



## **OUR LADY'S ASSUMPTION**

---

### SCHOOL

### **AGM 20 November 2018 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

Good evening and welcome to our Annual General Meeting.

Having taken the pulse for the last eleven months, 2018 has been a very productive and rewarding year for all members of Our Lady's Assumption School community. With the financial constraints placed upon us because of the budget limitations, the increase in teachers' salaries and other increases, I am proud to announce that we will be able to sustain the initiatives implemented this year as well as new, progressive initiatives in 2019.

The parent survey formulated and distributed to parents late 2017 and the second survey early in 2018, gave the Leadership Team sufficient data to determine that there needed to be change at OLA. Although I didn't agree with every comment made in the surveys, by the community members, I respected their comments - the message was loud and clear, there needed to be a change. The one thing I have learnt as a leader, in a number of schools, is that people's perception of something, whether it is fact or fiction, is their reality and it is my responsibility to change that perception, to the best of my ability.

I mentioned to all community members, at the beginning of the year, I was putting together an OLA jigsaw puzzle, which I commenced late 2017 when I was in Balgo Hills. With Di being seconded to Sacred Heart, Goomalling in Term 1, as Acting Principal, Vel was seconded and appointed as the Acting Assistant Principal and we spent most of January together putting the pieces in place.

With Di then seconded to St John Bosco in Term 2, as Acting Principal, so many pieces of the jigsaw scattered on the table, being a leader down, I believed we weren't moving quick enough, so I called for expressions of interest from the staff and Rebecca was appointed as Acting Assistant Principal. As you all know Di returned in Term 3 as Acting Assistant Principal and I

decided to run with three Assistant Principals, a decision I don't regret for a moment, for we, as a team, have worked towards changing the culture, implementing sound teaching pedagogy and building a school of excellence. Although we have a long way to go, I believe we have made huge advances and we will continue to strive for excellence in 2019 and beyond.

### **Learning – Education**

Our Lady's Assumption School has been proactive in changing how we teach and learn. During the year we have identified the need to change our thinking, the school processes and the way we interact with the children. We all learn differently, and it is our duty, as educators and parents as the primary educators, to cater for the needs of our children with the available resources we have. Thanks to the support of the School Board and P&F, we are very well resourced, and we will continue to upskill our staff members as well as continue to purchase new resources to enhance the teaching and learning.

As a Leadership Team, at the beginning of the year, Vel (who is also a very experienced leader having completed Acting Principalships, at a number of schools over the last four years) and I completed a SWOT analysis of where we were as a school and as we commenced putting the pieces together, we very quickly identified the need to address some of the issues and concerns. We also identified the fact we had excellent educators who needed to be led and were happy to be mentored and guided through the change.

Although Vel and I identified many areas requiring attention in all four leadership domains (Learning, Engagement, Accountability and Discipleship), we decided to focus on the main priorities of the school, the school's culture and teaching pedagogy.

In 2018, the following supportive structures formed a foundation for our teaching:

- In depth data analysis;
- Data driven intervention programs addressing the needs of the students;
- Gifted and Talented programs introduced – STRETCH & REACH;
- Gifted and Talented testing for the future Extension Programs;
- Differentiation of the curriculum to cater for all the students in each class;
- Sensory program;
- Early Identification of children at risk, with immediate referral to outside agencies e.g. Speech; O.T, SCDC, Non-Government Schools Psychologist etc;
- Pre – Primary On Entry Assessments;
- Observation Surveys – Year 1 and 2 and students reading below Level 20 in Year 3;
- Whole School Assessment Schedule;
- Literacy Dedicated Time – involving whole class, small group, individual explicit teaching (to the best of our ability);
- Teaching strategies that reflect developmental learning;

- Using Digital Technology to enhance the pedagogy in all areas of the curriculum (in its infancy stage);
- A focus on 21st Century Learning, incorporating Contemporary Learning Spaces (infancy stage);
- Professional Learning Community Meetings;
- Professional Development including opportunities for teachers to engage in learning opportunities, to enhance the development of quality teaching practice and to increase teacher capacity;
- Upskilling of Staff;
- National Quality Standards;
- Learning Sprints (Agile Schools);
- Introduction of the Science Core Learning Area with a focus on STEM;
- Introduction of a School Improvement Team (SIT) to improve our standards.

Staff members have also engaged in Professional Development throughout the year, both whole school and in Professional Learning Communities. The school has used elements of the 'Collaborative Professional Learning' model to guide our professional learning and to continue to grow as educators. These include:

### **2019 Curriculum Focus**

Analysing our data, information taken from the surveys, the Leadership Team's SWOT analysis, observations during the year, Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings, etc. we have identified extending the learning of all students as a major focus. With this in mind, we asked ourselves the question, "*How can the learning of our students be enhanced in all curriculum areas in 2019 and beyond?*".

Moving forward into 2019 and beyond, reflecting our new Strategic Plan, and having redefined roles, our focus will be to move to our next phase and improve on what we have already implemented at OLA. As 'Agents of Change' we will continue to improve on what we have implemented in 2018:

- **Early Intervention:** Staff allocation in the ECE to ensure students experiencing learning difficulties are identified and supported very early;
- **Enterprise & Initiative:** Staff will be allocated roles to formulate, implement and oversee programs such 'Boys and Girls in Education', 'Sensory Program', 'Clubs', 'STEM', 'REACH and STRETCH Programs' – continued, showcasing of students' achievements, Year 6 Canberra Trip (not compulsory and to be funded by the parents – Term 2 holidays), to list a few initiatives;
- **Classroom Teaching:** Greater emphasis on Inquiry Based Learning including the Four Cs (Critical Thinking, Communication, Collaboration, and Creativity) incorporating Deeper

Learning, Digital Literacy, Innovation, Problem Solving, Multiple Intelligences (higher level with the Gifted and Talented programs). Continue with the explicit teaching process already in place;

- **Targeted Intervention Team (Support):** Role redefined to include Learning Sprints and targeting groups of students;
- **Curriculum & Staff Pedagogy Team:** Upskilling of staff in all areas of teaching to ensure every student is given every opportunity to learn at a quicker rate and to their highest potential;
- **Intensive Intervention Support:** Role created to target a number of students – intensive teaching and intervention;
- **Technology and Initiative:** Greater emphasis on teaching and learning using technology with the upskilling of teachers' skills;
- **Communication:** Greater communication with parents regarding their children's progress;
- More showcasing of children's work;
- **Academic Student Tracking Profiles;**
- **Resilience Programs;**
- Greater emphasis on intrinsic motivation over extrinsic motivation;
- 'True Values' tree – including the values of Respect, Integrity, Compassion and Excellence.

### **Analysis of OLA Data**

Through our Professional Learning Community meetings, the staff developed a shared and common understanding of what is meant by 'Increasing the Learning Opportunities of All Students' and what it looked like in the classroom. As a staff we worked on increasing staff awareness of available tools that could be utilised to increase learning at a faster rate, such as 'Learning Sprints'. In analysing our 2018 NAPLAN data, we were pleased to observe that most of the students who achieved in the top bands in Year 3 had made very satisfactory progress from Year 3 to Year 5.

Through further investigation of our 2018 data, it is clear that most OLA students are performing above the All Australian School Mean in all areas, in both Year 3 and Year 5. Further analysis also showed that although we are still above state and national averages in most areas, there are core learning areas we need to focus on in 2019. These being spelling and reading.

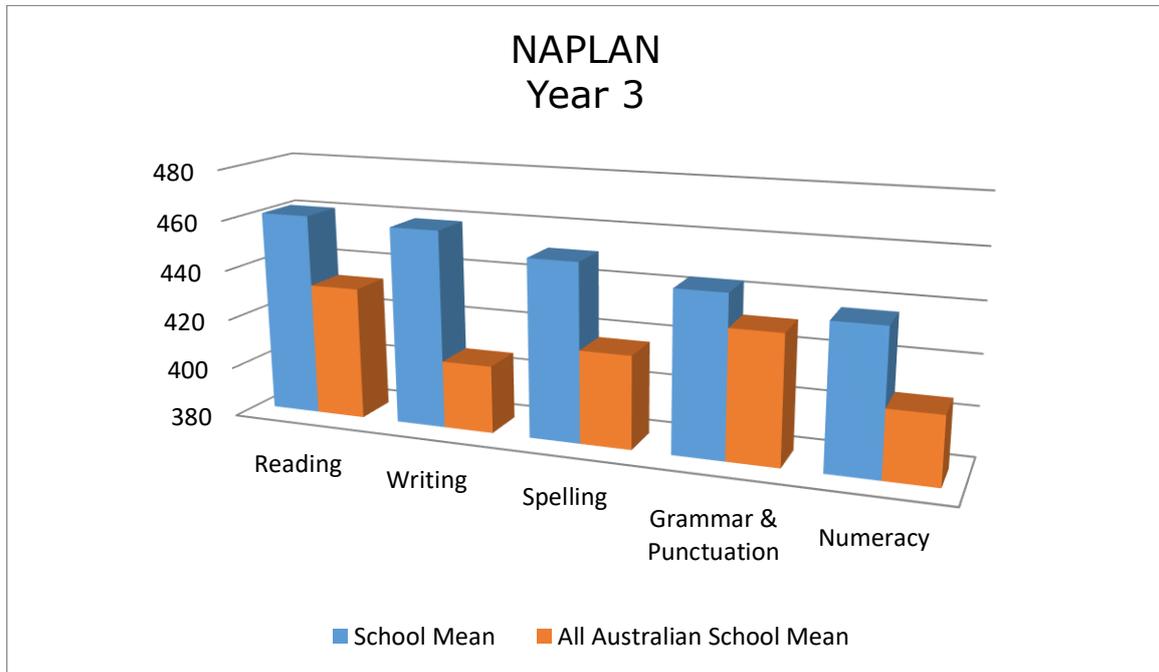
As a staff, we have made a decision to introduce a whole school approach to teaching spelling hence the Spelling Mastery program will be introduced in 2019.

## 2018 NAPLAN Results

### Year Three

Our Year Three students have performed well above the average mean for all Australian schools in all areas of NAPLAN.

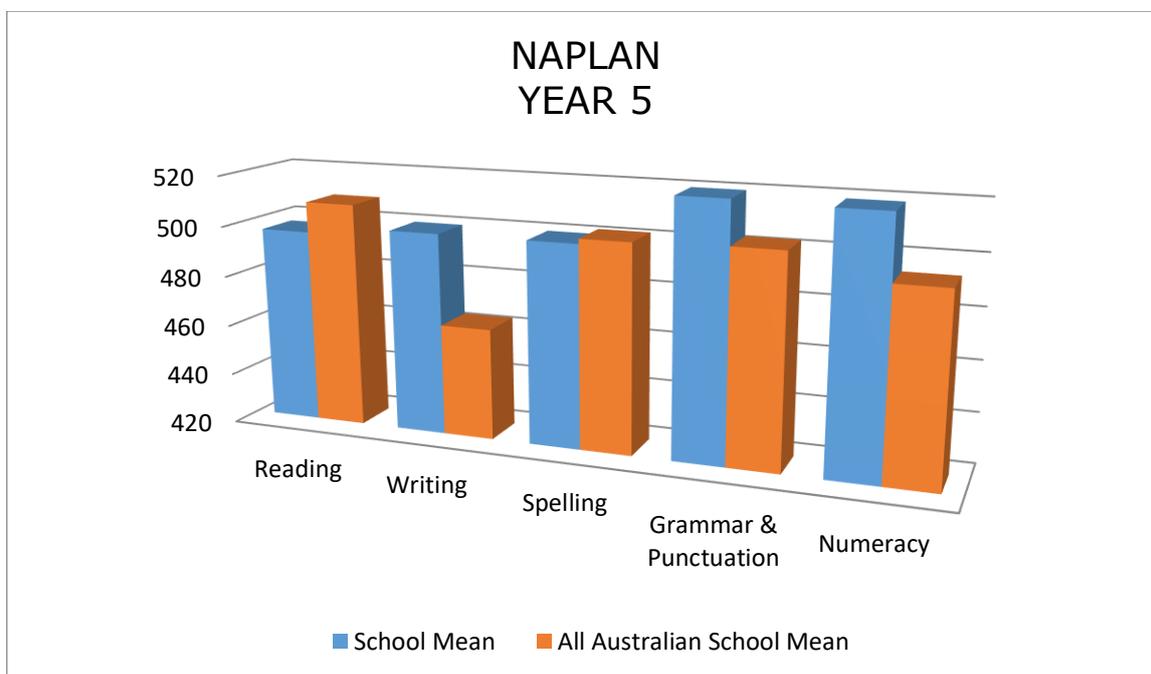
| Year 3<br>2018     | Reading | Writing | Spelling | Grammar &<br>Punctuation | Numeracy |
|--------------------|---------|---------|----------|--------------------------|----------|
| Australian<br>Mean | 433     | 407     | 417      | 431                      | 407      |
| School Mean        | 461     | 459     | 451      | 444                      | 437      |



## Year Five

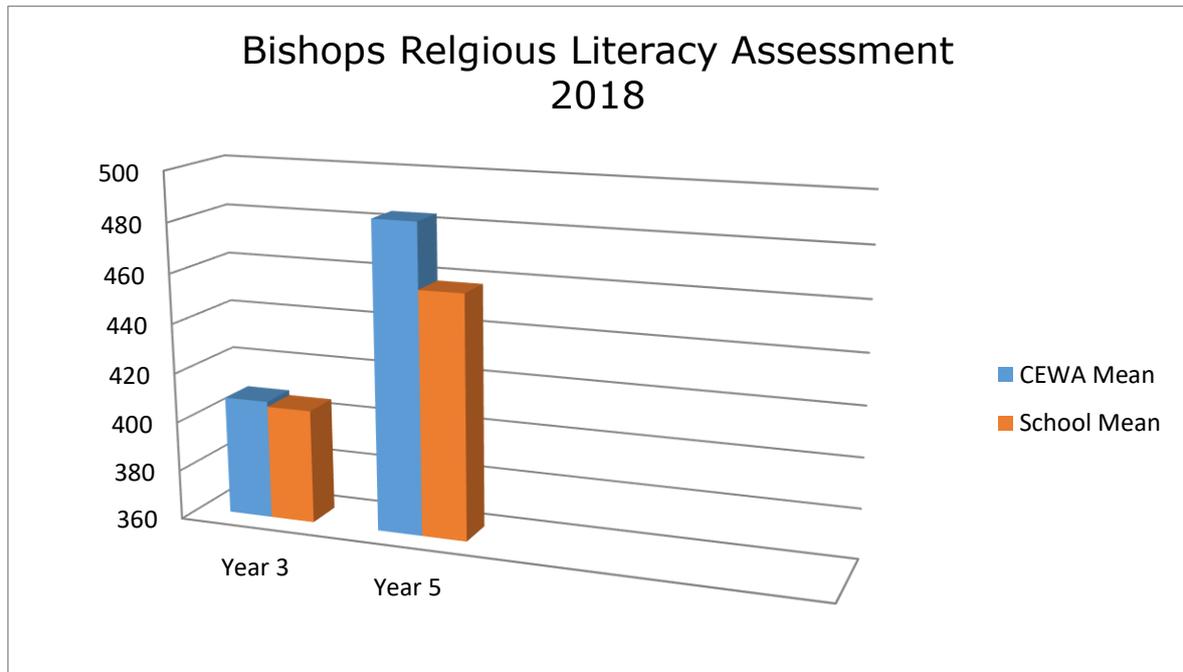
Our Year Five students have performed well above the average mean for all Australian schools in Writing, Grammar and Punctuation and Numeracy. In the area of Reading and Spelling, our Year Five students have performed slightly below the Australian Mean.

| Year 5<br>2018  | Reading | Writing | Spelling | Grammar &<br>Punctuation | Numeracy |
|-----------------|---------|---------|----------|--------------------------|----------|
| Australian Mean | 509     | 464     | 502      | 503                      | 494      |
| School Mean     | 497     | 500     | 500      | 520                      | 519      |



## 2018 Bishops' Religious Literacy Assessment (BRLA) Results

| BRLA 2018 | CEWA Mean | School Mean |
|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| Year 3    | 408       | 406         |
| Year 5    | 484       | 458         |



### Engagement – Community

Parish and school relations have continued to flourish this year with the school and parish supporting each other during many scheduled events. Father Ken, as well as members of the Parish Council and Finance Committee have been very supportive of the school and vice versa. We are extremely lucky and proud to have Father Ken as our Parish Priest and we will continue to work towards creating a stronger connection between the parish and school in 2019.

Over the year we have endeavoured to nurture a community, which is inclusive of everyone. In 2018 we held a number of different events to acknowledge all of the wonderful people in our community. These include (to list a few):

- NAIDOC Week;
- Harmony Week;
- Mothers' Day, Fathers' Day, Grandparents' Day.

Throughout this year, the OLA children have continued to support a variety of charities including the Lifelink program run by the Perth Archdiocese, Caritas, Project Compassion, Catholic Missions, and St Vincent de Paul (Mini Vinnies). These commitments will continue in 2019. Thank you to those who have generously supported these charities and to the staff who coordinated the events.

The students have also participated in a number of events throughout the year, such as the Sacred Saints Interschool Sports, Intraschool/Interschool Sports, Athletics and Swimming Carnivals, the Running and Swimming Clubs, and many other events. We once again look forward to a successful 2019 when the school community will continue to be actively involved in many school community events.

### **Accountability - Stewardship/Governance**

With the school's current 'Three Year Strategic Plan' in its final year in 2018, forward planning, to formalise the 2019 – 2021 OLA Strategic Plan has now been formalised and ratified by the OLA School Board. The OLA School Board members, OLA P&F Executive and the staff have worked closely to formulate the new plan with the process having commenced in Term 2. After many months of discussion, planning and seeking what our school's vision will be for the next three years, I am proud to present to the school community our new 2019 – 2021 OLA Strategic Plan.

Launching the school's new plan, I want to draw your attention to the outcomes we seek over the next three years. These are:

- Strong academic performance and service of others;
- A community that is faith-filled, diverse, engaged and healthy;
- A place that is contemporary, inviting and sustainable.

Many of the points outlined in the new strategic plan have already commenced in 2018 and these, as well as others outlined in the plan, will be implemented in 2019 and beyond. The new OLA Strategic Plan is a 'work in progress' document and can be modified and changed at any time. Regular reporting to the community will occur as we implement the plan. Moving forward, it has already been identified that the need for a school-based Social Worker is of great importance, this role will be introduced in 2019. Our school environment is limited for space and, as a result, we will be introducing staggered recess and lunch breaks so that students have greater access to outdoor space and resources. In addition to this, a buddy system will allow older students to work with younger students in a mentoring capacity.

During the development of the new Strategic Plan, it was identified that OLA's existing six values were not embedded within the school culture. As a result, a review to refine these values and update their relevance in the lives of our students was carried out. The following was decided upon and, in 2019 and beyond, will become the foundation of our daily interactions with others:

- *Respect* – Accepting others for who they are, taking their feelings, wishes and rights into consideration.
- *Integrity* – Being honest and truthful in our actions.
- *Compassion* – Showing others we care by reaching out to those in need and sharing what we have.
- *Excellence* – Striving to be the best that we can be and persisting when faced with challenges.

I would like to state that we, as a school staff and committees, are working extremely hard to increase student achievement and outcomes as well as working towards providing an environment that is conducive to learning (physical and human resources). Having stated the above, if it's 'not broken' then we won't 'fix it'. Many more changes will be made over the next few years to ensure the children receive a quality education. Not everyone will agree with the changes we implement, but the changes we make will be for the greater good. We will continue to strive to implement changes, but it won't happen overnight.

At OLA we are very fortunate to have a dedicated and committed group of staff members who have consistently displayed their commitment to the OLA community. The Staff have worked tirelessly taking on cutting edge educational initiatives, such as Learning Sprints and other initiatives, to further enhance their own teaching skills and to implement 'Strong Teaching Practices' within their classrooms and learning environments. As mentioned previously, the upskilling of staff will continue in 2019 and beyond. The OLA Staff have indicated to me, on many occasions, they're on the OLA Bus and some of them want to start driving the bus. I take this opportunity to publicly state how fortunate we are to have such dedicated, committed and caring staff members and I thank them for their dedication and commitment to the children and families of our school. Mrs Mary Barclay will be returning to OLA in 2019 after a six month secondment to Infant Jesus School. We are extremely excited to have Mrs Barclay return to OLA to share with us what she has learnt during this time.

As schools are ever-changing, we are at that point of the year where we farewell staff who will not be returning in 2019. I would like to express my immense gratitude for their contribution to the OLA community and we will farewell them officially at our End of Year Mass on Wednesday 5 December. Firstly, to Mrs Jenni Hutton who has been a staff member at OLA for 18 years and is retiring at the end of the year, thank you for what you have done to enhance the lives of our children during your time at OLA. To Miss Anne Mannas, who has had a number of different teaching roles throughout her years at OLA, I wish her all the best for her future endeavours. Mrs Peggy McQuillan has been an invaluable member of our Pre-Kindy program, her kindness and gentleness towards our students will be missed as she retires at the end of 2018. I would like to congratulate Miss Ellie Croft who has been appointed as a classroom teacher at Assumption Catholic College, thank you for what you have done for our Year 2 students this semester. Finally, to Mrs Jemima Saunders who has been on secondment to CEWA for the past four years. Mrs Saunders has been

appointed Assistant Principal at St Michael's Bassendean. I would also like to acknowledge Mr Justin Kirry who is continuing at St Luke's in 2019 and Mrs Maryanne Petkovic who is taking 2019 off as well-deserved Long Service Leave.

The school wouldn't be able to operate without the assistance and generosity of the many wonderful parents within our community. As there are too many people to mention individually, I would like to take this opportunity to thank them all for assisting us in so many ways such as in the canteen, library, in the classrooms, at sporting events and on committees.

To the school's Parents & Friends Association, I offer my sincere thanks for their support in raising the necessary funds to complete the tasks as outlined previously in the newsletter. As I have mentioned during the year, the P&F kindly donated the funds for much needed classroom resources. This commitment will continue in 2019 and we thank them sincerely.

I would like to state that it hasn't just been about fundraising in 2018 with the commitment made, by the P&F Executive, to build community. The Parents & Friends provide valuable support to the school, not only financially, but also at a social level, drawing the community together. Some of these, just to name a few, include:

- Welcome Back Family Night;
- School Disco;
- Coordinating of public speakers;
- Fathering Project, etc.

Appreciation and thanks go to our President, Natalee Cunningham, the P&F Executive for their support throughout the year in coordinating events and assisting with items, such as posters, P&F Newsletter and Facebook – where would we be without these wonderful people. I also thank the regular attendees at monthly meetings who have worked tirelessly during the year to ensure they support the school in building community. A concerted effort and spectacular results with the fundraising demonstrated what can be achieved by a group of dedicated people who work together towards a common goal.

During the semester, I have received support and assistance from many individuals and groups within the school and parish communities. I would particularly like to thank all of the Board members for their support and encouragement during the year. They have the responsibility of assisting with the financial management and planning for future resources of the school. Under the very capable leadership of Maria Russo, the Board members have worked diligently to ensure all aspects of the school's educational program and physical resources are maintained at the highest level, as we have come to expect. I thank them all for their untiring efforts. To our retiring member, our Chairperson Maria Russo, I thank you for the unbelievable journey we have travelled together this year. Your input, thoughts and laughter will be sadly missed at Board meetings next year.

## **Discipleship - Faith**

As mentioned previously, the OLA Parish and the school maintain a very close relationship. We continue to build relationships with other local Catholic schools, especially through the Sacred Saints sport program. Father Ken is a wonderful support to staff, students and families.

This year, we have participated in the following:

- Ash Wednesday Celebration;
- Sacramental Programs & Celebrations;
- School/Parish Weekend Masses;
- Celebrations during Holy Week;
- Liturgies and Celebrations;
- Staff Prayer;
- Catholic Mission Celebrations;
- Archbishop's Lifelink Appeal;
- St Vincent de Paul Society;
- Special Feast Day Masses;
- Bishops' Religious Literacy Assessment.

The school and parish continue to work closely together for the instruction and celebration of the sacraments and we are all committed to the notion of celebrating these events as a whole parish group rather than school and parish. We look forward to continuing this tradition in 2019.

Religious Education and Faith Formation are the primary purpose of Catholic schools. In partnership with all parents, the school and parish work together to assist the children to develop knowledge of their Catholic faith and provide opportunities to engage in Catholic practices. The explicit teaching of Church doctrine and traditions, through the Religious Education Units of Work, mandated by the Bishops of Western Australia and the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, are the basis of all Religious Education lessons. In 2019, CEWA will be releasing the revised Religious Education Curriculum Units of Work and staff will be engaged in Professional Development opportunities that will support their delivery of the RE Curriculum to students.

## **Conclusion**

To all those who are leaving the school community at the end of the school year, and to those who have worked so hard in and around the school in a voluntary capacity, I thank you for your involvement and contribution to the school. Your time and effort are very much appreciated by the whole school community.

On your behalf, I would like to express gratitude to our Parish Priest, Father Ken, for his work on the Board and assistance with the educational and spiritual guidance of the children. He is a dedicated and caring priest who is open-minded, friendly and a much-respected pastoral leader

in our community. The school and parish are very fortunate to have such a wonderful spiritual leader and friend.

There are always a number of people who I would like to especially thank for this wonderful year. Firstly, to our Assistant Principals, Vel Erskine, Di Scoble and Rebecca Smith, for their support and dedicated efforts during the year. Our Assistant Principals have worked tirelessly to complete extra responsibilities assigned to them to transform OLA into a school of 'Choice and Excellence'. Their support and professional approach to all that they do have been very much appreciated by all members of our community. I look forward to working closely with Vel Erskine and Mike Morris as Assistant Principals and Di and Rebecca in different roles, in 2019.

I also take this opportunity to thank my Administration Team. From starting at 6am each day, taking work home and answering my emails and calls on weekends, I sincerely thank you all. To the OLA Staff – thank you. It has been a wild ride this year with the OLA Bus driving over gravel roads, speed humps and, on occasion, sealed roads, but we have made the first leg of our very long journey and I have you all to thank for that.

Finally, I thank you all very sincerely for the support and encouragement during the year. It has been an extremely busy year and your support has been invaluable. We are all very fortunate to have such a vibrant community and wonderful children at our school. I wish all families a very safe, happy and Holy Christmas season. May this wonderful community continue to endorse and support our school mantra '*Imagine, Believe, Succeed*' in 2019 and beyond as we strive for excellence. I am looking forward to a wonderful and exciting 2019!

Yours sincerely

**Greg Martin**

**PRINCIPAL**

**20 November 2018**