



November 2018

Dear Parents and Guardians of Star of the Sea students,

The College Community welcomes you to the impending 2019 College year. We extend a special welcome to those students and their families who are joining us for the first time.

As the newly appointed Chair of the Board in June this year, I would like to extend my gratitude to Ms Kathleen Donnellon for her dedication and commitment, having held this role for the past seven years. I look forward to continuing to progress the great work of Ms Donnellon and fellow board members.

College Master Plan

Led by our Principal, Ms Mary O'Connor and the Leadership Team, together with the full support of the Board, the College has entered into an exciting new phase of master planning this year. Award winning architect, McGlashan Everist have been appointed to assist with the development of a long-term vision for the future of Star.

Aligned with Masterplanning, the College is undertaking an accelerated maintenance program of renovating senior classrooms in the West Wing throughout the 2018 term breaks. To date, twelve general-purpose classrooms have been renovated to a modern standard that provides fresh, comfortable and more suitable learning environments for our senior students. Further enhancements and works in this area are targeted for completion over the January break.

Funding and costs

One of the key responsibilities of the Board of Directors is to ensure the strategic growth and financial sustainability of providing a Star education. This includes setting the annual budget, staffing and curriculum refresh, consideration of master planning and future facilities and determining the most appropriate and equitable fee structure for parents, students and families. We continue as a Board to be very focussed on delivering a rich, vibrant Star education at a reasonable cost and in the Presentation tradition.

Currently, the Catholic funding authority, CECV, receives federal funding for all Catholic schools in a block, and determines allocation of that funding. The CECV is yet to obtain specific details regarding funding arrangements for 2019 from the Government and has again advised that Star should expect a reduction in the amount of federal grants to be made available. This will have a direct impact when setting budgets and fees for the year.

There has been much debate around the allocation of funding to Catholic schools, particularly throughout 2018, with the Government recently announcing its support of the National School Resourcing Board's review which is expected to see the funding mechanism allocate funding grants based on the parent personal income tax (PIT) measure (previously based on the inaccurate SES measure).

2019 Fees

In light of the above, and after careful consideration of the educational and staffing needs for 2019, the Board has approved a 4.85% average increase in fees for 2019. As was the case last year, the Board has again chosen not pass on to families the full impact of the funding cuts. Careful forward planning by the Board has enabled us to absorb part of that cost and related staffing and related costs

For 2019, the capital levy charged per family will increase from \$1,250 to \$1,550. This increase is directly offset by a much lower average increase (~1.6%) in the tuition component to apportion fees and achieve this average increase of 4.85%. Following a review by the Finance Committee, it was agreed that increasing capital costs, especially with the upkeep of many older buildings in much need of repair is justified. This adjustment of both recurrent and capital costs has been achieved without compromise to educational resourcing needs.

Ensuring access to education

Last year the Board was delighted to announce the establishment of a Bursary Committee. This Committee is seen as an important formal process established to help determine and provide ongoing financial assistance to those families in need. Through a tax-deductible bursary fund, financial assistance will be awarded on a needs basis, to help students who would otherwise be unable to attend Star, have the opportunity to participate in and experience a Star education. We invite parents and the wider community to consider contributing to the fund, which is at the heart of the Presentation tradition of providing support and education for those most in need. For further information, please contact the Finance Office.

We look forward to continuing to offer your daughters an outstanding education, which enables them to be their best selves, in the richness of the Presentation tradition.

Yours sincerely,



Ms Lisa Dwyer

Chair Star of the Sea College Board