Director’s Message

A great and joyful event for our Church occurred on 27 April 2014, when Pope Francis canonised Pope John XXIII and Pope John Paul II. Both Popes lived lives of profound witness to Christ and the love of God in their different ways. Their canonisation is a reminder that there are many paths to holiness and each of us must take our own path.

I share with you as a reflection the following words of St John XXIII which can inspire our work in Catholic education:

Consult not your fears but your hopes and your dreams. Think not about your frustrations, but about your unfulfilled potential. Concern yourself not with what you tried and failed in, but with what it is still possible for you to do.

I am aware of the great work undertaken and resources developed by boards and like parent groups in our schools and colleges. I thank you for all you do for Catholic education.

I encourage you to share stories of innovation and/or good practice from your school through this newsletter; contact Patricia Palman at 9267 0228 or ppalman@ceomelb.catholic.edu.au.

Stephen Elder
Executive Director of Catholic Education

Board Chair Network meetings

 Meetings and networks for board chairs
Board chairs may be interested in joining a Catholic Education Office Melbourne (CEOM) network. The primary and secondary board chair networks meet once a term. To join a network, contact Patricia Palman on 9267 0228 or via email ppalman@ceomelb.catholic.edu.au.

The Primary Network meetings (6.00 pm–9.00 pm) scheduled for the rest of the year are: 4 June, 20 August and 29 October at the Catholic Leadership Centre, East Melbourne.

The Secondary Network meetings (6.00 pm–9.00 pm) scheduled are: 18 June (St Monica’s College, Epping), 3 September (Catholic Leadership Centre, East Melbourne) and 12 November (Catholic Leadership Centre, East Melbourne).

Resources

Resources are located on the CEVN website http://cevn.cecv.catholic.edu.au under School Improvement / Parish–School Boards. Additional material and resources are available in 2014 for primary schools and secondary colleges.

Induction for new primary school board members
PowerPoint slides for use by principals are available on the CEVN website under School Improvement / Parish–School Boards.

If there are two–three school boards requiring induction/formation for their board members who can join together to host a session, contact Patricia Palman on 9267 0228 or via email ppalman@ceomelb.catholic.edu.au to discuss.
The Community Tool Box is a free, online resource for those working to build healthier communities and better partnerships. It offers tips and tools which can be easily identified and accessed to meet specific needs. 
Link: http://ctb.ku.edu/en

The School Governance website has resources on topics such as risk management and parent photography at school events to stimulate conversations on your board. 
Link: www.schoolgovernance.net.au

CEOM Parent Engagement in Action: Guide and Tool (2013): This practical and user friendly resource helps schools to know how well they are going with parent engagement, and how to get even better.

The resource is available on the CEOM website www.ceomelb.catholic.edu.au under Learning & Teaching / Parents as Partners / Initiatives / Family School Partnerships.

Building better boards

POLICY REVIEW

Time to revisit the anti-bullying policy
By Nancy Bicchieri, General Corporate Legal Counsel, Legal Services, CEOM. First published in the CEOM Director’s eNews on Vol. 4, No. 2, 14 February 2014

As the new school year begins it is a good time for schools to review their safe schools/anti-bullying policy. There is little doubt that the bullying faced by schools and reported in the media has forced the Australian Government to work closely with state and territory governments on the National Safe Schools Framework as part of a national approach to tackle the issue of safe school communities.

Schools that do not have effective safe schools policies in place that are adhered to and regularly reviewed can become not only a breeding ground for bullying, abuse and threats, but also the target of bullying claims and complex legal proceedings.

Anti-bullying and harassment policy
An anti-bullying and harassment policy enables a school to communicate to its staff, students, parents and the wider school community that bullying is taken seriously and that consequences will apply to any breach of the school’s policy.

Reporting and Responsibilities
Your school's safety and wellbeing policy ought to be well considered and developed in a way that sets out the procedures that are in place for staff when responding to bullying, harassment and aggression. Staff need to be aware of these procedures in a way that leaves little room for doubt in the complaint-handling process. Your school’s policy and procedures must also enable students, staff and parents to confidentially report safety and wellbeing issues to the school.

It is imperative that clear complaint and reporting procedures are in place for staff, students and parents and that your school’s policies deal with documenting such reports in the complaint-handling process. Your school must ensure that it develops, implements and regularly reviews its anti-bullying policy and provides ongoing training and development of teachers, students and the provision of information to parents.

Anti-bullying policy checklist
By way of a guide, the CEOM has developed an anti-bullying checklist (see last page), to provide assistance in helping your school meet the recommended actions under the National Safe Schools Framework. The list of actions and effective practices can be used as a guide for schools to meet the needs of their own school community.

Having a policy is not enough. It needs to be communicated to the school community and training provided as required (we recommend yearly). Awareness days are also effective.

For more information contact Nancy Bicchieri on 9267 0228 or via email nbicchieri@ceomelb.catholic.edu.au.

See also the CEVN website http://cevn.cecv.catholic.edu.au under School Improvement / Parish-School Boards for the ‘Policy development and review’ section of A Guide for Parish Education Boards.

Reflect and consider

GOOD GOVERNANCE – CORE DOCUMENTS
A working definition of board governance may read as follows:

Governance is a framework which includes appropriate structures, documented principles, policies, processes and reporting requirements to achieve the common goals and objectives of the board. An appropriate framework will incorporate accountability and transparency.

Catholic Education Office Melbourne www.ceomelb.catholic.edu.au

Consider your board constitution?
- Does each board member have a copy of the constitution?
- Is the constitution dated and ratified (primary boards by the Parish Priest; secondary boards by the appropriate authority, e.g. for regional colleges by the Archbishop in accordance with CEOM procedures)
- Is there a regular review process? When was it last reviewed?

Consider your board handbook?
- Are the board’s principles, policies, processes and reporting requirements clearly documented and accessible to the board members?
- Is there regular updating and a review process? When was it last reviewed?
- Is it used for induction of new board members and for board formation activities?

Victorian Catholic Schools Parent Body

STAY CONNECTED – Access key resources
✓ Visit the V CSPB website – parents and schools have collated resources available in one place on the following topics:
  - Bullying
  - Catholic Identity
  - Curriculum
  - Parent Engagement
  - Parenting
  - Safe Schools.

✓ Place a link to the V CSPB website on your school website.

✓ Subscribe to the V CSPB newsletter online.

✓ Participate in online surveys.

✓ Activate your very own reserved V CSPB email account. Check that the on-forwarding email address is still current. If assistance is required please contact the IT Helpdesk on 9267 0422 or via email ictsupport@ceomelb.catholic.edu.au.

The Holy Spirit ‘is the soul, the lifeblood of the Church and of every Christian: He is God’s love, which makes our hearts his home and enters into communion with us. The Holy Spirit is always with us, always in us, in our hearts’.

The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are traditionally: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of God.

‘This is wisdom: It is the grace of being able to see everything with the eyes of God,’ he [Pope Francis] explained. This means seeing the world, situations and problems with God’s eyes, rather than as ‘we want to see them’.

The Pope emphasized that wisdom’s source is ‘intimacy with God’: Our intimate relationship as children of the Father gives us wisdom.

The Holy Father explained that when we are in communion with God, the Holy Spirit ‘transfigures our heart’. The Holy Spirit makes us wise.

Pope Francis added that a wise person can discern when something is of God and when something is not.

‘If we listen to the Holy Spirit, it teaches us this path of wisdom, he gifts us wisdom which is seeing with God’s eyes, hearing with God’s ears, loving with God’s heart, judging things with God’s judgment. These are the things that the Holy Spirit gifts us and we can all have this. We just have to ask the Holy Spirit.’ ‘.. with this wisdom, we can move forward, build the family, the Church and we can all be sanctified.’

Pope Francis General Audience Vatican City 9 April 2014 (Zenit.org)
## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY CHECKLIST

### FOR SCHOOLS

**YOUR BULLYING POLICY MUST:**

- Make a clear statement on the school’s stance on bullying, harassment and violence
- Define what constitutes bullying, harassment, discrimination, violence, cyber-bullying and sexual harassment and use language consistent with the Equal Opportunity legislation (additional definitions can be found in the *National Safe Schools Framework Resource Manual*)
- Provide information about the signs of bullying
- Be reviewed annually and involve parents and students in the process

**IN ACTIONS RESPONDING TO INCIDENTS, YOUR BULLYING POLICY SHOULD:**

- Allow for flexibility depending on the nature, severity and extent of bullying in light of natural justice principles
- Inform parents about serious incidents involving their child
- Follow up victims and perpetrators

**COMPLAINT-HANDLING PROCESSES AND REPORTING MUST CONSIDER:**

- How is bullying reported?
- Who is it reported to and when must it be reported?
- Responsibilities of the principal, staff, students and parents

**YOUR BULLYING POLICY SHOULD ‘BE COMMUNICATED’ IN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY BY:**

- Ensuring students/parents/teachers/the community receives a copy of the policy (and consider how, and when a copy is provided)
- Making sure the Policy is placed on the school’s website and is communicated regularly (for instance in assembly)

**RECORD POLICY IMPLEMENTATION BY:**

- Documenting processes and forms used such as action plans, reporting forms, bullying register, follow-up documentation forms, advice to parents/students/staff

**PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION:**

- Ensure all prevention, intervention and post-intervention strategies that are used are well documented
- Document how bullying is addressed through the curriculum

**TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT:**

- Provide training and development to teachers, parents and students (and decide who will provide this training and development, as well as how and when)
- When/how will training and development be updated?