference = \$3,000**
- **Amount of additionality = 10% or \$300 per student**
- **2014 funding = old per student amount + additionality = \$6,000 + \$300 = \$6,300** (see Graph 3 on page 6)

Once 2014 actual funding has been determined, the relative share of the Commonwealth and the states and territories is applied to the additionality. This is based on the proportion of funding schools received from both sources in 2013.

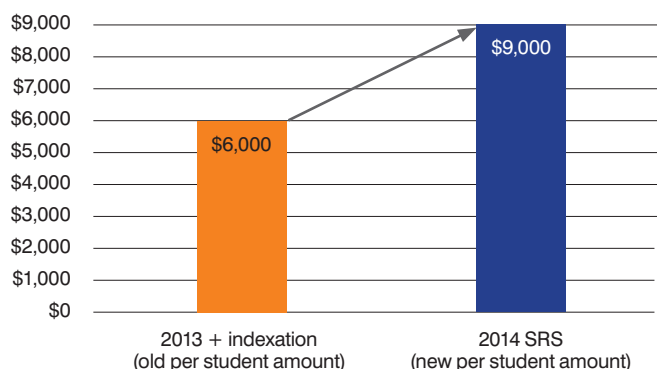
In the pure SRS model, a school 'below the SRS' would receive its 2013 Commonwealth recurrent funding indexed to 2014 plus the Commonwealth share of additionality and the same from the state or territory government i.e. its 2013 state recurrent funding indexed to 2014 plus the state share of additionality.

The Australian Government is committed to funding all schools in Australia according the new SRS funding model for a quadrennium to 2017

However, not all states and territories have signed up to the new funding model. Of those that have signed, some have indicated that they will not use the SRS

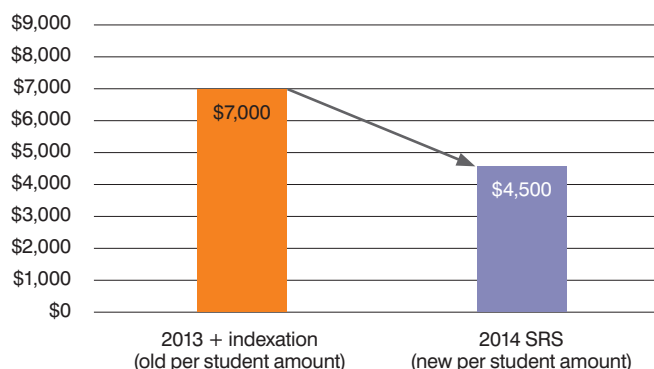
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'Below the SRS'



Graph 1

'Above the SRS'



Graph 2

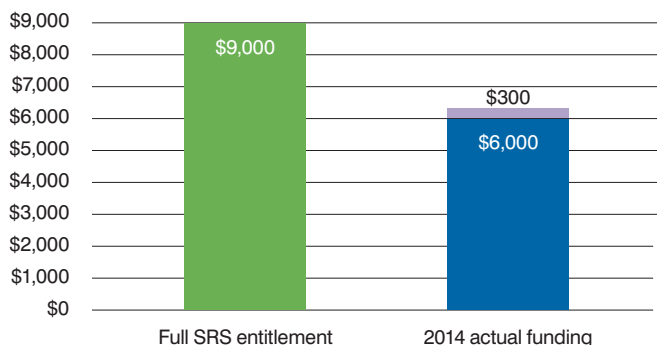


Understanding Commonwealth funding of independent schools in 2014

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old per student amount additionality

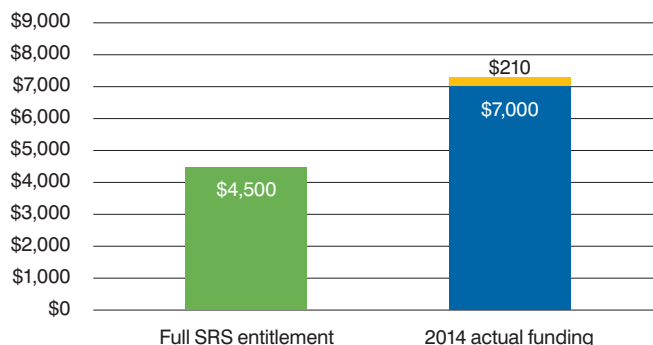
2014 Transition for school 'below the SRS'



Graph 3

old per student amount indexation

2014 Transition for school 'above the SRS'



Graph 4

funding model to calculate their grants to schools.

This means that while all independent schools should receive their Commonwealth share of additionality, the extent to which they receive their state or territory share of additionality towards their SRS entitlement will vary from state to state.

If a school is 'above the SRS' in 2014, its funding will be its 2013 total public recurrent funding plus 3% indexation. For example:

School B is 'above the SRS'

- Old per student amount = \$7,000
- Indexation is 3%
- 2014 funding = old per student amount + indexation = \$7,000 + \$210 = \$7,210 (see Graph 4 above)

In 2014, a school that is 'above the SRS' would receive its 2013 Commonwealth recurrent funding indexed by 3%. Under the SRS funding model the school should also receive its state recurrent funding indexed by 3%. However, as with schools that are 'below the SRS', how the school is funded by the state will vary between states.

Under the model, as the SRS is being indexed at 3.6% per year, and a school 'above the SRS' receives 3% indexation every year, eventually the gap between the

funding received by a school 'above the SRS' and its SRS entitlement will slowly diminish. These schools will continue to receive 3% indexation for as long as it takes for the SRS entitlement to catch up to the indexed amount.

So if a school is 'below the SRS' it is receiving less than its SRS entitlement, but with a higher rate of indexation and some additionality, and if a school is 'above the SRS' it is receiving more than its SRS entitlement, but with a lower rate of indexation.

Unfortunately, the payment advice provided by the Department of Education to schools fails to explain these transition arrangements and presents funding information as if all schools are being funded according to the SRS.

SAFETY NET FUNDING FOR 2014

In the original negotiation process with the previous Government, an undertaking was given that no school would lose money in real terms – which roughly translated to 'would receive a funding increase of no less than 3%', equivalent to the funding guarantee being provided for schools 'above the SRS'. In 2014 the indexation applied for Commonwealth funding was relatively low (2.9%) and it was conceivable that a school could be

'below the SRS' but entitled to less than its 2013 funding plus 3% indexation. For this reason a safety net was put in place that guarantees Commonwealth funding of 2013 funding plus 3% indexation for schools in this situation in 2013.

HOW THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HAS PRESENTED TRANSITION FUNDING

The calculation for a school's 2014 SRS entitlement includes base funding and the various loadings for disadvantage. Using available data, the Department of Education calculates what a school would be entitled to if it were fully funded under the SRS and what proportions are accounted for by the various components. These calculations only account for Commonwealth funding for schools.

School C – 2014 Commonwealth Funding 'Below the SRS'

For example, the Commonwealth portion of School C's SRS funding entitlement for 2014 is calculated to be \$3.17 million made up of base and loadings. However this school is 'below the SRS' and in transition. Its actual funding entitlement is \$2.77 million, which is comprised of its indexed 2013 funding plus additionality. This represents 87% of the school's full

¹ In the funding model, 2013 Commonwealth funding has been indexed by 2.9% while different indexation rates have been applied to state and territory government funding in each jurisdiction.

² The proportion of additionality received by any school in a given year depends on the school's sector and state and the agreement between the Australian Government and the relevant state or territory government.

Table 1

	Commonwealth SRS Entitlement		Transition Funding as if it were SRS	
	\$	%	\$	%
Base funding	\$2,196,233	69.3%	\$1,920,444	69.3%
Location	\$51,809	1.6%	\$45,303	1.6%
ELP	\$3,440	0.1%	\$3,008	0.1%
ATSI	\$66,896	2.1%	\$58,496	2.1%
Low SES	\$526,808	16.6%	\$460,655	16.6%
SWD	\$172,760	5.5%	\$151,066	5.5%
Size	\$150,161	4.7%	\$131,305	4.7%
Total	\$3,168,108	100.0%	\$2,770,277	100.0%

Table 2

	Commonwealth SRS Entitlement		Transition Funding as if it were SRS	
	\$	%	\$	%
Base funding	\$2,288,143	92.2%	\$2,736,870	92.2%
Location	\$ –	0.0%	\$ –	0.0%
ELP	\$3,667	0.1%	\$4,386	0.1%
ATSI	\$22,123	0.9%	\$26,461	0.9%
Low SES	\$41,219	1.7%	\$49,303	1.7%
SWD	\$125,608	5.1%	\$150,241	5.1%
Size	\$ –	0.0%	\$ –	0.0%
Total	\$2,480,760	100.0%	\$2,967,261	100.0%

2014 SRS entitlement. See *Table 1*

The payment advice however is presented as if the school is being funded according to the SRS with the same proportions, just the dollar amounts differ.

There are two main issues with this presentation.

First, the calculation of transition funding has very little to do with the actual SRS funding formula except for the initial comparison. For schools 'below the SRS', the dollars are largely determined by the funding received under a previous funding model. For schools 'above the SRS', the funding is entirely based on the funding received under a previous funding model, not on a base SRS plus loadings model.

Second, these figures are now being used by the Government and the Department of Education to argue that schools are receiving particular loadings for disadvantage. Given how the transition calculations actually work, this is not an accurate presentation. This presentation of a school's funding entitlement distorts the value of the various loadings depending on how far away from the SRS the school's funding is.

For example, School C has 11 students with disability (SWD). If it was receiving its full SRS funding in 2014, the school would get the full loading for each SWD, which for this school would be \$15,705.

But because the school is transitioning up towards its SRS entitlement, it is only receiving 87% of its SWD loading, or an apparent \$13,730 per SWD, in 2014.

School D – 2014 Commonwealth Funding 'Above the SRS'

Schools 'above the SRS' have the opposite issue as their 2014 funding is greater than their SRS entitlement. The Commonwealth portion of School D's SRS funding entitlement for 2014 is calculated to be \$2.48 million made up of base funding and loadings. Because the school would have received more funding under the previous funding model, it is 'above the SRS' and in 2014 will actually receive \$2.97 million from the Commonwealth.

This represents 120% of the schools' SRS entitlement. See *Table 2*

However, using the Department of Education's methodology, the figures are presented as though the school is being funded under the SRS.

School D has 9 students with disability. If it was receiving its SRS funding in 2014, the school would get the full loading for each SWD which for this school would be \$13,956. But because the school is transitioning down to its SRS entitlement, it receives 120% of its SWD loading, or an apparent \$16,693 per SWD, in 2014.

SO WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOUR SCHOOL?

One of the main issues with the presentation of the funding advice provided by the Department of Education is that a school sees the amounts labelled 'Students with Disability', or 'English Language Proficiency' and may conclude that that is the funding it has received for that purpose, even when the amounts are not actually based on loadings calculations. These figures are in fact a school's 2013 funding plus either a proportion of its additional funding entitlement, a safety net of 3% or indexation of 3%, depending on where it sits in the transition.

For schools which have a very large gap between their old funding and their SRS funding entitlement, the amounts shown for the various loadings in the payment advice can verge on the nonsensical.

IS MY SCHOOL GETTING EXTRA MONEY FOR LOADINGS?

If your school is 'on the SRS' then you are being funded according to the SRS calculations. If your school is 'below the SRS' then you are getting a small

continued overleaf



Understanding Commonwealth funding of independent schools in 2014

continued

amount from additionality. If your school is 'above the SRS' then no, you are not receiving any additional funding for loadings..


CAN I PREDICT MY FUNDING NEXT YEAR?

Not with any certainty. Funding for 2015 will be based on a recalculation of the comparison between old and new per student amounts which depends on a number of factors, including the demographic profile of your school.

DOES THIS METHODOLOGY APPLY TO SCHOOL SYSTEMS?

The SRS funding model is not based on the funding of schools, but rather the funding of Approved Authorities. Most independent schools are their own approved authority. However for Approved Authorities for school systems, the calculations above are worked out for the system as a whole and the system is determined to be either 'above the SRS' or 'below the SRS'. This determines the transition funding process applied to each school in the system.

Systems, including government school systems, must have an approved "needs-

based funding arrangement" for the internal distribution of funds for schools. However, there is no obligation on any system to actually fund schools according to the SRS model, even in signatory states and territories. Systems can continue to fund schools according to their own needs-based funding arrangements. 

MORE INFORMATION

For more information see ISCA Independent Update Issue 3 2014 – The SRS Funding Model available on the ISCA website at www.isca.edu.au.



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ASBA 2015 Conference Update

Sponsors flocking to Perth venue for ASBA 2015 conference

Preparations are in full-swing for the ASBA National Conference to be held in Perth from 28 September to 1 October 2015.

ASBA members and their partners are going to absolutely love the venue location, the range of social activities on offer, and the great program of speakers and workshops that has been put together” says Michael Burgess, Chair of the ASBA 2015 Organising Committee. “We all look forward to our ASBA conferences to learn, grow and socialise... but the Perth National Conference is aiming to be one of the best ever professional development and networking opportunities for our profession.”

The conference theme is “Embracing Diversity” and was selected to recognise and celebrate the enormous variety of tasks and responsibilities that encompass the School Business Manager role.

“We’re finalising our Conference program right now, and we are all excited by the fantastic array of speakers already on-board to address the diverse range of topics. Plus, we have some really special social events planned for members, partners and sponsors that really showcase how vibrant the city of Perth has become.”

Michael’s final message: “Don’t miss out on this opportunity to head west and visit Perth and all that the sunset coast has to offer. Make your plans, bring your partners, and enjoy the hospitality and friendliness we’re renowned for.”

Sponsors and exhibitors have seen

The ASBA 2015 National Conference

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what is on offer at the Perth Conference and have responded with an almost overwhelming level of interest. Gold sponsorship has sold out, with only a few Silver sponsorships remaining. Within two weeks of opening the exhibitor spaces for booking, more than half of the available booths have been sold.

“We have had an outstanding response to sponsorship and exhibitor opportunities for the National Conference” says Des Hardiman who leads the Sponsorship team within the ASBA 2015 Organising Committee. “The interest we’ve had from companies and suppliers active in the education market from across Australia has been unprecedented. They love the idea of coming to Perth, they love the state-of-the-art venue, and they’re also excited to support ASBA members” says Des. “We hope to have more than 600 delegates attending ASBA 2015 in Perth, and it is a group of school business managers and administrators that control and influence more than an estimated \$3 billion in spending each and every year.”

The home of the 2015 Conference

will be the Perth Convention & Exhibition Centre, a world class conference venue located in the CBD, overlooking the Perth skyline and soon-to-be-completed Elizabeth Quay, situated on the beautiful shores of the Swan River.

Close to all the major Perth hotels and apartment accommodation, the PCEC is designed to be able to house conferences, exhibitions, session break-outs and any variety of social events all in the one facility, making it convenient and easily accessible for attendees.

Visit the Conference webpage at www.asba.asn.au to register your interest and to be kept up-to-date on ASBA 2015 as we plan towards what promises to be a great conference you cannot afford to miss.

Kathy Dickson – ASBA Chair also commented; ‘The 2015 ASBA National conference also marks the beginning of a new chapter for ASBA with key strategic partners – Aon, CBA, Camp Australia, Ricoh and Spotless – all embarking on deeper engagement with the association’.



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SCHOOL PLACES

Trinity College – Learning the hard way

Walking 100 kilometers in eight days through the Flinders Ranges is exactly what eight Trinity College, Gawler, SA, students and three staff achieved during March as part of the Operation Flinders Program.

Below: Eight exhausted students and three staff take their final steps as they return to base camp on day eight of their Flinders Range expedition.

The Operation Flinders Foundation is a South Australian based charitable organisation that runs a world leading wilderness adventure program for young people at risk. The program takes participants between the age of 14 and 18 years on an eight day exercise in the far northern Flinders Ranges, providing an opportunity for its participants to break away from their past and grow as valued members of the community. Unlike other aspects of their lives, there is not an opportunity for the participants to 'opt out'.

In a week of intense heat, the entire team of adult leaders (including Trinity staff) were tested to their limits.

The Trinity students learnt to abseil, developed navigation skills, bush survival techniques, listened to stories from an Aboriginal elder about local history, completed team challenges and developed leadership skills. We are pleased to report that this group of students was the first in the 23 year history of Operation Flinders to be awarded with a team commendation.

Trinity College has not only had students successfully complete these demanding exercises but they also fundraise for Operation Flinders. Students and staff are so impacted by the program that they have become

volunteer Team Leaders, Peer Group Mentors and Ambassadors to the program.

The testing March environments lead to these reflections from students:

"I can achieve anything I put my mind to... I liked the abseiling and camping out..." Joshua

"I liked learning about the Aboriginal culture, getting to know new people, disliked no showers and the heat... would do the program again as it was a really good experience" Rachel

"I enjoyed working in a team and achieving our goals... it has shown me not to bottle things up" Adam. ✨



Our Schools

Launceston Church Grammar School bucks the trend

Launceston Church Grammar School will continue with its unique Grade 7 transitional program, guaranteeing a personal, professional and passionate approach to education. Grammar has maintained a 'log cabin' environment for over 25 years, an education model backed by National Research. The school firmly believes it allows for a gentle transition of students from primary school into the senior school.

Launceston Grammar's decision not to follow the 'trend' to a middle-school facility, is backed by the most recent findings of the Australian Council for Educational Research.

ACER has found little hard evidence to quantify the effectiveness of middle schools, instead suggesting that a focus on quality teaching plays a more pivotal role in positive educational outcomes.

Launceston Grammar concurs with ACER's latest report into middle schooling for students in years' five to nine. That report was less than positive about the trend, saying it is now being wound back in the United Kingdom and under reform pressure in the US.

"Despite the literature claiming positive effects of approaches to middle schooling that focus on the cognitive, developmental, social and emotional needs of adolescents, evidence to substantiate the claims remain elusive," the ACER report states.

"The bulk of research-based evidence indicates that such structural interventions are little more than preconditions for teaching, and their effects on learning per se are, at best, small to negligible".

At Launceston Grammar there are on average 90 to 100 students enrolled in Grade 7, separated into four classes.

ACER reports that the most important element for students in their middle years remains quality teaching and learning provision, supported by teaching standards and ongoing teacher professional learning.

Headmaster Stephen Norris says quality teaching is at the forefront of Launceston Grammar's educational philosophy.

"Overall we believe the benefits of a gradual integration into the senior campus system, as well as the personal

but professional educational and cultural programmes we have in place, far outweigh the perceived benefits of a middle school format that are based on assumptions and not fact," Mr Norris states.

"We are proud of the teaching record at our school and the dedication our staff show in maintaining the highest educational standards possible."

At Launceston Grammar there are on average 90 to 100 students enrolled in Grade 7, separated into four classes.



Grade 7 coordinator Mrs Jacque Bourne says the key benefit of the Launceston Grammar programme is the personal approach to what can be a stressful transition to secondary education – both for students and parents!

“The students have a safe base that they can explore from but return to. They have class teachers who really get to know them and who support them in this discovery of life as a high school student. There is a real focus on the development of skills needed in secondary education such as personal organisation and time management and handling pressure,” Mrs Bourne explains.

“Because it is a specific Grade 7 programme, we are able to focus exactly on what is needed for children of this age and because we are separated from the main part of the school we have a lot of flexibility.

“Housing our Grade 7’s in the ‘log cabin’ also gives parents an opportunity to go through their own transition from being primary school parents where access to teachers and the classroom is an expectation, to the secondary school environment where access is more limited.”

Each Grade 7 class has a class teacher responsible for a substantial proportion of the timetable and pastoral care within the log cabin environment, while two teacher aides work between the four classes in all subject areas.

Specialist teachers are also used for all subjects – meaning up to twelve different teachers per class. Specialist subjects such as Home Economics, Physical Education, Science and Art are conducted in specialist areas.

Mrs Bourne says the Grade 7 students have a separate play space close to their classrooms, but they are encouraged to



Launceston Church Grammar is proud of its teaching record and the dedication of its staff

explore the entire Mowbray campus.

The Grade has their own weekly Chapel service and Grade meeting (students in Grades 8-12 attend Chapel with their Houses).

The Grade 7 programme also involves a four day camp in the second week of the year, attended by class teachers and outdoor education staff.

“Lots of team-building activities are included in the camp’s programme. By the time the students return to school at the end of the week, they have made new friends, have got to know their teachers, have been pushed beyond their comfort zone and feel like they belong to the group

they will be a part of for the next six years.”

The Grade 7 programme is finished at the end of the year with a seven day camp to Maria Island – a well received experience setting the students onto the path of educational exploration in the senior campus.

Mr Norris concludes: “We look forward to welcoming you should you wish to visit our Mowbray campus and see first-hand the wonderfully personal approach we give to our students as we guide them through their teenage years and help mould them into outstanding citizens that we can all be proud of.”



On top of the world – Lots of team-building activities are included in the camp’s programme

Our Schools

Shaping Safer Schools

– A School's review of its framework of response to bullying

In 2011 the Dominic College Pastoral Care team decided to review its framework of response to bullying, conducting surveys, researching contemporary best practice, and debating potential improvements.

Dominic College is a Kindergarten to Year 10 Catholic, coeducational, school in Hobart, owned by the Salesians of Don Bosco, with a student population of over 950.

Ms Beth Gilligan, Dominic College Principal, believes all schools, teachers, parents and students have a responsibility to help counter aggression.

'Each year I enrol several students from other schools who have been bullied,' Ms Gilligan said, 'and who feel their schools are not doing enough to address bullying.'

Bullying and harassment in schools and the community has undergone transformation as society has evolved, but its core elements of power, isolation and repetition continue.

Schools have responded over time by speaking out, often with poster campaigns amongst younger children, and lectures on social media misuse with older students.

Dominic College has found that by using the commitment of the College Leadership Team, across pastoral care, business management, e-learning (information and technology team) and student leadership, a substantial change to the infrastructure of anti-bullying can support the 'message' of posters and lectures.

Most casual surveys of student experience have shown that students were aware of bullying, and believed if it happened to them, telling someone just



Andrew Pritchard, Director of Pastoral Care K-10 chats with some Dominic students



Students are encouraged to comfort and support their fellow students

made it worse. Often students will say that adults did not take the reports seriously, or reporting led to the isolation of the victim.

Bullying has always flourished in hidden places, and translation from the school

environment to the internet hasn't changed that.

Mr Dylan Chivers, Dominic College Business Manager, felt the review gave the College the chance to rethink what was

previously a narrowly focused policy.

'The focus of the policy has shifted,' he said, 'towards what we would like to achieve as a community based on genuine care. The new title encompasses it all: a Safe School.'

Three key drivers were identified and implemented:

- **Bullying was to be made obviously and consistently unacceptable.**
- **Every technical means of reporting bullying was to be employed to give students the widest possible choice in reporting mode to allow for anonymity and personal circumstances.**
- **Response to offenders was to be clear, automatic and on an ascending scale.**

The Dominic College Safe School Policy takes a whole-of-school approach to dealing with bullying and harassment. To ensure the whole school/community approach is effective, different roles of the school community members have been identified with clear expectations attached. This has created a shared responsibility across the school to take action to stop bullying and harassment whether they are a student, parent, staff member or most importantly bystanders.



The College's EMPOWER program focusses on social and emotional well-being

The aim has been to make the school a safer place. It is Dominic's view that students must feel safer at school than in the outside world. And while they are at school they need to be able to grow and learn to be stronger to respond to external threats and help others who are trying to cope.

Mr Andrew Pritchard, Director of Pastoral Care K-10, was proud to launch the policy in early 2013 after this significant period of reflection and assessment. 'Dominic College's new Safe School Policy reinforces an environment where bullying is not accepted, is easily reported and is dealt with quickly,' he said.

Mr Pritchard said the first step was for students to stand up for their right to be safe. 'Students are taught to tell any person harassing them to stop; be assertive and look them in the eye. They use role play to practice telling a bully that their comments, behaviour or contact is unwelcome and offensive.'

'Students are explicitly taught that they should report bullying behaviour, towards them or others, by telling a teacher or parent.' Mr Pritchard explained that any report was followed up and taken seriously, and email and voicemail options for reporting were available for students.

'Students are encouraged to comfort and support their fellow students, and encouraged to report bullying behaviour. Parents can help by being aware, too,' he said. 'Parents are advised to not encourage their children to fight back – this only confuses the clear consequences of the bully's actions, but rather to report quickly and immediately their concerns to the College,' he advised.

Clear consequences are an important part of Dominic's policy. For a first, or minor incident, parents are contacted, the offending student enters compulsory education, supervised mediation and the victim is assisted by the College

continued overleaf



Year 9 boys watching the sunrise atop Mount Wellington as part of the EMPOWER program

Our Schools

Shaping Safer Schools

continued



Principal Beth Gilligan with Dominic students

Counsellor with resilience strategies.

If a second incident occurs automatic suspension is enforced until re-entry with parents and a compulsory counseling program is agreed. The offender is warned that they are making choices against the values and expectations of the College. If a third incident occurs enrolment is reviewed and potentially terminated.

Concurrent with these disciplinary approaches, the College has implemented the School Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS) approach as well as pioneered a personal development program called EMPOWER.

From 2012 the SWPBS approach at Dominic College affirmed the four central expectations the College has of its students from Kindergarten to Year 10: Respect, Honesty, Responsibility and Learning. These expectations are emblazoned on student diaries, student laptops, merit awards and on signs and places around the College.

'This has been crucial to strategically creating a positive learning environment for all of our students, Ms Gilligan stated. 'Actively teaching and affirming positive behaviours of our four expectations has enabled the College to continue to build a culture of high expectations and positive choices by students.'

The College's House leadership structure was changed to broaden student leadership opportunities from having just a sport focus to also including creative arts, mission outreach and academic development. This provided more diverse opportunities for students and further established and developed a leadership culture focused on the school's core values.

'A new structure has enabled student leaders to emerge and take up responsibilities in a number of priority

focus areas,' said the College Principal. 'It has reinforced the generosity of spirit across all aspects of school life, and made striving for House and community a multi-disciplinary path for students.'

In the College's EMPOWER program, the focus is on social and emotional well-being, building resilience and academic care. Anti-bullying education and personal goal-setting are embedded in all year levels. The anti-bullying components reinforce the rejection of negative behavior and explicitly teaches positive behaviors.

Since the launch of Dominic College's Safe School Policy in 2013, there have been only four Level 2 repeat behaviours, and one Level 3 situation, where the student has been transitioned out of the College to begin a fresh start in a new school environment.

'Tracking the data is key to ensure that we are achieving the environment of a safer school,' said Business Manager, Mr Dylan Chivers.

In 2014, 12 months since the launch of the Safe School Policy, students from Year 5 to Year 10 were surveyed on their experiences of bullying at the College for a comparison to surveys undertaken from

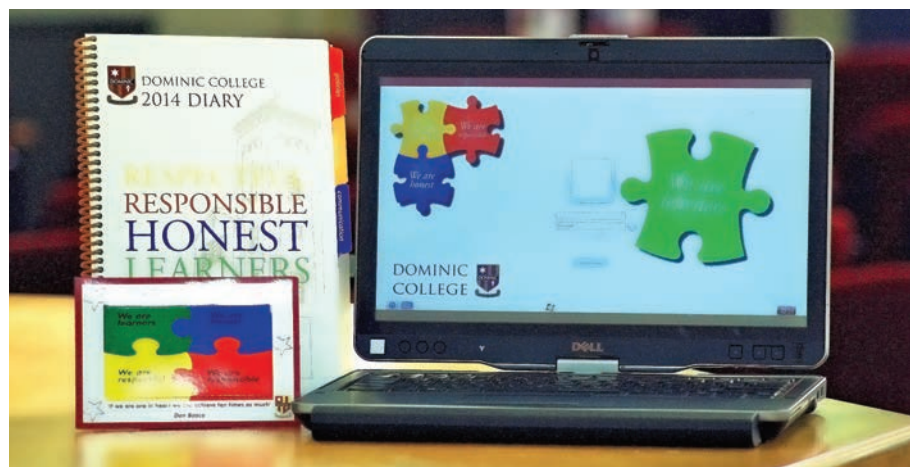
the same year levels in 2011 prior to the development of the new policy.

Over this short period of time, the results have shown positive improvements to providing a safer environment for students. According to the students surveyed, bullying occurrences on buses, for example, have now reduced from a reported 32% in 2011 to a current 13%.

In response to any online bullying students are encouraged to take a screen shot of the incident and provide that to staff at Dominic College to apply the Safe School Policy.

A Year 6 student recently posted on the College's Facebook page, 'Perfect place to send kids. There is barely any bullying seen or done.' The Safe School policy and procedures appears to be sending a clear message that bullying and harassment will not be tolerated at Dominic.

Stakeholders at Dominic College believe that through a combined approach, students are growing into stronger, fairer, more empathic young people who see the consequences of anti-social or bullying behavior; and now see that it is dealt with by the College quickly and transparently.



The College's expectations are emblazoned on student diaries, student laptops, merit awards and on signs and places around the School

Our Schools

Chrysalis Steiner School

– wins award for its unique River Safety program

Five years after winning a prestigious water safety award, Chrysalis School continues with an enjoyable, educational and safe water program in summer terms of the school year.

Chrysalis Steiner School has been honoured in the NSW Water Safety Awards (Community Education), presented by the NSW Minister for Sport and Recreation and Austswim NSW for its unique River Safety Program. In presenting the award, for the community education program of the year, the Minister for Sport and Recreation recognised Chrysalis Steiner School for its leadership work with Royal Life Saving to pioneer and implement a water safety program based on swimming in the river.

Education Manager, Kelley McGlashan,

said that as Chrysalis is fortunate to be adjacent to the Bellingen River, the school saw a need to provide a program which helped children to swim safely in local rivers. "Swimming in the river is an integral part of life in the Bellingen Shire and we saw a need to focus our swimming safety classes on the river. Whilst there are a number of beach safety courses available, we felt that the river has a different quality with quite specific risks attached. Students from Year 1 to Year 8 participate in the program".

The school approached Royal Life



The children are taught how to assess risks in the river, enter and leave the water safely

Saving Australia with a request that they develop, in partnership with Chrysalis, a water safety program based on the particular features of swimming in a river. "The children are taught how to assess risks in the river, enter and leave the water safely and enjoy themselves in the water in a way which does not endanger themselves or others," Ms McGlashan said.

Business Manager and trained swimming instructor, Steve Klipin, an active staff member with the water safety program said "Our school is located in a very special environment and we work hard to make it safe and enjoyable for the children. We are very proud to be honoured for our work, with Royal Life Saving, in creating and implementing our River Safety Program. We hope that other schools will follow our lead and tailor water safety programs to meet the specific needs of their own swimming environments."

Chrysalis is fortunate to be adjacent to the Bellingen River, the school saw a need to provide a program which helped children to swim safely in local rivers





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Our Schools

Transition to University

– a different senior secondary pathway

Principal, **Bob Holloway** of University Senior College, Adelaide, SA, reveals what they are doing, to better prepare students for University.

Many students find the transition from senior secondary to university very difficult and often report a significant variance between their expectations and the actual experience (Pargetter, McInnis, James, Peel & Dobson, 1999; Hillman, 2005; Peters, 2013). In the past schools have been criticised for not providing students with the skills and understanding to cope with the transition to tertiary studies. In response to such criticism school leaders will often respond that they are not in the business of preparing students for university. Additionally teachers may argue that it is their responsibility to ensure students experience a positive learning pathway through the final years of secondary school, one that allows successful completion and enables them to secure the best possible ATAR. However, there is great deal of common ground in this developmental pathway and both individuals and institutions stand to gain if there is a clear understanding of expectations on each side of the secondary/tertiary divide.

University Senior College (USC) opened its doors for the first time in January 2002 and was established to deliver a highly academic course with a major focus on university entry. The aim was to develop a different learning pathway, one that would provide an authentic transition to university

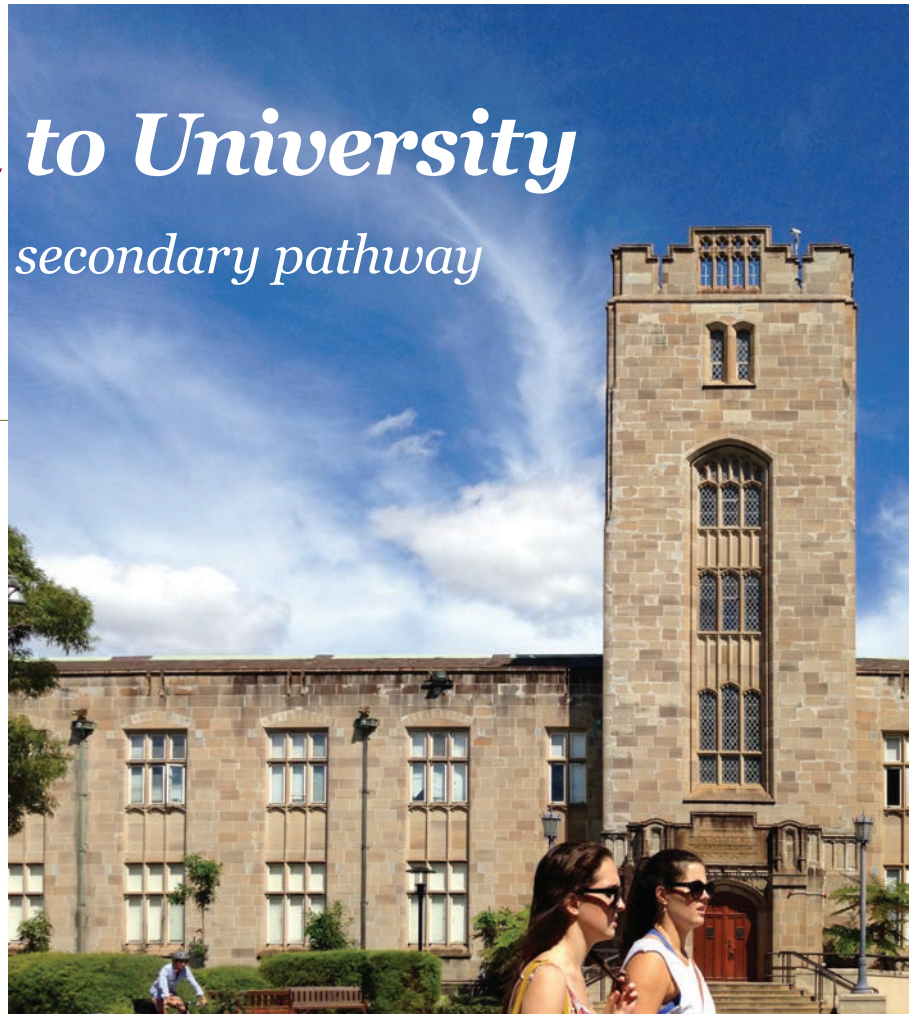
and enable students to gain a clear understanding of the responsibility that comes with independence and freedom of choice. The fact that the school is embedded on the North Terrace campus of the University of Adelaide is a significant point of difference and is one of the pillars of our highly successful transition program. This article provides an overview of the rationale behind this venture, the underlying philosophy and the structure of the school. Hopefully it will provide some insights into how we equip students with the skills and understanding to manage better the transition to university.

The majority of first year students feel positive about starting university despite the heightened anxiety of operating in unfamiliar surroundings and adjusting to a change in routine (Hillman, 2005; Krause, Hartley, James & McInnis, 2005). The way in which subjects are organised and delivered differently, heavier workloads, limited contact with academics, restricted feedback, more sophisticated research requirements, the expectation of independent

learning and self-management often make the transition from the controlled learning environment of school highly problematic. Most cope with the change but a significant proportion struggle to balance their commitments and often fail to recognise the fact that university study is very different from school. "The unfortunate reality for about one-third of students is that first year is when they drift in an anxious journey from the known and familiar to unknown and indecipherable." (Kift, 2014).

It has been long recognised that the way in which students approach university study depends upon the way in which they have been taught and the way in which they have been expected to study at school. A number of studies (Otto, 1979; Pargetter et al, 1999; Marks, 2007; James, Krause & Jennings, 2010) suggest that students who come from a less advantaged background perform as well at university as their counterparts who arrive with a higher ATAR from a better resourced and more privileged schooling experience. A case study

continued overleaf



Transition to University

continued

from Monash University (Dobson & Skuja, 2005) shows that students from non-selective government schools outperformed students from other sectors when they were at university. Analysis of the data for Monash revealed a differential of around five marks at the end of the first year between students from different sectors who enrolled with the same ATAR.


Student achievement is not impacted greatly by the material circumstance of the school but effective school leadership coupled with the motivation and expectations of classroom teachers can lead to positive learning outcomes (Otto 1979, Jensen & Sonnemann 2014). Those students who withdraw during the first year of study regularly do so due to reasons other than the academic demands of the coursework. More often than not the inability to cope is linked to the nature of campus life and a failure to adjust to the expectations in a university environment. Those factors affecting an individual's capacity to complete a course are complex but the absence of clear goals, inappropriate course selection and the lack of self-management skills for truly independent study are often cited (Xin, Zeng-Hua & Zhongjun, 2007; Di Sotto-Hames, 2013). There is no doubt the move to university involves considerable change, but good preparation can ease the transition process and probably limits the attrition rate. Research indicates that early student engagement with the culture of the university is a key factor for future success (Lysaght, 2007), but just as universities have a responsibility to provide a supportive orientation process and first year experience, schools should consider what part they can play to inform students better and develop skills to assist the transition.

So what has been put in place at USC to address the problem of attrition? A number of discussions have been held with staff from the University of Adelaide to identify the characteristics of a successful first year learner. Time and time again it is the resilient student who is acknowledged as the one who is most likely to do well at university. Someone who is a problem solver, is flexible, organised, socially competent, self-aware, connected to place and people and has the skills and confidence to tackle a challenge. Often those who have been wrapped in cotton wool, sheltered from criticism, failure and disappointment have a clouded understanding of the real world and lack the skills to cope. Fortunately resilience is a capacity that can be developed and what follows are some of the key elements that we have adopted into our program to help build resilience in our students:

- **Our timetable is structured to provide every student with a minimum of 14 hours non-contact time on campus each week. Students are able to decide where to work, what to work on and who to work with during this time, or they may decide not to work at all. A writer (McQueen, 2009) more knowledgeable in these matters than me refers to this as “intelligent neglect”, and this is seen to be a key element in building resilience. Students are given space and permission to make choices, to make mistakes and deal with the consequences.**
- **Student learning space is provided alongside teacher work areas to encourage regular interactions. The fact that we share space on a continuous basis means that those**

artificial barriers that often exist between student and teacher disappear and meaningful, productive conversations follow.

- **Teachers work with small numbers of students to explain how best to keep things in perspective by focusing on the big picture and breaking each task into bit-sized achievable pieces.**
- **Staff members are encouraged to share their current professional learning pathway with students. Every member of staff is a subject specialist and there is an expectation they will model enthusiasm, curiosity and a love of learning.**
- **In the classroom we avoid worksheets and mere busy work. Student abilities are challenged and we work on the premise that if you seek a better answer you need to ask a better question.**
- **We adopt practices and use resources encountered at university level including, a single draft for assignments, concise diagnostic feedback, fixed deadlines, Turnitin originality checks, extensive use of online technology to support learning, peer-peer instruction, blended learning strategies and podcasts in association with our lecture-tutorial system at Year 12.**
- **The mentoring program allows students to explore strategies to build self-awareness, resilience and grit. Much of what has been developed at USC comes from the combined wisdom of a very experienced staff, but over the last two years much has grown out of the work surrounding Positive Psychology and Wellbeing, promoted by Dr Martin Seligman during his initial engagement with the ‘Adelaide Thinkers in Residence’ program in February 2012.**

Over the next few years researchers will detail our program and track the pathway of USC graduates as they make the transition through to their university course. To date we have gathered significant feedback from students that our pathway provides good preparation and a seamless transition to university, but it is prudent to benchmark and analyse real data to substantiate these claims. There can be no doubt that the school being embedded on a university campus and located in the near vicinity of a rich array of learning resources all adds greatly to the potency of our program. Parliament House, Law Courts, Museum, Art Gallery, Migration Museum, Botanical Gardens and the Zoological Gardens are within ten minutes' walk of campus and all are used on a regular basis to enrich the learning program. When this is coupled with the opportunity for university academics to join groups of students to talk about their teaching and research, or engage in sophisticated workshops and demonstrations, the whole school community is immersed in a wonderful learning environment that excites and enlivens everyone involved. Our physical environs cannot be duplicated in the context of a conventional school, nor is our daily routine easily replicated, but there are many aspects of classroom practice and personal interactions that are readily transportable. We undertake to share future research findings to allow others to consider the value of adopting a different approach to senior secondary schooling, one that delivers a smoother transition to university study. 



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Leadership

A leadership case study

– From Harvard Business School's

Women in Leadership Forum

Merle Boniface, Director of Business and Planning at the Diocesan School for Girls in Auckland, shares some of her learnings whilst attending the Harvard Business School's Women's leadership Forum earlier this year. (Given the volume of subject material covered, Merle will share snippets in upcoming editions.)

Harvard University uses the Case Method methodology to transfer knowledge. Case studies were distributed a month prior to commencement of the programme and participants were expected to familiarise themselves with these, prior to arrival.

The focus of one session was on entrepreneurial leadership and in particular, leadership in a crisis situation. HBS Professor and Historian, Nancy Koen, used Ernest Shackleton's Imperial Trans-Antarctica Expedition to demonstrate a number of leadership

attributes and team dynamics, which are still relevant today. Shackleton's entrepreneurial leadership style and how he (and members of his party) responded in a crisis situation, were considered.

Planning and funding for the expedition, recruitment of crew and leadership styles were discussed, as was the behaviour of Shackleton and his team, their decisions and the dynamics within the team. As the expedition progressed, events unfolded and disaster after disaster struck, certain themes and patterns emerged. Parallels were drawn

to modern day entrepreneurial leaders.

The way in which Shackleton shouldered responsibility, kept his team busy, motivated them in the face of disastrous circumstances, put his own life at risk, adapted to changing circumstances and made strategic decisions with limited information, were scrutinised. His ability to sway members of the crew to return on a further expedition when they had nearly lost their lives on the previous one, was testament to the influence he had as a leader.

Shackleton hired primarily for attitude



Baker Library at Harvard University School of Business

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and commitment. He got to know his men well, knew their strengths and weaknesses and capitalised and compensated for these. He consistently observed his team, knew what they were up to and managed their energy levels. He was able to “dial down” those who resisted him, by giving them more power and then monitoring them very closely in order to marginalise their influence.

He planned his expedition meticulously, considering all eventualities and ensuring he had the provisions and support structure in place to ensure that they were capable of surviving the worst. He knew anything could happen and prepared his men for this, both psychologically and physically.

Shackleton fed his men's sense of worth and contribution to the larger mission. He never let them forget this, and frequently reminded them of their goal, as the situation deteriorated. He provided direction, gave them a purpose and was consistent in his expectations. His men knew what was expected of them and he built their trust, confidence and commitment, which was critical as

the expedition progressed. He cared for each of his men and took the time to get to know them individually.

When weather conditions turned and the expedition team had to abandon ship, he was able to, using a disciplined approach, manage their collective fear by providing a practical, empowering and enabling structure, including duty roster and tasks. He realised that structure, routine and discipline were even more vital in an uncertain and turbulent environment, as was the need to continuously affirm and communicate belief and focus on the higher team goal. He used food and water as a leadership tool; to reward and lift their spirit.

Shackleton realised that his demeanour and attitude, regardless of the situation, would set the tone. It was essential that he “showed up” every day, appearing confident and in control of the situation, even after the ship had sunk and they set sail, without any navigation tools. He demonstrated authenticity and resilience as a leader and knew that how he showed up each morning would set the tone for the day.

He needed to internalise his fears and anxiety, in order to keep his men positive; using his diary as a tool for reflection instead of sharing his fears with his men. He was prepared to pass the leadership to one of his team, when circumstances forced him to set sail for help, but knew that he had equipped him well to take charge in his absence.

Shackleton realised that he would be unable to lead, unless he earned the trust and confidence of his team. He built the faith of the individuals and the collective, and continued to demonstrate faith in his own abilities and those of his team, even although at times he didn't know whether they would survive the day. He improvised as events unfolded, but never left his men in any doubt that he cared for them and had their interests at heart. The men trusted him implicitly and each day, following his departure, lit a fire in the hope that he would return. Shackleton owned responsibility for the expedition and when all else “fell apart”, he didn't shirk his responsibility and returned to rescue his men, whilst putting his own life at risk.



Getting bang from your buck from – Maximising your investment in Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

The challenge of ensuring that funds invested in ICT deliver the expected benefits is foremost in the mind of business leaders. In this article **Richard Jones**, ICT Manager, Shore School, NSW, explores the conditions under which such investment is more likely to succeed, after first providing some important context on the role of ICT as he sees it.

The first point I'd like to make is that in the majority of organisations ICT is a service function which does not generate revenue and does not directly provide services to the organisation's customers. In other words, ICT is only needed to enable other business functions to do their job.

Secondly, it is worth reflecting on the different operating styles an ICT team can adopt.

- **Command and control; characterised by a focus on risk avoidance and efficiency.**
- **Technology focus; characterised by the desire to work on computers and experiment with technology without considering practical business applications for it.**
- **Consultancy; characterised by the desire to assist without being actively involved in delivering the desired business benefits.**
- **Partnership; characterised by the desire to proactively match technologies to business processes in a way that delivers genuine business benefit.**

At first glance it is tempting to expect ICT to act as a partner all the time, however, there are times that the ICT function has to take a stand on risk, investigate new technology and take more of a peripheral role when the organisation wishes to



implement a new system.

It might also be tempting to task ICT with just “worrying about the computers”, thereby focussing on command and control, and technology. I personally dislike this operating model due to the significant risk of the ICT function becoming irrelevant.

One of the ways you can assist your ICT function is to help them strive for and maintain a balance between these disparate operating styles. A good question to ask a prospective Head of ICT is to describe their preferred operating model.

As a Head of ICT I believe that my primary role is to deliver business benefits using the resources I'm provided with. To be successful I have to understand

technology, business processes, be willing & able to adapt my style, and I must actively pursue and orchestrate change by having some “skin in the game”. This is not to say that ICT is responsible for organisational change, rather, an important enabler in it.

But this is not enough!

To be successful the ICT function has to be regarded as credible and reliable. As business manager you can profoundly assist your Head of ICT to develop such an ICT function by fostering connections to key stakeholders, publically supporting the work ICT does and awarding an appropriate level of financial responsibility.

When it comes to financial responsibility it is my view that the Head

your investment in ICT



of ICT should; be accountable for forming the ICT budget, manage expenditure against the budget, and should have a financial delegation that enables them to run ICT on a day-to-day basis. Without this responsibility there is a risk that ICT will operate on “auto pilot” where the Head of ICT is executing someone else’s plan.

In return for this responsibility your Head of ICT should:

- **Protect the organisation by being upfront and transparent in relation to the cost of ICT and risks that emerge from time to time.**
- **Justify expenditure in plain English with an emphasis on the business benefit to be delivered.**
- **Look for opportunities to apply technology to business processes and help drive the organisational changes enabled by the technology.**
- **Develop relationships with suppliers so that ICT can readily adapt as workload increases.**
- **Systematically and relentlessly identify and eliminate the causes of technology failures.**
- **Engineer solutions that utilise standard components with a proven track record.**
- **Work with people to raise their technical competency and confidence so they develop a sound knowledge base for innovation.**

It is my experience that a credible and reliable ICT function that is embedded in the day-to-day of their organisation is best placed to deliver bang for the buck invested in ICT.

When ICT teams develop a reputation for delivering real benefits the right conditions are in place for sustaining and potentially increasing the level of resource allocated to ICT, which in turn improves the foundation for more organisational change.

As a business manager your challenge is to appoint the right person to lead the ICT function and then help them create the conditions necessary for success. ✨

Schools need to think digital

Choosing an independent school that meets the needs of a child can lead to a lifelong love for learning, a place at one of the country's most respected tertiary institutions and a successful career in a chosen field. It is therefore paramount that parents make the correct school-based choice when placing their children, writes School Places Chairman, **Paul Sheahan**.

In February this year, Fairfax Media spoke with Jane Caro advertising icon and author of *What Makes a Good School*. The interview with Caro, which ran in *The Age* made the very valid point that school choice should be made with the child in mind, not the parent.

Caro said in the interview, "No matter which school, education is about relationships; not about marks. A student who has a good relationship with their teacher, fellow students and the school itself will have a better experience.

"It is important for the student to feel in tune with the school, not feel like a square peg in a round hole. They need to feel there are people there who understand them.

"The most important thing for a parent to consider when they attend an open day is 'if it were me, would I like to go to this school?'

There is great insight in Caro's comments. Unfortunately trying to determine right fit may become a parent's worst nightmare. When considering independent schools, what tools are available to help parents find a suitable match?

Research conducted by Pureprofile and commissioned by School Places sheds light on what influences parents when shortlisting schools. The survey examined the type of information parents require when researching a school, whether

a financial incentive would persuade parents to move schools or consider a non-preferred school, which areas of the enrolment process cause frustration for parents and identified potential services that might make parents' lives easier when it comes to enrolment procedures.

The barriers to an independent education are understandable: affordability, location, questions of whether the education at a higher priced school is any more effective than at a public school, limited vacancies and a lack of awareness of independent schools that are available.

So many questions: so few answers. In this digital world, where information is at the ready, one would assume the abovementioned data would be easy to find. After all, schools of all persuasions should be busting down your door to tell you why your child should be attending their morning assemblies. Shouldn't they?

Frustratingly, it's not the case. Accessing pertinent information is more difficult than it may seem for a parent. What is needed is a digital transformation of the school sector. This has already occurred in the mortgage, employment, real estate, automotive and insurance industries, but there has been no assistance, up until recently, for parents looking to place their child at a school of their choice.

Every independent school should at least consider digital solutions for their

enrolment processes, particularly if they have failed to fill all positions for the year. Yet, some institutions seem to be running scared. They need to understand that offering parents the right solutions will help fill their classrooms. They need to think of these solutions as not replacing traditional enrolment means but complementing them.

Independent schools should be run like any other business; they provide a service, they offer a product and take up of this is dependent on meeting a customer's needs, ease of use and value for money.

In this day and age, where rising costs and locality impact buying decisions, schools cannot survive on reputation alone. They need greater presence in the marketplace.

The Pureprofile study found that parents are crying out for independent schools to make their enrolment services more visible and easily accessible. 93% of parents with children in a government school who are considering moving to an independent school want to be able to view online which independent schools have vacancies for certain year levels. 92% of the same group desire the ability to track the status of a wait list at an independent school online as part of the enrolment process.

Other much needed services, particularly for those parents already in the independent sector, included the ability to



PROFILE

Paul Sheahan AM, is Chairman of School Places Pty Ltd. His educational credentials include Housemaster of Geelong Grammar, Principal of Geelong College from 1986-1995 and Headmaster of Melbourne Grammar School from 1995-2009

apply online for vacancies at independent schools (82%) and the ability to book an interview online for an enrolment application (81%).

The ability to attract student numbers by offering a short term financial incentive was proven to be effective among parents intending to move their child from the public school system to an independent school. 69% from this group said that it would encourage them to move earlier than planned and 31% said that they would consider a non-preferred school as a result.

The study also found that, although two-thirds of respondents (66%) had no plans to move their child to an (or another) independent school, most said that they would consider moving if they could secure a financial discount. 61% of parents with children in government schools who had no plans to move, would consider moving their child to an independent school if they could secure a 20% discount for the first two years.

In short the survey found that larger discounts over shorter time periods were likely to encourage parents to consider an independent school for their child.

A digital transformation that delivers all of this may still be some time away. School Places is one digital start-up that is blazing a new trail.

The first of its kind in Australia, School Places helps bring the independent school

enrolment process into the digital age. As an online marketplace for unfilled spaces, schools can now match their last minute vacancies with parents searching to find a place for their child. Like online hubs for property and insurance that bring customers and industry players together, School Places will greatly benefit parents and schools alike.

School Places has created a flexible platform that allows each partner school to determine how many places to make available across each year level and the applicable discount rate and duration. Parents use the site to find a school that meets their needs and then complete an online application form that is forwarded to the school. While acceptance remains at the school's discretion, School Places' strength is in its ability to associate schools with parents.

In only four months of operations, there are already many happy, satisfied parents. One parent, when asked what the main benefit of the service is commented:

"Peace of mind owing to the 'guaranteed' place providing we satisfy the school's enrolment requirements."

Another parent said she was encouraged to apply for a vacancy via School Places because:

"I was unable to get a spot for year 7 in 2016, this opened up an opportunity for Year 5 in 2014 that we did not know existed. We were thinking of moving to

be able to get into a good school zone. However, this allowed us to move to a better education earlier for my son."

Schools are under increasing pressure to deliver outcomes. Everyone from shareholders to staff, students and parents have expectations that must be met. To help meet these, schools must embrace digital innovation. Failure to do so will see the school 'left behind', resulting in potential reputation damage. It is time for independent schools to upgrade their service offering and provide processes that meet the needs of their target audience, helping parents make the right decisions with regard to their children's future. ✨

ABOUT THE SURVEY

The Pureprofile survey was conducted in July 2014 with a sample size of 703 Australian parents who have children between the ages of 5-17 years. The survey explored factors that influence a parent's choice of education for their child, their view on the current enrolment process for independent schools and potential areas for improvement in the enrolment process.



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ASBA 2015 Conference Update

Goodbye paper brochure... Hello Conference app!

The ASBA 2015 Conference in Perth is embracing new technology with the introduction of a dedicated conference app for delegates, sponsors and exhibitors. **Ian Anthony**, Bursar, Iona College and **Pip Jones** (ASBA Executive Officer) tells us more...

At the 2015 Conference, organisers are going to provide attendees with an app that's accessible on any smartphone, tablet or laptop. No app store approvals or downloads are needed, and the conference app is accessed from a web browser into the cache of the device. That means ASBA members can quickly browse content within the app, without relying on an Internet connection" says Michael Burgess, Chairman of the 2015 Organising Committee. "We want ASBA members to experience the convenience that comes from greater connectivity and interactivity enabled by mobile technology. The conference app is just one way for this to happen while in Perth."

The Conference App has some great interactive features:

- **Every attendee has access to the conference program, and can create their own personalised session schedule including time alerts on their device**
- **See the Speaker's details including any session presentation slides or handouts from within the app for instant access, including active links to their web or social media sites**
- **Never get lost again with Interactive digital maps of the venue and exhibition hall. Pin-drop locations help attendees find their way around**

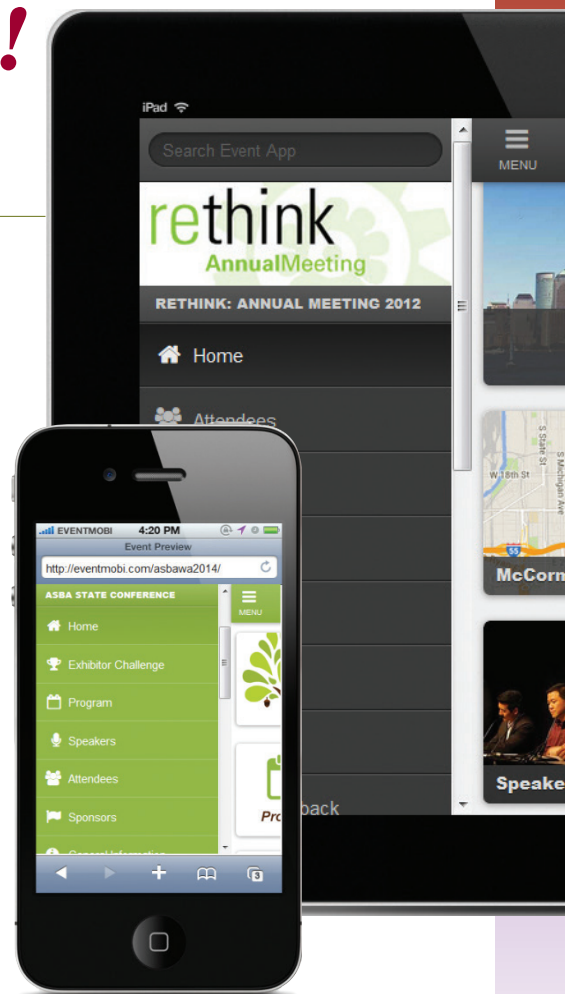
large, unfamiliar conference halls so they can get to where they need to be. Connections to Google Maps will help members navigate the streets surrounding the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre and the City

- **In-app messaging that lets members network one-on-one through the app without publicly displaying contact details**

The Conference app is supported by EventMobi in Australia and CrowdComms globally. It has also been put through its paces by members and sponsors at the recent ASBA WA State Conference at Bunker Bay south of Perth.

Baiju Patel and Ian Anthony, who lead the Marketing and Technology team within the ASBA 2015 Organising Committee are excited by the possibilities. "The State Conference provided an outstanding opportunity to show what the app could do for members and sponsors. The app was a great success, easy to use, feedback has been very positive, and 80% of user satisfaction rated the app as 'excellent' or outstanding'. We learned a lot about what members want to access quickly, and how to tweak it to improve the future user experience."

"You're listening to a great speaker and want to take notes? You can do that within the app. Use of in-app polling will turn attendees into active participants with



lightning-fast results displayed live to the audience, and they will be able to ask a question or give immediate feedback on the session they're in. The app is easily refreshed and updated keeping it current throughout the Conference, and once it is over, it remains on your chosen device so you will access to the program, speaker's details, documents and notes for as long as you want."

"The app promises to make the ASBA 2015 Conference the most interactive, the most personalised and technologically savvy ASBA event ever. We aim to get the app out to delegates, sponsors and exhibitors in August 2015, so you will arrive in Perth with all the necessary information at your finger-tips. Stay tuned!"

Visit the Conference webpage at www.asba.asn.au to register your interest and be kept up-to-date on ASBA 2015 as we plan towards what promises to be a great conference you cannot afford to miss! 🌟

ASBA 'AIMs' high

– with new professional development alliance

In July 2014 ASBA Limited was thrilled to announce the launch of an historic strategic alliance with the Australian Institute of Management (AIM).

Australian Institute of Management (AIM) is a professional association of more than 20 000 managers at a range of levels in a vast array of Australian enterprises. AIM's vision is to develop better managers and leaders for a better society. They seek to achieve this by offering a range of services in business and management training, events and seminars, coaching, research and publications. AIM's objectives closely parallel those of ASBA in the education sector, making the alliance between the two bodies a natural fit.

The strategic alliance with AIM offers ASBA members many different professional development opportunities. One significant opportunity is access to discounted pricing to study a Diploma of Management. The Diploma comprises eight units across a range of subjects, including team performance, customer service, operational planning and performance management. This qualification is further supported by ASBA through a commitment to reimburse an additional 20% of the total course cost to members upon successful completion. Recognised under the national accreditation framework, the Diploma of Management offers a fantastic opportunity to obtain a cost effective and transportable qualification that can both recognise and enhance your management skills. With options for recognition of prior learning,

the Diploma is flexible in meeting the needs of both new school administrators and those who may already have solid management experience. Meanwhile, a range of face-to-face and online delivery options make the Diploma accessible to all members regardless of their location or circumstance.

The strategic alliance with AIM also provides ASBA members with access to a wealth of short courses and qualifications in everything from management and leadership, to project management, communication skills and general personal development. Through the alliance arrangements ASBA members are able to access all of these offerings, either for themselves or for staff members at their school, at discounted AIM member prices. Courses can be tailored by AIM, in terms of both content and delivery, to meet

the unique needs of particular schools. This offers a great way to deliver targeted professional development to staff within a particular school, or across groups of schools

For more information on these opportunities, or to discuss your unique professional development requirements, call Rachel at AIM on 02 9956 3060. You can also send an email to marketing@aim.com.au and request that AIM add you to their mailing list so that you can stay informed about opportunities available to you at discounted AIM member pricing.

ASBA looks forward to a long and successful association with AIM and we encourage all members to take advantage of the wide range of professional development opportunities that the alliance offers both them and their school. ✨



Members of ASBA and the Australian Institute of Management (AIM)

Not so secret women's business

Kathy Dickson, Shore School, NSW questions what are the seven myths about women and work, how hard is the glass ceiling, how do you progress your career and remain friends with your colleagues, how effective are your networks and what does your handshake say about you as a leader?

These were some of the topics covered by speakers at the recent NSW chapter Women in Leadership session held in conjunction with the NSW State conference at Coffs Harbour. NSW women members were joined by colleagues from Queensland, sponsors who had attended the state conference as well as 2 progressive males for this inaugural female-focussed leadership professional development event.

Louise Hambridge from Daneback commented: "I found the four sessions an excellent opportunity to reflect on staying true to myself in my role, encouraged to be authentic in all aspects of my life and work. I also was challenged to stop myself from just accepting the way things are but to be a part of positive change, regardless how small my impact may seem. It was a great morning and I would like more chances for days like this, and especially to have days where the men are encouraged to participate with us".

The concept for specifically targeted PD for women was born out of a survey of NSW members back in 2009 when members were asked what they were looking for in future professional development days. Whilst it has taken some time to come to fruition, the half-day session was well attended and provided the perfect opportunity for us 'girls' (and guys) to get together and reflect on how others may see us and how best to promote ourselves




without detriment to our male counterparts.

Our speakers, Catherine Fox, Dascia Bennett, Danielle Di Masi and our own Wendy Wills provided us with a great morning of professional development, laughter, facts and inspiration. Lorraine Plant from All Saints Grammar School reflected that she really enjoyed Danielle's session. Lorraine commented that Danielle's presentation refreshed for her all the little things she already knew but sometimes forgot to practice. Lorraine appreciated hearing Dascia from NGS tell her story. "I could relate to many parts of her story having also come from the country many years back. I personally believe that you make the best of whatever your current situation and grow from that and I heard this in her presentation. Always

taking the opportunity that is presented and if none show up, going out and finding one!"

Sue Smedley from Northside Montessori felt that "The Women in Leadership morning was an excellent concept and the timing at the end of the main conference made it an easy decision to attend. It was great to be able to meet other women in Schools and from our Sponsors. The speakers were fantastic – Catherine Fox's seven myths were a timely reminder to keep our eye on the ball with regard to issues affecting women the work place. Dascia and Wendy were both inspirational with their experiences and generous with their advice. Danielle's tips on networking were very practical and quite amusing – I shall be focussing on handshakes a little more now!"

This networking opportunity was well received by our chapter and we are keen to reach out to other chapters if they would like to explore what this type of network might look like across all ASBA chapters. 

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you are interested in finding out more about what we have started in NSW, please contact either Stephanie Ghali at sghali@pacifichills.net or Kathy Dickson at kdickson@shore.nsw.edu.au.

Awards

The NGS Super Scholarship Awards

– supporting the school sector

Jorjet Issavi, Client Relationship Manager of NGS Super, talks about the six \$5,000 scholarships awarded to NGS members working in the education sector in 2014.

At NGS Super, we're committed to supporting those who are dedicated to making a positive difference in the world. The NGS Super Scholarship Awards program provides up to six \$5,000 scholarships to our members working in the education sector. The awards consist of three categories within the education sector – teachers, management and support staff. The Awards provide the opportunity for professional development on a personal level as well as facilitating a positive and sustainable change within the education industry.

The Scholarship Awards allows applicants to design and develop their own unique professional development project, course or study tour with the primary objective to significantly contribute to their employer and the broader education industry. The 2014 Scholarship Awards saw a wide range of unique and creative projects from applicants. Our winners displayed a strong desire to contribute to and improve the education industry with potential to add significant value to the sector.

For example, one of our 2014 winners, Charlotte Fernwood is passionate about empowering students with language disorders and wants to build teacher knowledge and understanding within this space. She is using her scholarship award to visit schools and organisations in



Emily Gann (left) receives her award from Thomay Gatis

the UK offering services and support for students with language disorders and their teachers, with an aim to implement similar strategies in Australia.

Another winner, Emily Gann is using her Scholarship Award to fund her study tour which will investigate best-practice models of education partnerships between schools and professional music organisations. She plans on developing a Learning Program that provides accessible music education opportunities to complement and enhance music programs within schools, with a specific focus on enabling students to actively participate and engage with professional musicians.

Another winner, Luis Siddall is using his Scholarship Award to fund the program he is leading called the *Cuneiform in Australia*



Dr Luis Siddall (left) receives his award from Jorjet Issavi

and New Zealand project (CANZ). This aims to identify, translate and publish all the cuneiform tablets in the region and produce a book with a catalogue and editions of each text and an educational website and support syllabus that teachers can use for secondary history. These texts are important for the field of ancient history for they have never been translated and need to be analysed and published to bring them to light.

If you are passionate about positively impacting on your industry and have an idea that could contribute to your professional development, the 2015 Scholarship Awards could help make your idea a reality. Keep your eye on the NGS Super website at www.ngssuper.com.au for all the details.



Lest we forget?

– The Southport School Lone Pine Memorial

John Wallace, reports on how The Southport School continues to remember its Old Southportonians and the planting of a lone pine tree in 1998 grown from a seed taken from the hills of Gallipoli.

The Southport School is a living memorial to the sacrifice of Old Southportonians in the global conflicts of the twentieth century namely World War One, World War Two and the Vietnam War.

World War One was the first conflict in which old boys volunteered in large numbers to serve their country. The TSS Chapel was built in 1925 as a memorial to the boys who had fallen and to all those who served and their names are etched on the Honour Board near the Chapel entrance. Those names alphabetically listed in the centre column are the boys who never came home.

The Memorial Room was built in 1948 as a Library to honour those who served and gave the ultimate sacrifice in the European and Asian conflicts of 1939-1945. John Fraser a sole name from The Vietnam War also adorns the Honour Board.

Such was the Old Southportonian's respect for the boys who fought and served in the Gallipoli campaign of 1915 where our Australian identity was born and realised that a memorial in the form of a simple tree was planted in an area between the Chapel and St Alban's Close. The Battle of Lone Pine was one of the bloodiest battles between the Turks and the Anzacs. It was a battle where men had to resort to the bayonet and bare hands in the fight for survival. Many



A young Southport student looks on with interest

soldiers from both sides died in the blood stained trenches of Lone Pine. Boys from The Southport School gave the ultimate sacrifice in this field of conflict.

In the story of Gallipoli Lone Pine is seen as one of the major confrontations between Anzacs and Turkish forces.

On the 24th April, 1998, just prior to the School's Anzac Day ceremony a small pine tree was planted and this tree had been grown from a seed taken from a tree at Lone Pine, Gallipoli. The tree was planted in a moving ceremony by Old Southportonian, Mr Dick Newton.

Today this tree stands tall with strong trunk and healthy branches and leaves. A living memorial to Old Boys who died and served for their country.

Lest we forget.



Australian troops in a captured Ottoman trench at Lone Pine, Gallipoli, 6 August 1915



What's driving increased costs in Independent Schools?

John Somerset, Chartered Accountant and Director of the Independent Schools Council of Australia, continues his look at how costs in independent schools are increasing and suggest a greater focus may be required on staff costs.

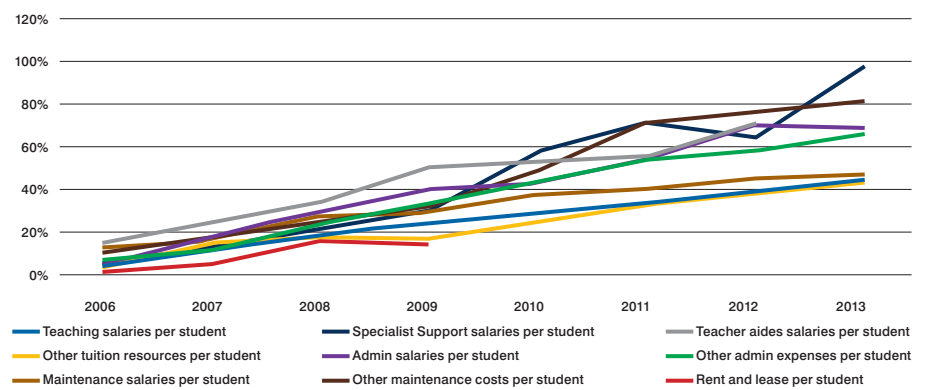
In the previous edition of Associate I identified that costs in independent schools have been increasing by 5 to 7 per cent per annum. Using results from the annual ASBA/Somerset Non-Government Schools' Financial Performance Survey (FPS), I have further investigated these trends and now summarise the cumulative increase by cost categories from 2005 to 2013 in figure 1.

The average total cost per student in the FPS increased by 52% over eight years from \$10,090 in 2005 to \$15,359 in 2013 (about 6.5% per annum). Although teacher wages is the largest expense in schools, it is the non-teacher costs that have increased fastest over the past seven years.

Significant increases include Specialist support salaries (98%) Teacher aide (77%), Administration salaries (69%), Other administration (66%). The increase in other maintenance costs is misleading because rent and lease costs were added to this cost line from 2010.

It is probable that IT costs have contributed to the administration increases. A new initiative in this year's FPS is an on-line IT comparison tool – log back into the FPS to access the link.

Cumulative % changes in average costs per student (2005 base year)



Source: ASBA/Somerset Non-Government Schools Financial Performance Survey

Figure 1: ASBA/Somerset Non-Government Schools Financial Performance Survey – cost increases by category

INCREASED STAFF

Staff increases have significantly influenced costs. The average independent school of 500 students (250 primary and 250 secondary) employed an additional 4.7 staff in 2013 than they did in 2005. There are 1.7 additional teachers. However from a lower base, and therefore a larger proportional increase, 1.3 more specialist support and aides, 1.3 more administration staff and 0.4 more maintenance & other staff.

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Schools can use the FPS to compare their income, expenditure, staffing and debt ratios with a sample of similar schools. This is a simple and effective method for analysing relative performance and assessing financial viability/sustainability.

This year over 600 schools participate in the FPS. 100% of participants rank the survey as good to excellent and

recommend participation to others. I urge schools to participate/contribute and use this unique industry tool to analyse risks and plan improvements where appropriate.

Whether you participated in the survey or not, schools can access the on-line Somerset Key Indicator (SKI) Report at any time. This tool compares the trend in your key ratios from 2012 to 2018 and also compares with a sample of similar schools – you choose the characteristics.



DISCLAIMER

We publish this article only for non-government schools in Australia and New Zealand. All material should be regarded as information only and individuals should rely on their own enquiries when formulating decisions for themselves or their clients. In no way do we warrant or guarantee any changed circumstances for a school from use or non-use of this material.

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