Value Added Measures

This year has certainly been an exciting one in the life of the College with the achievement of a number of significant goals. After the completion of the School Renewal and Validation in November last year, we set about developing a strategic renewal plan for the next three to five years and this was published and distributed to parents earlier on in the year. Our Strategic Plan 2007-2011 looks at four broad goals and details the outcomes we are seeking and the strategies to achieve them. Our major achievements in each of these areas for this year are as follows:

**Strengthening our Catholic Identity, Faith Development, Ethos and Spirituality**

This year saw the introduction of new House names reflective of our traditions and history: Kelly, Lambert, MacKillop and Woods. It was the impetus for a surge in school and House spirit as students took on the identity of their new groups, dressing up in House colours for inter-house events and creating a whole range of effective jingles and war cries. For the first time this year we will have the McKnoultys - House Spirit Trophy for the House which has achieved the highest points for spirit and participation in all inter-house sporting and college cultural events.

World Youth Day preparations are well underway and we have a substantial group of 25 students, four teachers and a parent who have committed to attending the celebrations in Sydney next year. Student and staff leaders have all been engaged in professional development or programs in readiness for this international spiritual and religious event. We have also taken part in the Cross and Icon journey, once again making links with other secondary colleges in our region.

The spirit and ethos of Mary MacKillop and the Sisters of St Joseph have been further enhanced this year as we have grown a strong connection to her ideals of compassion, justice, integrity and service. Each fortnight we recognise a student from all year level who is able to uphold the ideals of the college and walk in the footsteps of Mary MacKillop. The recipients of the “Spirit of Mary MacKillop” awards are presented with a bookmark, a certificate and a footprints badge to acknowledge the very special accomplishments of these students.

**Enhancing Teaching and Learning**

In an effort to develop a passion for life and learning which is in keeping with our motto “Ad Altiora” and the priorities of our mission statement, we initiated a Week of Excellence. During the last week of semester one, students were offered numerous activities, taking what they were interested in and then building on the strengths, talents and gifts that they all have through involvement in hands on and experiential classes or workshops.

Students were encouraged to strive for quality and excellence no matter what activities they undertook. Some of the highlights of the week were: discovering social justice through the arts; paper craft activities; visit from a children’s author; artist in residence; clay animation; motivational speakers; lots of cooking; health and sporting activities; excursions to museums, theatre, courts and safe driver training.

Data analysis provided substantial evidence that the week was a huge success. The girls really appreciated being able to choose their activities; that they had fun and enjoyed their selections. The results showed that the girls were excited to learn new and different things that they normally wouldn’t be able to do within the constraints of the regular timetable and usual classes. The week provided opportunities for us to develop closer links with members of our community and other community organisations who participated in the running and the presentation of a variety of sessions. An additional bonus to the week was the improved and increased student attendance across all year levels. One final highlight was that the week was both cost neutral to the College and to parents as costs of activities were covered by generous funding from Brisbane Catholic Education for school renewal activities and resource enhancement. There is no doubt that the girls are looking forward to next year’s Week of Excellence.
Another achievement in the enhancement of teaching and learning has been the cross-curricular perspective to planning for a whole school Literacy and Numeracy Plan and ensuring that we integrate information and communication technologies across the curriculum. These plans will move into an implementation phase in 2008 where issues of literacy, numeracy and technology will be addressed in all subject areas with a view to directly improving the outcomes of students in these areas.

**Develop Relationships, Community and Partnerships**

We are proud of the fact that we are a fully inclusive and a culturally diverse community. In a response to assist students with learning difficulties, disabilities and those form culturally diverse backgrounds, we have taken on the initiative of forming a Student Support Services Committee. The group is comprised of the Learning Support Coordinator, ESL teacher, Counsellor, Campus Minister, a member of Administration, and a Brisbane Catholic Education Student Services Consultant. This team of dedicated people ensure that we have a unified and multi-faceted approach to the support of all students and in particular, those with learning, social or emotional, or physical needs in our college.

Community Day which was celebrated on the last day of term 3 was an opportunity for our girls to experience a sense of belonging to our inclusive and supportive community. It highlighted belonging to House groups, to our college as a whole, to our immediate community and to the wider community through a focus on International Day of Peace celebrations. Girls form the St Vincent de Paul group and Social Justice group engaged students in activities to help raise awareness and funds for the Peace Movement in an effort to put an end to torture in war torn countries and countries with corrupt governments.

Another major initiative this year has come about due to the success of a submission for a “Queensland Community Partnerships Grants Program”. This program has included the introduction of a ‘smart choices’ and ‘healthy eating’ strategy for the tuckshop; extending the range of physical activities; purchasing new sporting equipment and increasing participation in and awareness of healthy lifestyles.

**Maintain effective College Governance, Renewal and Quality Assurance Practices**

There has been a whirlwind of activity around the college this year in the maintenance, refurbishment and painting of areas. One of the houses owned by the college has had a significant facelift to enable its use for staff and college business. This building will now house our student support services and provide a quiet and reflective sacred space for small group prayer. Two buildings have received new roofs and the library has had air-conditioning installed as an initial upgrade which has been partially covered by Investing in Our Schools Small Projects Grant.

The major highlight of the year has been the completion and official opening of the new D Block and refurbished facilities to C Block (lockers/toilets/classroom) and F Block (music/art undercover area). The new Drama Facility, Art room and four general teaching classrooms are certainly quality environments encouraging students to produce quality work. We acknowledge the financial contribution of the Commonwealth Government for granting $380,000 towards the construction of the building and we also both acknowledge and thank the OLC community for the support and contribution of almost $800,000 towards the project.

In all, we are thrilled with our achievements, we are thankful to our dedicated staff, we are appreciative of our parents’ support and that of others in the community; but most of all we are proud of the fine young women who continually strive to do their best, upholding the priorities of tradition, excellence and community.
The College Mission and Vision statement was reviewed at the start of 2005. This was done in consultation with all members of the community, including staff and parents.

The Mission Statement provides all with an understanding of “what we do” and the Vision Statement gives a commitment to “what we hope to achieve” for each student. What the community values in education is made very clear in these two statements.

It is important to note that all policy, goal setting and practices are aligned with the College Mission and Vision statement, reflecting clearly what we value in terms of a high quality education.

This statement is therefore a clear demonstration and measure of the value added to educational outcomes at Our Lady’s College.
Our Lady’s College is a Catholic secondary college established in 1964 by the Sisters of St Joseph. It is a learning community dedicated to the education of young women. We seek to uphold the ideals of Mary MacKillop and to pursue excellence as embodied in the College motto, “Ad Altiora” – Ever Higher.

Our Vision

To create reflective, self-directed young women who live out Christ’s mission contributing positively to a changing world.

Our Mission

Our Lady’s College provides a Catholic education for young women in a caring environment that values tradition, excellence and community.

Our Priorities

Tradition
To promote faith learning that is lifelong and life-giving by proclaiming our Catholic beliefs and traditions.

To uphold the ideals of Mary MacKillop by providing an authentic experience of Catholic Christian Community which includes values of compassion, justice, integrity and service.

Excellence
To pursue excellence in all dimensions of College life by providing teaching and learning of a quality that encourages all students to achieve their full potential.

To provide a curriculum that is flexible and relevant to the needs of our students, so that they develop a passion for life and learning.

Community
To encourage in students a willingness to be responsible for their own actions and decisions.

To nurture the growth of relationships so that all members experience a sense of belonging in a supportive and inclusive community.

To develop an appreciation of our connectedness with the past and our responsibility as custodians of our school environment for the future.