St James College
A Catholic School
in the Edmund Rice Tradition

Part A
ANNUAL REPORT 2015

Part B
ANNUAL REPORT FOR
EDMUND RICE EDUCATION AUSTRALIA
PART A: Annual Report
- Introduction
- Enrolment
- Curriculum Overview
  - Diversity and Flexibility
  - Planning and Policy Implementation
  - Community Relations
  - School Environment and Culture
  - Timetable Structures
  - Field Studies
  - Partnerships
  - Overseas Student Program
- Reporting to Parents
- Academic Outcomes
- Student Retention
- Student Attendance Rate
- Special Programs that produce Improved Student Outcomes
- Year 12 Post-School Destinations
- Pastoral Care Programs and Social Climate of the College
- Strategies to respond to Bullying
- Co-curricular Activities
- Capital Development
- Value-Added Aspects at St James College
- Staff
  - Teaching Staff
  - Staff Development Priorities 2015
  - Attendance Rate for Teachers
- Strategies Used for Involving Parents
- Information Communication Technologies
- Strategic Actions for 2015

PART B: School Report for EREA
- Preamble
- Section 1: College Board Report
- Section 7: Narrative
- Section 8: Awards Night 2015: Principal’s Address
St James College
http://www.stjamescollege.qld.edu.au//AboutUs
http://www.erea.edu.au

St James College
201 Boundary Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000
Ph: +61 7 3230 8600
Fax: +61 7 3839 3058
Email: school@stjamescollege.qld.edu.au
Website: www.stjamescollege.qld.edu.au
ABN: 96 372 268 340

Enrolling: Years 7 to 12

Queensland Curriculum Assessment Authority, Registration number: 183
http://www.stjamescollege.qld.edu.au//Curriculum.htm

Registered Training Organisation (RTO) number: 30526
http://www.stjamescollege.qld.edu.au//Curriculum/Vocational Education.htm

Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) number: 00715J
ANNUAL REPORT 2015

This Annual Report for 2015 is published to provide a ‘snap shot’ of the College for parents and other interested parties. Hard copies of this Report are available upon request from the College Office. The Annual Report 2015 is posted on the College website (www.stjamescollege.qld.edu.au).

INTRODUCTION
St James College, founded in 1868 is a co-educational Catholic School in the Edmund Rice Tradition. It draws strength from more than 200 years of educational mission of the Christian Brothers nourished by the Charism of Edmund Rice. It is part of a system of fourteen schools and flexible learning centres in Queensland and an association of forty-two schools nationally, administered by Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA).
Edmund Rice Education Australia:  http://www.erea.edu.au/
Oceania Province of the Christian Brothers:  http://www.edmundrice.org/

Foundational to the distinctive nature of the education provided for all students at St James are the following four core documents:
St James College Mission Statement  (www.stjamescollege.qld.edu.au)
St James College Strategic Plan  (www.stjamescollege.qld.edu.au)

All school policies, protocols and procedures are developed in association with these documents.

ENROLMENT
The total 2015 enrolment (as the August 2015 Census) of the College in full time equivalent students was 420. The breakdown of the numbers is shown below. Domestic = Permanent residents of Australia; FFPOS = International students on study visas; ATSI = Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students; SWD = Students with Disability (verified)

OVERVIEW OF ENROLMENTS
August Census 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Group</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>108</td>
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<tr>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>105</td>
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<tr>
<td>FFPOS</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>ATSI</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>SWD</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CURRICULUM OVERVIEW
Students are encouraged to develop positive attitudes and perceptions about the classroom climate and tasks and
to develop good habits of mind so as to acquire and integrate knowledge, further extend this knowledge and to
use it meaningfully. Students learn to integrate the spiritual, emotional and practical dimensions of their being
through the acquisition and application of core thinking skills to learning in real life contexts. A holistic approach
to education provides every opportunity for learners to flourish and achieve their unique potential. In short, the
College provides a curriculum that is relational, responsive and relevant and as a result liberating.

http://www.stjamescollege.qld.edu.au//Curriculum/Overview
http://www.stjamescollege.qld.edu.au//Curriculum/Years 7-10
http://www.stjamescollege.qld.edu.au//Curriculum/Years 11-12

St James College offers a dynamic and innovative curriculum with flexible curriculum access structures that have
the capacity to meet the diverse needs and interests of our learners. An extensive curriculum and support program
tailored to meet specific needs are designed to support all students at all stages of their learning. To ease the
transition from primary schools and based upon the latest understandings of the needs of students in the middle
school, Year 7 and 8 students engage with learning in a foundation program studying all mandatory curriculum
areas as stipulated in the Australian Curriculum. In addition to the core subject areas of English, Mathematics,
Science, Religious Education, History and Physical Education, students in Years 9 and 10 students can select
semester elective courses from our broad offerings. Some of these courses are offered across the two year levels
allowing students to work at various levels regardless of which year level they belong.

In the senior school, St James College offers a very extensive and flexible curriculum. Students can choose from
academic curriculum streams to achieve their Overall Position (OP) which leads to direct entry to university from
school, or from Vocational Education and Training studies that lead to TAFE, apprenticeships and/or directly to
employment. A further option is a carefully tailored combination of academic and industry studies which would
include a one day a week Industry Placement. The College employs two FTE guidance counsellors who assist in
tailoring each student’s individual study program and personal development.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Level</th>
<th>CORE</th>
<th>ELECTIVE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 7/8</td>
<td>Religious Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Science</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>History</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Geography</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Art</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Literacy</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Design Technology</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>French</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cooking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health &amp; Physical Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sport</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Personal Development</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Years 9 – 10</td>
<td>Religious Education</td>
<td>Business</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Information Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>Design Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>History</td>
<td>Drama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>Outdoor Recreation &amp; Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sport (Yr 9 only)</td>
<td>Cooking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Work Skills (Yr 10)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Level</th>
<th>OP Subjects</th>
<th>Authority Registered Subjects</th>
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<tr>
<td>Years 11 - 12</td>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>English Communication</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Visual Art</td>
<td>Catering Practices</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>Prevocational Mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>Religion &amp; Ethics</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drama</td>
<td>Visual Art Studies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Language</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English as a Second Language</td>
<td>Languages studied externally (may include Chinese, French, Italian, Korean, etc)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Information Technology Systems</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Legal Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mathematics A</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mathematics B</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Modern History</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physics</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Study of Religion</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Languages studied externally (may include Chinese, French, Italian, Korean, etc)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Certificate I Hospitality</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Certificate II Hospitality (Kitchen Operations)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Certificate III Hospitality (Commercial Cookery)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Certificate I Construction</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Certificate I Furnishing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Certificate II Engineering Pathways</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Certificate II Outdoor Recreation (Multiple Activities)</td>
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<td>Certificate II Sport Coaching</td>
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<td>School-based Traineeships</td>
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<td>Certificate Courses</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TAFE Course Offerings</td>
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</table>
1. **Diversity, Flexibility, Inclusivity**

In a tradition firmly established at St James, vibrant and dynamic learning programs have been available to meet the learning needs of a diverse community. A committed teaching and support staff have embraced the possibilities of the flexible curriculum structures at the College to creatively design the most appropriate learning experiences so that the individual learner is the prime concern in developing individual learning programs.

The College is privileged with a culturally diverse enrolment including 17 international students on study visas. In addition, the College provides a particularly welcoming environment to students with learning differences and disabilities, as well as students from over 40 different cultural backgrounds, many who have English as their 2nd, 3rd or 4th language. It has focused on the opportunities presented by such a diverse community to encourage engagement through celebrating our diversity, highlighting connections and building capacity to appreciate and negotiate differences. Learning programs and community celebrations promote tolerance, empathy and the importance of social capital by building cross-cultural competencies and cultural literacies, leading to a sense of global citizenship. Themes in study programs explore issues of global forces, critiques of cultural clashes and sensitivities of differing value systems. Community activities promote participation and engagement and encourage an active, personal commitment to building a peaceful and prosperous future for all. St James is an inclusive and welcoming community providing students with the skills to negotiate and manage the complexities of globalization.

2. **Planning and Policy Implementation**

Every five years the College engages in an accreditation process through the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board (NSSAB). This process occurred in 2015 with full accreditation being awarded by NSSAB early in 2016. Every five years a School Renewal program is initiated and conducted by Edmund Rice Education Australia. The College is due for its next School Renewal program in 2016. A new Strategic Plan was implemented in 2012, with an Annual Plan process for each subsequent year to 2017 when the overall plan will be reviewed.

Capacity is built at the College through ongoing Professional Development. The Queensland College of Teachers mandates 20 hours per year of PD for teachers through the Continual Professional Development framework. In addition, EREA in association with Oceania Province of the Christian Brothers provides professional development and spiritual renewal opportunities through such programs as *Into the Deep, Galilee, Break Every Yoke, Mt Sinai, New Street Revisited* and *Mt Sion*. As well, staff have the option of engaging in a variety of Immersion Experiences mounted each year by EREA to such places as India, South Africa and Ireland.

College policies, developed locally and also in association with Edmund Rice Education Australia and Qld Catholic Education Commission, are posted on the College website and reveal procedures and practices that support and inform a vibrant pastoral and educational environment. Policies are reviewed regularly through internal processes. In addition EREA policies are reviewed through a Policy Review Committee on which the Principal of St James College sits.

3. **Community Relations**

The College employs an Indigenous Support Officer, trained and experienced teachers in English as a Second Language and teacher-aides to assist in teaching and learning processes across the school.

Immersion programs in other cultures are available through EREA as well as through school programs such as the annual East Timor Immersion available to Year 11 students.
The College has a unique relationship with the Salvation Army through the Youth Outreach Service (YOS) in Fortitude Valley to conduct, staff and resource the educational facility for student clients at YOS. The service is due to relocate from the start of 2016 to a site in School St, Spring Hill, adjacent to St James College.

In addition, students from Year 10 engage with business and industry groups as part of the Beacon Foundation, a program that develops in young people preparation for the world of work.

Other activities that aid strong and positive relations with the community include student participation in Brekky Van for the homeless (two mornings a week throughout the year), Project Compassion and other community fundraising events, the Lord Mayor’s Youth Advisory Council, International Women’s Day, Women of Substance seminars, multicultural events (see below), Indigenous Dance Group, ERA (Edmund Rice Advocacy) for Change, etc.

4. School Environment and Culture

The College is an inclusive yet diverse community. It enrols students from a wide range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds, including: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islands, Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, New Zealand, Thailand, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Taiwan, China, Korea, Japan, India, Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Eritrea, Italy, Philippines, South Africa, Uganda, Burundi, Somalia, Afghanistan, Iran, Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, etc.

Students with special needs including learning differences and disabilities are accepted and their presence valued within inclusive education practice in the classroom.

The Cultural Gala Night is an annual event featuring performances from dance, vocal and instrumental groups representing the many cultural groups in the school, and attracting a large community audience.

Recognising and celebrating National Days, International Days and other annual observances in prayer, liturgy and celebrations are also an important feature of the school community.

Students from all cultures are encouraged to participate in our own ‘World Cup Soccer’ competition for boys and girls in National teams. Likewise, international students are encouraged to participate in inter-school sporting teams, inter-house events and chess championships.

Initiatives to promote cross-cultural connections at St James College contribute to quality outcomes for all students at the College. For students with different cultural backgrounds the initiatives specifically encourage engagement with the broad College community, promoting a sense of belonging, inclusion and welcome. This provides the motivation to make connections, building relationships with staff and other students, appreciating and negotiating differences and managing complexities of communication across cultures. The increased communication and engagement also has considerable benefits in developing English language skills leading to increased capacity to communicate on more complex topics leading to greater inter-cultural understandings and cultural literacy.

5. Timetable Structure – Years 7 - 10

To ease the transition into secondary schooling, especially for a group of learners from so many different backgrounds, a foundation studies approach is adopted in Year 7 and 8 so that students quickly develop significant relationships with specific teachers. Modular units for elective studies in particular in Years 9 and 10 recognize that students perform at varying levels in each Key Learning Area and that this flexible arrangement provides students with the capacity to select courses of study that meet individual needs through this crucial two year period. Use of 100 minute class sessions allow for reduced movement around the school, for concentrated and prolonged classwork in more practical subjects particularly where additional time is of the essence. Subdivision of the 100 minute sessions into alternating 50 minute time slots at various
times during the timetable cycle allow for the more frequent contact requirements of such subjects as Mathematics, Science and English.

6. **Timetable Structure – Years 11 & 12**
In the Senior School students select courses that will prepare each for the many post-school options now available. While many of our students are successful in direct entry to university from school through their study of OP subjects, just as many students prepare for entry to TAFE Colleges and other training providers, apprenticeships and traineeships and directly into careers in the workforce through their study of Vocational Education and Training Certificate courses. A 2-week timetable structure over an 8-day cycle with two alternating Wednesday programs operates. The Wednesday program allows for VET students to engage in work placement without missing out on lessons. All class-contact subjects are programmed throughout the other 8 days of the cycle.

7. **Field Studies**
Learning in classrooms is augmented with excursions into the community, particularly taking advantage of easy access to important institutions the CBD location of the College affords. Students visited Parliament House, the Law Courts, City Hall, the Queensland Museum, Queensland Art Gallery, local live theatre companies, Queensland Gallery of Modern Art. They explore sites important to the early history of Colonial Brisbane. Students abseil on the Kangaroo Point Cliffs, kayak in Breakfast Creek, take swimming and life-saving classes in local swimming pools and, broader afield, they have the opportunity to develop skills learned in Outdoor Recreation classes through wilderness experiences in the Glasshouse Mountains, Mt Barney, Girraween National Park and the College’s own facility at Jimmies on the Dam outside Boonah. Senior Health and Physical Education students access training facilities at the University of Queensland and other local sporting and athletic institutions.

8. **Partnerships**
The enrolment profile of the College continues to change with the developing trends in demographic characteristics of the population of Brisbane as a whole. Proactive strategic alliances have continued to be developed with other organizations to identify the needs of the community and the changing demands on St James.

A very successful partnership with the Youth Outreach Service (YOS) of the Salvation Army in Fortitude Valley has seen the development of a learning program where homeless youth, enrolled at St James, are supported in a specifically-designed program at YOS. This program operates four days a week and is staffed by teachers employed at St James College.

Newly-arrived families who have escaped persecution or worse in African nations, the Middle East and in some Asian countries and who have settled in Brisbane on Permanent or Temporary Protection Visas or who are living community detention as asylum seekers while awaiting the outcome of visa applications have added to the diverse student enrolment at St James. These students and their families are supported by community groups such as Red Cross, Multicultural Development Association, Mercy Family Services and Qld Program for the Survivors of Torture and Trauma (QPASST). In school, they receive support from the College’s Pastoral team and ESL staff at the College.

In the field of Vocational Education and Training, the College has developed a highly-successful partnership with the Beacon Foundation to deliver a training program for students in Year 10 in regard to preparation for the world of work.

9. **Overseas Student Program**
2015 saw a similar enrolment pattern to 2014 in the number of International students attending St James. The students who do come contribute to the rich cultural diversity of the College. The Deputy Principal together with the Coordinator of International Students participate in various overseas marketing ventures, including marketing trip to China.
REPORTING TO PARENTS
Reports are forwarded to parents at the end of each term. Mid-Semester reporting formats are used for Terms 1 and 3, with formal Full Semester Reports at the end of Term 2 and Term 4. National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) results are published on the MySchool website each year. Year 12 results from the previous year are made available to parents at Parent Information Nights, Board Meetings and Parents and Friends Association Meetings. Regular Parent-Teacher Interviews are held early in Term 2 and Term 3.

ACADEMIC OUTCOMES
NAPLAN Results Year 7 and 9 2015
The National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) assesses all students in Australian schools in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. Visit the MySchool website.

The chart below displays average NAPLAN scores for each domain in 2015. The selected school’s scores are displayed in blue. Also displayed are average scores for statistically similar schools and all Australian schools. The coloured bars indicate whether the selected school’s scores are above (green) or below (red) the other scores. That the school’s scores show a red line, the indication is that the students performed on average below schools of a similar nature (as defined by ACARA) and all schools in general. The performance of students at St James largely reflects the nature of the enrolment at Year 9 level. Many students are from refugee and non-English speaking backgrounds, where English may be a second, third or fourth language. In addition, the school has many students who are either verified as Student With Disability or identified according to the criteria as designated by the Disability Discrimination Act. As such, students struggle with the demands of the NAPLAN testing program. Parents should be wary of placing too much emphasis on these results as a reflection of the literacy/numeracy development program at the College.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 2015 NAPLAN Year 7 Results</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Scores</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sim</td>
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<tr>
<td>526</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 2015 NAPLAN Year 9 Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Scores</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>557</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Year 12 Outcomes

**Outcomes for 2015 Year 12 Students (Enrolment 100)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of students awarded a QCE</th>
<th>84</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of who received an Overall Position</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of OP-eligible students with an OP 1 - 15</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total VET qualifications achieved by students: Cert I = 84, Cert II = 66, Cert III=11</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Year 12 students who are completing or have completed a SAT or were awarded one or more of the following: QCE, VET qualification</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of QTAC applicants (excl. visa students) receiving an offer</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**STUDENT RETENTION RATES  2015** (using August Census figures)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 10</th>
<th>Year 12</th>
<th>Year 10 – 12</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Enrol</td>
<td>Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>2011</td>
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<td>2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Apparent retention rates are above the 100% mark due to enrolment of International Students and a significant intake of students from other schools in Years 11 and 12.*

**STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE**

The average student attendance rate (Years 7 – 10) as sampled during Term 3, 2015:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Attendance %</th>
<th>Non-Indigenous Attendance %</th>
<th>Indigenous Attendance %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>87.84%</td>
<td>88.83%</td>
<td>78.03%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This number excludes students who terminated enrolment during the year or who were absent for extended explained absence such as overseas exchange programs or serious illness during this period.
SPECIAL PROGRAMS THAT PRODUCE IMPROVED OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS

  A Behaviour Pathway detailed in the Student Diary provides clear guidelines that direct the handling of behavioural issues. Students gain recognition for their efforts in classwork, homework, positive behaviours and cooperation through a merit system. Students nominated for Merit Awards have these presented at House Assemblies. In addition, students can qualify for Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards which recognise exceptional standards in the areas listed above.

Restorative Practice:  This is viewed as a key program in ensuring students are engaged positively and productively in their schooling. Restorative Practice aims at building personal confidence, resilience, positive relationships, responsibility and accountability. Particularly effective in conflict resolution, restorative strategies aim at identifying the issues or the problem, who has been affected and what has to happen to make things better. As such restorative practice is transformative rather than punitive.

Strategies to respond to bullying:  The College has a comprehensive Anti-Bullying Policy. Ref. [www.stjamescollege.qld.edu.au/about us/school policies](http://www.stjamescollege.qld.edu.au/about us/school policies). Bullying is handled through the House Pastoral Care structure and involves carefully constructed restorative practices processes involving the students' Pastoral Coordinators, senior student leaders and, where appropriate the Assistant Principal Pastoral. A 'no tolerance' policy exists where physical fighting or abuse of teachers are concerned. Suspension is the immediate consequence of such behaviour. Re-entry after suspension is an important step in the restorative process and involves interviews with parents and the students concerned before a student is permitted to return to normal classes.

Vertical House Pastoral Care:  Students are allocated to homerooms structured around a four-house Pastoral Care system, accommodating students from Years 8 to 12 in each group. Along with providing students with opportunities to build relationships across the entire school community, students arriving throughout the academic year are quickly integrated increasing a sense of belonging, encouraging active engagement.

Individual Education Programs (IEP) and Educational Adjustment Programs (EAP):  Students with verified learning differences/disabilities have programs developed for them in consultation with the Head of Faculty Teaching and Learning, classroom teachers, ESL consultants, parents and community liaison officers. Disabilities include Physical and Intellectual Impairments, Autistic Spectrum Disorders, Speech Language Disorders, Social-Emotional Disorders. These students are engaged in mainstream classroom groups and supported by Learning Support staff, ensuring social and academic inclusion.

Retention Rates:  Year 7 to 12 retention rates are consistently over 100%. This is a result of meeting the needs, interests and abilities of students, whether they commence in Year 7 or transfer to St James after difficulties at other schools for a significant number of students. St James is highly geared to ensure our capacity to tailor individual learning programs for each student is maintained. The high retention rate reflects also the enrolment of International visa students as well as students from other schools in the senior years.

Youth Outreach Service:  Students who have become completely disengaged from school or any form of training or employment and who are isolated from social and family networks are re-engaged through our partnership with the Salvation Army at the Youth Outreach Service. The College conducts the Education Program at YOS which is located at the Salvation Army Headquarters in School St, immediately adjacent to the College.
Tracking Student Performance: Years 11 and 12 students are tracked by the Senior Coordinator and Years 7, 8, 9 & 10 students by the Middle School Coordinator, both in association with the Deputy Principal (Studies). Students are counselled individually, programs are developed to meet the learning needs of groups of students and parents were encouraged to become more active in their involvement with student learning intervention and improvement.

Queensland Core Skills Test: a training program operates from Terms 1 – 3 and is designed to prepare Years 11 and 12 students for the Queensland Core Skills Test. Students are trained in approach strategies, time management and in ensuring appropriate responses to specific questions were developed.

Australian Curriculum Implementation: This fully implemented in all relevant subject areas.

YEAR 12 POST SCHOOL DESTINATION

Note that the 2015 Next Step Report will be added in to this Annual Report in July 2016.

This report is based on the findings of the Queensland Government Next Step survey, which targeted all students who completed Year 12 and gained a Senior Statement in 2015, whether they attended a Government, Catholic or independent school, or a TAFE secondary college. The Office of the Government Statistician conducted the survey between March and May 2015, approximately six months after the young people left school. Responses were predominantly collected via computer-assisted telephone interviewing with a paper-based survey collected from a small number of students for whom telephone details were not available.

PASTORAL CARE PROGRAMS & SOCIAL CLIMATE OF THE COLLEGE

The primary focus of pastoral care at St James College is student care, management and discipline with an emphasis on preventative care rather than punitive or reactionary discipline. Preventative care is best achieved through:

- The holistic development of individual students
- Close supervision and monitoring
- Supportive and caring relationships between students and staff.

The holistic development of students is achieved by a team of House Deans, Home Room Teachers, Counsellors and the whole staff working together to create a safe, supportive learning environment within a vertical house system. A House Dean is responsible for the overall pastoral care of the students in each of the four Houses. The student is then allocated to a House Home Room Teacher who takes a particular interest in the students’ academic, social, emotional and spiritual welfare. These messages are reinforced through the weekly College and House Assemblies which also serve to enhance House and College culture. An extensive guidance and counselling program is also offered to provide students and their families with the support they need to lead healthy, fulfilling, productive and responsible lives.

St James College also provides many opportunities for students to experience and develop an awareness of its mission as a Catholic School in the Edmund Rice Tradition. The College Camps, Retreat Programs, Immersion Experiences, social justice and multicultural initiatives enable students to grow in self-confidence and deepen their personal relationships. They also allow the students to develop a personal and group understanding of the spiritual value of each person they meet and realize one person can make a difference in the Edmund Rice Tradition.

The Behaviour Management Policy is designed to develop these skills in students as well, although using the mistakes that have been made as a learning opportunity. Our Restorative Justice Principles which underpin
the reactive responses to these situations ensure that the student develops an understanding of the relationship between actions and consequences whilst maintaining the dignity of all those involved.

The key to learning and teaching at any school is underpinned by high attendance. The College has embraced the “Every Day Counts” philosophy of the Queensland Government and has developed a policy that promotes perfect attendance through proactive and reactive strategies whilst supporting families in supporting their children in attending school.

**Personal Development Program:** As a Catholic School in the Edmund Rice Tradition, St James has a responsibility to educate the whole person. The Edmund Rice Charter provides the school with a blue print for values education and the global objectives of the Personal Development Curriculum are built from them. In addition, the College has adapted the Personal and Social Capabilities from the Australian Curriculum to underpin this program and its resultant reporting. The course is delivered to students in Years 7-10 inclusive as part of the broader Religious Education Curriculum. In addition to class time students are formed through these objectives by College Assemblies, Year Level Assemblies and the Camp and Retreat Programs. All of which form a part of the wider Student Formation Program which seeks to nurture and engage the hearts and minds of students who are committed to just relationships in our way of living and promote justice in our world. By completing the program the students should:

**Liberating Education**
- Be shown the benefits of taking every educational opportunity
- Understand their rights and responsibilities
- Become life-long learners
- Understand their own strengths and weaknesses as learners
- Prepare themselves for a positive working life
- Understand the benefits of a healthy mind and body

**Gospel Spirituality**
- Be able to see the effects of living out gospel values
- Appreciate and enact Jesus as leader
- Understand the importance of a just world and actively promote it
- Become peacemakers in their relationships and the wider world

**Incusive Community**
- Understand the importance of a diverse local, national and global community
- Be able to connect with people from diverse cultures, genders and ethnicities
- Be empowered to build positive and constructive relationships
- Respect and empathise with people with disabilities

**Justice and Solidarity**
- Have a preference for the poor and marginalised
- Advocate for the interests of those in the majority world
- Understand the whilst education is a right they have the responsibility to extend that right to all
- Seek justice in their relationships
- Participate in the healing of restorative justice

**Self Awareness**
- Recognise emotions
- Develop a growing knowledge of self
- Develop and positive perception of self
- Improve their self worth

**Self Management**
- Learn how to appropriately express emotions
• Develop self discipline
• Understand the benefits of and enact goal setting and tracking plans
• Be able to work independently
• Develop confidence, resilience and adaptability

Social Awareness
• Understand the meaning and manifestations of empathy
• Appreciate diversity
• Contribute to civil society, advocacy and service to others
• Understand relationships

Social Management
• Communicate effectively
• Work collaboratively
• Make decisions constructively
• Resolve conflicts restoratively
• Build and maintain positive and helpful relationships
• Lead effectively

The College’s Personal Development Curriculum is being delivered through the Religious Education Program in Years 7-10. The program has the following units and is taught in conjunction with the Religious Education program in these year levels:
• Year 7: A New Journey, Learners and Thinkers, Positive Relationship, Drug and Alcohol Awareness
• Year 8: Taking Care of Yourself, Keeping Safe & Healthy Online, Managing Your Learning, Service Learning
• Year 9: Self-Identity & Goal Setting, Making Choices-Drug Education, Sex & Sexuality, Career Thoughts
• Year 10: Planning To Do Well, Constructions of Masculinity & Femininity through Role Models, Mental & Emotional Well-Being, Walking in White Shirts (Looking Towards Senior School)

The program intends to build on the relationship driven nature of classes here at St James and use them to foster activities and discussions around the key issues in adolescent development for these cohorts. They will also be supported by timely Year Level Assemblies at various stages throughout the term.

The College Counsellors (2fte) work within the Pastoral Team to supply immediate and ongoing Counselling support for the student body. The case load is managed and external agencies are engaged for chronic cases requiring a client based model. The nature of the students at St James is such that mental and emotional health issues are an ongoing concern and relevant issues are developed amongst the staff professionally by the Counselling staff.

**Strategies to Respond to Bullying**
The Behaviour Management Policy incorporating the College’s Anti-Bullying Policy outlines clearly a ‘no tolerance’ approach to handling bullying issues.

All students and staff in the St James College community have certain rights and responsibilities:

All students have the right
• To feel safe, cared for and respected
• To be free from intimidation and threat
• To have their property respected
• To a positive and productive learning environment
• To a healthy, safe and pleasant environment

All students have the responsibility
• To respect the rights, person and property of other students and staff
- To be assertive in the face of bullying
- To report bullying in all its forms

All staff members have the right
- To feel safe, cared for and respected
- To be free from intimidation and threat
- To have their property respected
- To work in a healthy, safe and pleasant environment
- To a positive and productive working environment

All members of staff have the responsibility
- To provide a safe, secure learning environment for students
- To provide an environment free from bullying, harassment, intimidation and abuse
- To actively promote a culture where bullying is unacceptable
- To be role models in word and action.

At St James we work to prevent and manage bullying incidents by
- Providing education on bullying, harassment, rights and responsibilities to students
- Providing ongoing professional development to teaching and non-teaching staff
- Visual advertising around the school
- Reminding students and staff frequently about the College's Bullying Policy at Assemblies and at House meetings
- Inducting new staff and students in this Policy
- Providing a supportive Pastoral Care Program
- Using evidence based responses to deal with incidents of bullying (Restorative Justice Processes, Method of Shared Concern)
- Providing counselling for victims, perpetrators and families
- Promoting a school culture where bullying is unacceptable

The following are strategies for students who are experiencing bullying:
- Talk to any of the following people for initial advice and support:
  - Homeroom teacher
  - House Dean
  - Classroom teacher
  - Counsellor
  - Parents
  - Principal, Assistant Principal Pastoral and other College Leadership Team members
  - Non-teaching staff member
- Report any incident of bullying at school immediately to any staff member the student trusts but action comes from:
  - Assistant Principal Pastoral
  - House Dean
  - Counsellor
  - College Leadership Team member
- If bullying continues after the incident has been reported, the matter must be brought to the attention of any one of the following people:
  - House Dean
  - Assistant Principal Pastoral
  - Counsellor
  - Police Liaison Officer (as appropriate for ongoing illegal issues)
  - Principal
- Don’t give up until you are satisfied with the outcome.
Strategies for Parents

- Watch for signs of bullying such as wanting to miss school, unusual behaviour changes, feeling fearful or depressed, a pattern of headaches or stomach upsets, physical injury, damage to or loss of property
- Contact any one of the following people:
  - The student’s House Dean, the
  - Assistant Principal Pastoral
  - Counsellors
  - Principal
- Do NOT encourage your child to hit back physically or be verbally abusive
- Support your child in the reporting process
- Express confidence that the problem can be solved
- If bullying involves severe physical assault, it is your right to consider police action
- Show support of and become involved in school procedures and practices that are used to manage incidents of bullying

At St James College, all work hard to prevent bullying and manage incidents fairly and effectively if they occur. The College treats all incidents of bullying very seriously and instigates strategies to manage such incidents and implements appropriate consequences for perpetrators. The management of all incidents of bullying is according to the College’s Behaviour Management Policy which is underpinned by the model of restorative justice and in the interest of the student/s learning from the experience.

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Throughout 2015, St James College continued to offer an exciting co-curricular program.

In Outdoor Education, students engaged in such activities as canoeing, hiking, kayaking, orienteering, camping, first aid and abseiling.

In Sport, the College was represented in the Confraternity Cup in Rugby League held at Ipswich, with the College being runners-up in the Division 3 competition. The Jimmies Basketball program continues to develop with school teams dominating both inter-school and district competitions. The St James College Lighthouse for Athletes Program continues to provide financial assistance to students who are selected for State or National competition. Students also represent the College in Futsal, Cross-Country, Swimming, Track and Field, Girls AFL (winning their competition), Netball and Soccer. In these sports, students participated in local and State-wide competitions and tournaments. In 2015, the Senior Boys Basketball Team again participated in the Queensland Champion School Basketball Tournament, running out champions by narrowly defeating St Joseph’s College, Gregory Terrace, in the Grand Final. It is very gratifying that several students in each of the main sports gains selection each year in the Met East representative teams.

Students represented the College in debating, public speaking and chess, and also engaged in a variety of community service activities.

The annual World Cup Soccer season at the College was again a highlight with students representing their country of origin and competing fiercely for the crown.

The College’s Annual Cultural Gala Night is a highlight of the College calendar. The Cultural Night is an entertaining evening of song and dance which celebrates the cultural diversity of our school community.

Students who are interested in computing, art, publishing or photography are given the chance to contribute to the College Yearbook, Website and Newsletter.
CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

Three major capital projects were completed and officially opened in 2015:

- A Trades Skills Centre, known as the Brisbane Flexible Learning Trades Skills Centre (St James Campus) and development in association with the Youth+ Flexible Learning Centre at Albert Park. This project was fully funded under the Federal Government’s Trade Training Centres in Schools program.
- Refurbishment of the Tom Carey Wing as a result of State Government funding for the move of Year 7 into high school.
- A new three level purpose-built building known as the Joseph Canali Centre housing a new Library and eLearning Centre as well as Science facilities and an extensive passive recreation undercroft area.

These new state-of-the-art facilities have enhanced the teaching and learning environment and have been much-welcomed by staff and students alike.

The College’s outdoor education facility at Maroon Dam, *Jimmies on the Dam*, continues to be very popular for Year level camps and outdoor education activities.

VALUE ADDED ASPECTS AT ST JAMES COLLEGE

Students are encouraged to develop positive attitudes and perceptions about the classroom climate and tasks and to develop good habits of mind so as to acquire and integrate knowledge, further extend this knowledge and to use it meaningfully. Students learn to integrate the spiritual, emotional and practical dimensions of their being through the acquisition and application of core thinking skills to learning in real life contexts. A holistic approach to education provides every opportunity for learners to flourish and achieve their unique potential. In short, the College provides a curriculum that is relational, responsive and relevant and as a result liberating.

The overall application and performance achievement of students has been enhanced through a variety of curriculum and pastoral initiatives at various Year levels. Such initiatives have included:

- Two-year flexible curriculum structures and some vertically-grouped semester programs in Years 9 and 10 have been designed to meet the needs and interests of a diverse student population. These provide students with the capacity to select courses of study that meet individual needs through this crucial two-year period and thereby improve student engagement and performance
- Appropriate and, in many cases, individual learning programs assist students with both verified and non-verified students to function productively in an inclusive educational environment
- Initiatives that promote internationalisation and cross-cultural connections allow students particularly from non-English speaking backgrounds to feel welcomed and included in the school community. The outcomes of this are seen clearly in improved student attentiveness in the classroom, development of fluent communication skills, improved study habits, socialisation and community building.
- In Year 11 and 12, the provision of courses which address a variety of post-school options allowing students the flexibility to study OP as well as Vocational-oriented courses.
- The House Pastoral structure has been designed to improve a sense of belonging among students and encourage active participation at all levels in the school. The vertical system allows students to engage with other students at different Year levels and increases potential for peer support in a social/relational sense and also in terms of peer tutoring.
- Highly-successful partnership with the Beacon Foundation where Year 10 students engage with many local and state-wide business groups. Students gain experience in leadership as well as in preparation for life in the workforce through job-interview programs, speed-careering, industry visits, etc.
- Structured Personal Development program from Years 7 - 10
- Regular tutorial sessions with senior students focusing on preparation for Queensland Core Skills testing.
- Homework Centre operates each afternoon after school in the Library where teachers give of their time freely to assist students with their homework and assignments.
- Involvement of students in social justice activities. These include the College Brekky Van program taking breakfast two mornings a week to the homeless, ERA (Edmund Rice Advocacy) for Change, Project Compassion, and an immersion experience for senior students to East Timor in the July school holidays.
STAFF

1. Teaching Staff

The Teaching Staff of St James College is a highly qualified, experienced and generous group of professionals who consistently contribute more than would otherwise be expected both within the classroom and beyond. The distinctive skills/qualifications and experience of our staff include:

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS 2015

Teaching Staff

The Teaching Staff of St James College is a highly qualified, experienced and generous group of professionals who consistently contribute more than would otherwise be expected both within the classroom and beyond. The distinctive skills/qualifications and experience of our staff include:

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<tr>
<th>Staff Member</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr James Anderson</td>
<td>B Ed (Phys Ed)</td>
<td>Sheffield University, UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Jim Bartlett</td>
<td>Cert Prof Counsellor, M. Ed Studies, B. Ed Studies, B Arts,</td>
<td>Aust Board Cert Counsellors QGCA</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cert Teaching, Cert IV TAA</td>
<td>UQ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs Vicki Blackman</td>
<td>B Learning Management, Cert IV Training &amp; Assessment, Dip</td>
<td>CQU</td>
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<td>Hospitality</td>
<td>Worklinks Inc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms Nikki Carpenter</td>
<td>M Ed (Teacher Librarian), Grad Dip Ed, B Arts</td>
<td>QUT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr Gerald Crooks</td>
<td>Dip Teaching, B MusEd (Hons), M Ed, M Ed Admin, AMusA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miss Mollie Daphne</td>
<td>B Arts, Media &amp; Communication, Dip Communication, Grad Dip</td>
<td>Swinburne TAFE, Vic.</td>
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<td>Ms Hanka Dearling</td>
<td>B. Arts (Hons), Exchange Studies, Graduate Diploma Education</td>
<td>Uni Helsinki</td>
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<td>Ms Bronwyn Doherty</td>
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<td>Mr Tim Fergus</td>
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<td>Ms Roz Ferris</td>
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<td>Mrs Jan Finch</td>
<td>B. Bus, Grad Dip Ed, A Grade Electrical Mechanic, Cert IV</td>
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<td>Mr Greg Flint</td>
<td>B Nature Tourism, Dip Ed</td>
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<td>Ms Casey Francis</td>
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<td>Ms Samantha Gall</td>
<td>B. Teaching (Early Child) M Ed Studies (Guidance Counselling) Dip Professional Counselling</td>
<td>UWS UQ AIPC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr Gordon Green</td>
<td>Dip T Man Arts Elec Trade Cert CNC69 Basic Bricklaying NBB009 Welding &amp; Thermal Cutting Autocad A Cert I Eng/Const Cert IV TAA</td>
<td>MGTC Penrith TC Ithaca TAFE Ithaca TAFE Seven Hills TAFE Gateway TAFE</td>
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<td>Ms Fiona Hales</td>
<td>B. Arts Dip Ed Cert III Sys Theology</td>
<td>UQ IFE</td>
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<td>Ms Karen Herrick</td>
<td>B Arts Grad Dip T RSA Cert TESL</td>
<td>UQ ACU British C. Singapore</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr Aaron Hill</td>
<td>B Visual Arts B Fine Art Grad Dip Education</td>
<td>USQ GU GU</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr Anthony Hill</td>
<td>Cert Eng/Const. WHSO Cert Eng Electrical Cert I Gen. Const. B. Tech Ed Cert IV TAA</td>
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<td>Mr Mark Holmes</td>
<td>Dip T Cert IV TAA</td>
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<td>Mr David Hopper</td>
<td>B. Tech Ed Cert I Const Cert Fitting (Instrumentation) Cert IV TAA</td>
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<td>Ms Erin Johnston</td>
<td>B Education Ad Dip Liberal Arts</td>
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<td>Mr Isikeli Kubunamceca</td>
<td>B. Arts (Psychology) B Ed GE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs Karen Lindsey</td>
<td>B Arts B Ed Grad Cert Religious Education</td>
<td>QUT QUT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs Neha Linyard</td>
<td>B Commerce Dip Sec Teach</td>
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<td>Ms Dianne Markey</td>
<td>B. Economics Dip Education</td>
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<td>Mr Tony McCulkin</td>
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<td>Ms Dianne McRoberts</td>
<td>Dip T Grad Dip Special Ed Cert IV Assess W/P Training</td>
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<td>Mr Sean McVeigh</td>
<td>M Sc(Info Tech) B Sc Dip Computer Studies</td>
<td>Edinburgh Edinburgh Guildford (UK)</td>
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<td>Ms Tania Munro</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs Helen Robin</td>
<td>B Arts, Grad Dip T, Cert TESOL, Dip TEFL</td>
<td>UQ, ACU, Trinity College, London Scottish ILC</td>
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<td>Ms Elisabeth Schaefer</td>
<td>B Ed, M Ed</td>
<td>QUT, USQ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms Corrie Shand</td>
<td>B Ed, Cert III Sys Theol, Cert Teaching, Dip Teaching, B Ed, Cert III Sys Theol, Cert I Hospitality, Cert II Hospitality (Kitchen Operations), Cert IV Ass &amp; Work Train</td>
<td>QUT, IFE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms Louella Sparks</td>
<td>B Ed, Grad Dip Ed, M Ed, B Theol, B Social Work, M Pastoral Studies, Cert IV TAA</td>
<td>ACU, UniSA, Loyola Uni, Chicago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr David Tan</td>
<td>B Ed, Grad Dip Ed, M Ed, B Sc (Chemistry), Accredited to teach RE in Catholic Schools</td>
<td>ACU, U Sydney</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr Brian Thompson</td>
<td>Grad Dip Ed, M Ed, B Theol, B Social Work, M Pastoral Studies, Cert IV TAA</td>
<td>QUT, MCD, UQ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms Juliana Tome</td>
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<td>Mr Chris Tooley</td>
<td>B Ed, Grad Dip RE</td>
<td>BCAE, MC</td>
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<td>Mrs Lisa Vongsarath</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs Brooke Walters</td>
<td>BA, B Ed, M Ed (Guidance &amp; Counselling)</td>
<td>UQ, USQ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miss Jessica Whelan</td>
<td>B Ed, B Sc (Ecology)</td>
<td>UQ, UQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Martin Wiseman</td>
<td>BA, DipEd, M EdStudies, MEdLead</td>
<td>UQ, UQ, ACU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Chris Zammit</td>
<td>B Ed, Cert IV Theology</td>
<td>QUT, IFE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Staff Development Priorities 2015
St James College is committed to the professional development and formation of staff. This continues to enrich the educational opportunities provided for our students and models to our young people/students the modern reality of life-long learning.

- Participation in subject-based Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) Review Panels
- Attendance at QCAA Workshops and Seminars in subject areas
- Goal-setting and Professional Development Plans (AITSL Professional Standards for Teachers)
- Vocational Education & Training Workplace Assessor Training
- NAPLAN and QCS data analysis
- Differentiating the Curriculum
• Reading to Learn
• School Improvement Plan
• Staff Spiritual Formation
• Working with students with learning differences
• Professional conferences (QCAA Conference, VET Conference, Beacon Conference, etc)
• Professional supervision
• Staff mentoring
• Edmund Rice Education Australia Professional Development Network meetings
• Child Protection Training
• Formation opportunities conducted by EREA and Oceania Province (eg Into the Deep, New Street, Mt Sion Revisited, Galilee, etc)
• First Aid Training
• Professional Development: Information Communication Technologies

The average amount spent per teacher in 2015 on professional learning was approx. $1469

3. Attendance Rate for Teachers
The average attendance rate for teachers is 95%. This figure reflects a low rate of sick leave among the staff. This figure does not include staff absent from classes attending professional development activities or who would have been replaced whilst on other forms of leave such as long service or maternity leave.

STRATEGIES USED FOR INVOLVING PARENTS IN THEIR CHILD’S EDUCATION
St James College recognizes that parents are the primary educators of their children. The work of the College is most successful when it collaborates effectively with parents. The College supports and encourages this role of parents through:
• Parents & Friends Meetings – held monthly
• Student Diary – weekly communication between the school and parents – required to be signed by both a parent/guardian and the students Homeroom Teacher each week
• Parent/Teacher Interview evenings held in Term 2 & 3 – discuss ongoing student progress
• College Newsletter (published weekly)
• Open Day (welcoming new parents)
• College Awards Night
• Special Occasion assemblies eg Investiture of Student Leaders
• Subject Selection Meetings
• Parent coaches, managers, umpires/referees (eg Jimmies Basketball Support Committee)
• Social celebrations, including the annual Cultural Night
• College Board: parent membership
• House breakfasts and other special House functions
• Community BBQ and/or Picnic Days
• Voluntary contribution of distinctive skills and enthusiasm of so many parents. These are gratefully acknowledged and celebrated
• Vocational Education and Training related events

INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES
Throughout 2015, the College completed its full implementation of a 1:1 ratio of computers for students in Years 7 – 12. The College operates two Computer laboratories equipped with desktop computers for more high-end computer studies. The College employs a full-time IT Manager together with an IT School Officer who work closely
with the Head of Library and eLearning in managing the IT needs of the teaching and learning programs in the College. Enhanced wireless connectivity has enabled eLearning across the school to develop considerably.

The College offers fully-accredited Certificate I and II courses in such areas as Information Technology and Creative Industries, as well as modular courses in Years 9 and 10 in Robotics, Computer Gaming, Web Design, Graphics and Animation.

Implementation of a Learning Management System has allowed staff and students to engage in learning at a whole new level incorporating on-line and e-learning resources. The re-focusing of the teacher-librarian’s position to become the Head of eLearning and Library Services gives witness to the College’s commitment both in budget terms and in resourcing terms to the incorporation of ICTs across the curriculum.

Student research and assignment work are aided by the latest online curriculum resources available to all students. Students worked through modules in the All My Own Work and Turnitin packages to assist them in correctly presenting research work and acknowledging sources, and thereby educating them in avoiding plagiarism.

**STRATEGIC ACTIONS FOR 2015**

**During 2015, in particular, the following strategic actions were focused on:**

- Completion of the major capital works: Trade Skills Centre, Science facilities, new Library, refurbishment of existing classroom block
- Ensure responsible decisions are made towards the on-going viability of the school, particularly in respect to the College Budget constraints.
- Review current Marketing Plan, investigating further means of enhancing enrolment patterns.
- Review College Maintenance Plan in association with WH&S.
- Further develop the faith life of the College through participative practices in liturgy and prayer
- Involve senior staff including those on ET6 level in the Teacher Mentoring program.
- Ensure College Counselling services adequately meet the needs of students both in a proactive and reactive way
- Ensure programs and strategies are in place to incorporate the transition of Year 7s into the College community.
- Ensure Middle Leaders are active members of EREA networks in academic and pastoral areas
- Ensure the Australian Curriculum implementation continues.
- Investigate and make a decision about the implementation of a whole-school pedagogical framework to be put in place, with appropriate professional development, in 2016
- Analyse and become familiar with the new directions for Senior Assessment in Years 11/12 as detailed by QCAA.
- Ensure educational adjustment programs continue to meet the needs of students with disability and learning differences.
- Continue to develop and maintain the College’s Learning Management System.
- Ensure our pastoral system identifies the specific needs of the different cultural groups in the school.
- Further develop and enhance the College’s co-curricula programs in Sport, particularly basketball, football, Girls AFL, rugby league and futsal.

**Gerry Crooks**  
Principal

**John Percy**  
Board Chair
CONTENTS

Preamble

Section 1: SCHOOL BOARD REPORT
  1.1 Board Membership
  1.2 Number of Meetings
  1.3 Formation and Development Undertaken
  1.4 List of School Policies approved by the Board
  1.5 Board Chair’s Annual Report

Section 2: NARRATIVE FOR THE EREA ANNUAL REPORT

Section 3: AWARDS NIGHT 2015: PRINCIPAL’S ADDRESS
PREAMBLE:

St James College Vision Statement:
The vision of St James College is to be an authentic witness to the touchstones of the Charter for Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition and to embody their expression in all aspects of our school.

St James College Mission Statement:
Challenged by the Gospel and inspired by Edmund Rice, St James College, as a Catholic School in the Edmund Rice Tradition, engages and nurtures the hearts and minds of young men and women. Through our inclusive teaching, learning and pastoral practices, we seek to create authentic pathways for all students in our diverse community to grow towards becoming hope-filled members of society. We commit to just and supportive relationships in our way of living and we promote justice in our world.

School Profile:
• Address: St James College
  201 Boundary St
  Brisbane 4000
• Catholic, Co-educational providing an inclusive educational environment for students from Years 7 – 12

OVERVIEW OF ENROLMENTS
August Census 2015

<table>
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<th>Year Group</th>
<th>7</th>
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<td>No. of Students</td>
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<td>ATSI</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
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ATSI = Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Verified SWD = Students with Disability who are verified under the Education Adjustment Program (SLI, PI, ID, ASD, SED)
FFPOS = Full fee-paying overseas students on study visas
YOS = Youth Outreach Service, conducted through a joint arrangement between Salvation Army and St James College
Asylum Seeker = students who are in Australia on Temporary Protection Visas, Bridging Visas, etc. Most live in community detention either independently or with their families.
SECTION 1: SCHOOL BOARD REPORT

1.1 BOARD MEMBERSHIP 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name / Address</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chair Mr John Percy</td>
<td>Senior Education Officer, Qld Catholic Education Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerry Crooks</td>
<td>Ex Officio, College Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claudia Mathews</td>
<td>Business Manager, Brigidine College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Ron de Bruyn</td>
<td>Refinery Technician, Former Parent, Former President of P&amp;F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Br Michael Talty</td>
<td>Christian Brother, Deception Bay FLC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Michael Egert</td>
<td>Businessman and consultant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Mike Wilkinson</td>
<td>Executive Secretary to QCEC, Former Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Olivia Versace</td>
<td>Solicitor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Mal Watts</td>
<td>Businessman and consultant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.2 NUMBER OF MEETINGS CONVENED DURING THE YEAR:
- 7 meetings are held by the College Board each year

1.3 FORMATION & DEVELOPMENT UNDERTAKEN:
- EREA Northern Region Board Induction evening for new members
- EREA Strategic Directions reflections/presentation at each Board meeting

1.4 ST JAMES COLLEGE BOARD ANNUAL REPORT (delivered at the College’s Annual Awards Night, 30 October, 2015)

As we look back over the year so far, we need to ask the fundamental question: have we been faithful to the Charter for schools in the ER Tradition and has the Board offered quality stewardship aimed at offering the best possible learning community for students attending St James. How do we form an opinion on this and what evidence is there to affirm such a position.

At Board meetings we have discussed this, we have reflected on the College’s Strategic Plan and its annual plan and intents under the core pillars of Hope, Community, Opportunity, and Inclusivity. The Board has been active in its discussion around the Risk Management Plan 2014 – 2016 and College Policies review and priorities that this might demand. Mr
Egert, Mrs Naomi Ritchie, Mrs Nikki Carpenter and Mr Leigh Brincat have done great work in conducting a parent satisfaction survey and the positive feedback they received to guide further strategic marketing initiatives.

We were delighted to hear a presentation from Mr Brian Thompson and Mrs Neha Linyard on the College’s Staff Mentoring and Beginning Teachers program and Mr Bob Knight from the QCEC gave a thought provoking talk on “An entrepreneurial approach to secondary education.

Principal Gerry Crooks and Acting Principal Mr Tony McCulkin gave comprehensive reports to the board covering Enrolments, Capital Development, Marketing and Progress against the overall Strategic Plan and the 2015 Annual Plan. Their reports have emphasised the Gospel priorities of inclusion and special concern for young people at risk of being left behind. The Board is pleased to report that St James remains true to the ER vision and remains a school for all who seek the values of our Gospel, regardless of religious affiliation or financial capacity. The Board continues to reflect on better ways of reaching out towards those young people in our world who are marginalized and in need of the Good News of God’s love and concern for all.

The Board relies heavily on the support it gets from its Finance and Property committee and thank members Wayne Anderson, John Browning, Danny Lynch, Claudia Matthews and Noel Williams for their continued service and the leadership provided by Michael Egert as Chair, and the work of David Cantwell as Business Manager in providing guidance as the College has undergone significant capital investment in building projects and the ongoing challenge in maintaining budget balance in the light of its enrolments.

Another key responsibility of the Board is to work collaboratively with Principal Gerry Crooks and his staff in the areas of strategic planning, budget and annual audited statements, capital works and master planning. The year has seen the introduction of year 7 and the refurbishment of current facilities and the completion of the new Joseph Canali Centre. Thanks to all involved in making this a successful transition to what has been a watershed year.

From Mr Crooks’ and Mr McCulkin’s reports to the Board, it has been clear that the school’s leadership team and staff are providing an authentic learning environment whilst maintaining the Edmund Rice ethos in all its operations. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate our Principal, Mr Gerry Crooks, for his tireless, considerate and respectful leadership of the College and for Mr McCulkin when acting as Principal when Mr Crooks was on leave.

I also like to take this opportunity to publicly thank retiring Board member Mrs Olivia Versace for her guidance and willingness to support the College in legal matters. On behalf of all of the SJCC I wish her and Olivia’s family all the best. I am pleased to report that Mrs Claudia Mathews (Brigidine College Business Manager/current St James Finance Committee member) has join the St James College Board. Thanks go to Mr Mal Watts and to Mr Michael Egert for their work in auditing Board Skills and Experience and leading discussion around “risk management for the college” as well as Mr Mike Wilkinson with student safety and governance, Br Mick Talty for his continued support and gentle guidance especially in matters of equity and Board formation, and Mr Ron de Bruyn for his wise advice and parent perspective and who is always mindful of retaining the integrity of what is St James.

I would like to thank the leadership and support provided by our Regional Administrator Mr Peter Chapman. We are also indebted to the Edmund Rice Education Australia administration for its ongoing support and positive regard for St James. This has been much appreciated.

Our meetings wouldn’t flow as smoothly without the attention to administration, the provision of minutes and agendas, the communication and hospitality provided so generously by Mrs Naomi Ritchie.

As this is my final year of serving on the Board, I would like to express my sincere and deepest thanks to the many Board members I have served with over the years, for their commitment to SJ; to the mission of ER; to the Catholic Church and...
the ultimate mission of Jesus Christ. Thank you to the teaching staff without which nothing would be achieved, the CLT for your dedication, service and commitment to education in the ER tradition. All the best to those who graduate this year. May you go forth with determination to be responsible citizens – where heart, mind and spirit are combined for the greater good and live rich and fulfilling lives. I thank the whole St James’ community for their contribution to this heritage.

Mr John Percy
St James College Chair 2015

SECTION 2: NARRATIVE FOR THE 2015 EREA ANNUAL REPORT

St James College, Brisbane is a co-educational secondary Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition. It is proudly part of the EREA Family and uses the Four Touchstones of the EREA Charter as its compass. The College provides a setting in the CBD of Brisbane which celebrates diversity, inclusivity and a very united and passionate community. All students are educated learning the Jesus Story and how Blessed Edmund Rice used his faith to make a difference in this world. This is a point not lost on staff who often see our work in the St James College Community as a contemporary reflection and expression of the work Edmund did with the marginalised, poor and oppressed, as many of our students come from the poorest and broken from many places in and on the outer surrounds of Brisbane. Our community also is a home to provide refuge for those who need a fresh start, those with special learning needs, those with disabilities and those who have fled their homeland seeking asylum in a land where they can see a better future.

The student population at St James College provides us with a unique character which is not replicated in any other learning context. Whilst we share the desperate desire to achieve a range of goals with our students, we have experienced difficulties achieving a range of goals for a variety of reasons. St James has become known as a caring and supportive school who welcomes all regardless of ability or financial capacity. As such we have become one of 3 Catholic secondary schools in Brisbane who cater for students with special needs. It must be noted that the other 2 schools, Seton College, Mt Gravatt, and Mt Maria College, Petrie, are owned and administered by the Brisbane Catholic Education Office and offer limited places with a restricted curriculum. St James College provides a central option for parents and these students which has made it an attractive option for many families. It is not uncommon for one of these special students to have other siblings attending other Independent Catholic schools with a predominantly mainstream academic offering. It must also be noted that whilst we have a number of our students who have been officially verified, that there are many other students who present with significant academic and/or social and emotional challenges who come to us because of our reputation for supporting these children with learning differences. This has in turn placed significant pressure on the resourcing of staff to support all students in our learning and service environment.

For example, a number of our students currently in Year 8 are operating at a level equivalent to that of a Year 3 student – clearly this has a huge effect on the way we teach, the way students learn and what we achieve. Whilst our results on a range of testing and score based systems may seem poor whilst being compared to like testing in other schools, for many of our students they have made significant gains in their learning even if they have not excelled in published benchmarks. It is a credit to the passionate and hardworking staff at St James who use a common pedagogical framework (The Art and Science of Teaching) and who differentiate the curriculum to support the broad range of ability levels in every class that they teach.

Being a multicultural, multi-faith community creates an environment which is rich and diverse, however it also challenges us in a variety of ways. Our students who come from a range of cultures see us as a welcoming community where over 40 nationalities are represented. ESL students, students from refugee backgrounds and our asylum seeking students and International Visa students add a level of complexity not witnessed in many school contexts.

In the last three years we have had an influx of students who are currently seeking political and humanitarian asylum in Australia. Many of these have been unaccompanied minors living in community detention. When they reach 18 years of age, these young people lose their educational entitlement at Government schools in Queensland and consequently need to seek to further their education elsewhere. St James College welcomes such students as part of its commitment to inclusive education. We provide all resources for these students including computers, uniforms and other educational
material as well as covering travel costs to and from school because their Living Allowance is lower than Centrelink payments which makes it impossible for them to contribute to their tuition costs.

Many of asylum seeker students are Muslim yet they respectfully participate in the faith life of the College and apply themselves to the tasks at hand in order to gain success. As can be expected these young people also often require emotional support to deal with the trauma that they have experienced. Our counselling staff are very attentive to the needs of these students as they are with all of our community however once again they too are stretched to provide all of the care and help that they would like. The current number of asylum seekers in our community is 29 and hail from a range of countries including Iran, Iraq, Somalia, Afghanistan, Burma (Myanmar), Sri Lanka, Vietnam and some African nations.

The College provides a range of counselling services which are absolutely required by our students. These include:

- individual student counselling (mood disorders, conduct concerns, trauma, peer relationship concerns, motivation and goal setting)
- family therapy and systemic response to matters, specifically, school refusal and oppositionality/defiance
- school refusal pragmatic support: parent phone support to assist with at-home problem solving; access to graduated school environment in which school work can be attended to in the relative quiet and containment of counselling work space; monitoring of attendance and communication of same to stake holders where consent is provided
- orientation of new students, often modified to suit students with limited English skills
- liaison with external agencies with view to supporting student mental health (Child and Youth Mental Health Service, Headspace, private psychiatrists and psychologists)
- liaison with external agencies with view to sourcing emergency and stable accommodation for (Brisbane Youth Service, Salvation Army Youth Outreach Service, etc)
- attendance in class to support students (regulate responses to impulsivity, contain anxiety, monitor behavioural contracts)
- refinement and implementation of behaviour contracts (Behaviour Understanding and Responsibility Program – BURP)
- support of refugee and asylum seeker students
- liaison with Centrelink for practical support of independent living students

Many of our students from other cultures require additional support in their academic pursuits. We encourage and support these students in trying to provide them with the best options possible and once again this impacts on staffing and time which staff need to provide. A range of these students access our Homework Centre of an afternoon after school hours which is attended by staff who volunteer in their own time to support the needs of all students who present.

Culturally making contact with family members when issues arise can present some difficulties which can make it a hard task engaging families on the journey. Some families have absolutely no capacity to contribute to the College either by presenting for interviews or in monetary terms. Our inclusive community welcomes all students, so we offer as much support as we possibly can manage with the resources available to us.

The College currently has 65 (16%) verified students (under the Disability Discrimination Act guidelines) currently enrolled but this does not accurately reflect the vast learning needs of many other students who are identified as having learning differences or who struggle due to cultural or financial reasons. The most cost effective way of dealing with such a significant number of verified students is to employ Learning Support Teacher-Aides to support these students in the classroom. This requires significant work with the curriculum needing to be differentiated at a number of levels within single classes and therefore a lot of pressure on classroom teachers and the Counselling staff. We develop Personal Learning Plans to support each student with needs and these are made available and staff are educated to enhance the teaching and learning process of these students.

Community relationships are a vital part of what we do as we support our diverse range of student. Relationships are established, maintained and used for support with the following:

- MDA (Multicultural Development Association)
- Red Cross
Access Community Services
- QPASTT (Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma)
- FHeal (Friends of the Home of Expressive Arts and Learning) – this group provides ongoing Art Therapy sessions for many of our asylum seekers who are experiencing trauma.
- Salvation Army
- RAILS (Refugee and Immigration Legal Services)
- ISCA (International Student Care Australia)
- Students on Immigration Community Detention

The College’s sporting program performs way beyond expectations. The Basketball Program attracts students to the school as our performance in State and National competitions in both boys and girls divisions is enviable. Our Open Football Team were Runners Up in the National EREA Football Tournament last April and the Open Girls’ AFL Team performs admirably in its yearly competition. Many students reach representative teams in basketball, football, futsal and athletics. Whilst we offer a reasonable number of sports we are hampered by a lack of facilities, space, equipment and funds. The only sports that we can host at the College is basketball and futsal, due to the lack of facilities but we are consistent members of State and regional competitions such as South Districts, Confraternity Shield and Q Cup Netball.

We are fortunate to have the “Jimmies on the Dam” outdoor education facility at Maroon Dam outside Boonah (about a 90 minute drive from Brisbane). However, while we utilize this space whenever possible, a lack of financial ability denies us the opportunity to develop the site into a viable, fully functional enterprise for use by our students and potentially to hire out to other groups.

The College signed a Memorandum of Understating (MoU) with the Salvation Army in 2006 to support of their Youth Outreach Service (YOS) – their educational wing which seeks to re-engage students in schooling. These young people have dropped out mainstream education as a result of such things as drug addiction, mental and emotional health issues, homelessness etc. It is a reciprocal relationship whereby the College collaborates with the Salvation Army using their case workers to assist us managing our student needs and the College undertakes to provide a Coordinator and teaching staff to the program. Since 2015, YOS has relocated to the property next door to St James at the new head office of the Salvation Army, making the partnership more accessible. A new MoU was entered into at the start of 2016 to continue the excellent work done through the relationship between the Salvation Army and St James College.

The College has had a long standing reputation as a leader in Vocational Education and Training and we have managed to acquire over time state of the art facilities in Hospitality and the recent Trade Training Centre which was achieved via a joint venture with St Joseph’s Gregory Terrace and the Albert Park FLC. These facilities acquired through grants, require constant upkeep and servicing and unlike other schools with similar facilities, we do not charge students a levy for their use and as such, this ongoing cost must be absorbed. Extensive VET programs need to be offered to meet diverse student needs and aspirations.

Faith Demographic of the College
St James College is a multi-faith community where the College faith life and Religious Education programs must respond to diverse needs of our students and families. We are a Catholic School in the Edmund Rice Tradition and as such, we provide a range of faith experiences for all students. While over 70% are from various Christian traditions (with Catholicism having highest proportion), other religions represented are Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism. A percentage of students indicate no religious background.

This provides our community with not only an opportunity to learn about the faith traditions of others, but also offers us the challenge to engage students from various faith backgrounds and indeed no faith foundation at all in both the Religious Life of the School and the Religious Education Curriculum from Year 7 through to Year 12.

In 2012, a number of College Symbols were created which are used after the Welcome to Country at all special school events, including Masses, Liturgies, Speech Night, Graduation, Feast Days, and are accompanied by an explanation so that our students are educated about our Catholic and Christian Brothers’ – now EREA – heritage.
SECTION 3: Awards Night 2015. Principal’s Address.

Today we walk on country traditionally cared for by the Jagera and Turrbal Peoples. As Principal and on behalf of our community here at St James, I acknowledge this special privilege and respect the traditions and customs of the people, together with their Elders, past, present and into the future.

Evenings such as this are all about formally acknowledging the achievements of our students throughout the year and also thanking those who have been integral to these achievements. While we are a small school, what our young women and men have achieved is really quite remarkable as you will witness when you meet them later on in the program.

***********

Someone once said that “to experience the rainbow, you first have to deal with the rain”.

Well, 2015 has been in many respects a ‘rainbow year’ that has nevertheless come about indeed after our fair share of rain!

After years of hope, some disappointments, some good luck and some very good planning, St James opened its new facilities earlier this year that have proven to be the equal of any school. Many of you were present for the Blessing and Opening in May this year of the three major capital works – the complete refurbishment of the Tom Carey Building, the development of the St James Campus of the Brisbane Flexible Learning Trades Skills Centre, and the magnificent Joseph Canali Centre housing outstanding Science facilities together with Library and eLearning Centre.

These projects were not without their troubles. Nevertheless, all was completed – albeit slightly behind schedule – the rainbow did appear, and we are indebted to both Federal and State Governments, together with our parent body, Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA), for their support in accomplishing these projects which have lifted the College to a whole new level.

Momentous among other things this year was the introduction of Year 7 students into high school across the State. The College made a conscious decision to ensure that our inclusive education policy extended fully to our new students and it was gratifying to see, from the start, how well they settled in, became integral to our vertical Homeroom system and adapted to the rigours of the high school timetable.

The College’s 1:1 laptop and eLearning programs have proven to have had a powerful impact on student learning, as technology continues to drive teaching and learning practices. I stand in awe of the ability of teachers and students to adapt themselves to its demands and produce enriching and sustainable learning experiences as they move forward into the increasingly-challenging technological world.

The Religious Life of the College continues to be deepened through College liturgies, social justice and service activities, immersion and retreat experiences, staff formation and student leadership programs. From a Principal’s point of view and, I know, from that of our parent community, the depth of student and staff engagement is inspirational and reflects what is at the very heart of the ethos of this place as an Edmund Rice school. Assistant Principal Identity, Mrs Tricia Parry (who, unfortunately, due to illness is unable to be present this evening), and her team continue to drive this essential part of our school and I thank them for the work they do both during and after school hours that impact so strongly on our students’ spiritual development and social conscience.

This year has seen some movement in the College Leadership Team. I would publicly like thank my Deputy Principal, Mr Tony McCulkin, who stood in as Acting Principal while I was on study leave in Israel in Term 2. This term from his much-loved position as House Dean of Long House, Mr Kubunameca stepped into the shoes of Mr Martin Wiseman, Assistant Principal Pastoral who has taken some much-earned long-service-leave. Since he assumed this position, Mr K has indeed excelled in using his extraordinary pastoral skills in leading students and staff.

The College’s Middle Leadership Teams – both academic and pastoral – are the two main drivers in the daily life of students at the school. Highly professional and organized curriculum development that caters for the rich diversity of our student body and helps to direct their future is underpinned by deeply compassionate and caring pastoral practices that
ensure there is a supportive learning environment at the College. I pay tribute to those Heads of Faculty, House Deans, Senior and Middle School Coordinators, College Counsellors and other teacher-leaders for their continued outstanding work for our students.

Teaching and support staff at St James are among the most inspirational that I have had the privilege to work with over the 43 years I have been in Catholic Education. Never considering that the essentials are enough, each in their own way goes above and beyond in their daily interaction with their students both in and out of the classroom.

At the end of this year we say farewell to two long-serving members of staff.

In January 1971, a very young Christine Hickey joined the Library staff to assist in covering books, manning the circulation desk and providing other assistance in the College Library. This year, some 44 years later, Christine Osborne, as she is now, retires as the longest-serving member of staff in the history of St James College. What changes she has seen, how many Jimmies kids and staff she has interacted with through the library during her time! We are humbled by her commitment and her generosity and we wish her every best wish for her retirement. Unfortunately, due to health reasons, Mrs Osborne is unable to be with us this evening for us to farewell her in person; however, I know she is here in spirit.

Mrs Dianne McRoberts has been the voice of inclusive education practice here at St James since the turn of the century….this century! Through her dedication to ensuring equity for all, she has made our school a school of choice for many parents seeking a supportive, professional and accepting environment for a son or daughter with learning differences or a disability. She often describes herself as ‘the squeaky wheel’, always urging us all to ensure we acknowledge and affirm inclusive practice both in and out of the classroom and furnishing us with the skills to do so. In this regard, St James can now proudly hold its head high – its procedures, protocols and practices due largely to the work and the inspiration of Mrs McRoberts. We sincerely thank her for all that she has done over the past 16 years and wish her well as she heads off to Scotland to catch up with family and shake up the education scene there!

Successive Newsletters have detailed and lauded the active participation of students in the many curriculum-related and co-curricular events that form part of the life of the College. Sport is a major part of these activities and St James, for all its smallness of numerical stature in relation to other schools, has continued to hold its own and excel particularly in the sports of Basketball, Soccer, Futsal, Rugby League, AFL, Netball and Athletics. For a school without any grass, that’s not a bad suite of sports! I would like to pay tribute to the staff members who give up their time to coach the various teams, as well as outside coaches who are committed to that unique Jimmies Spirit that is always typical of students’ levels of participation.

Outdoor recreation activities have seen students hiking, camping, canoeing, orienteering and rock climbing as part of their courses. In addition, students have worked with Primary school children at schools such as St Paul’s in Woodridge as part of their studies in Sports Coaching. Chess and Debating form another component of the co-curricular program to say nothing of the extraordinary and thoroughly enjoyable annual Cultural Night. Again, the dedication of teachers and the high level of cooperation of students are hallmarks of the success of these programs.

The College is fortunate to be served by three outstanding consultative groups: First and foremost is the College Board under the leadership of Mr John Percy. This year, Mr Percy retires from the Board after 9 years of dedicated voluntary service. On behalf of you all, I thank him for his selfless dedication, his commitment to and unshakeable belief in our school, and his deep personal support of me as Principal of the College. The College’s Finance and Property Committee, chaired by Mr Michael Egert, supports the work done by our finance team ably led by the College’s Business Manager and member of the College Leadership Team, Mr David Cantwell: I am indebted to them for ensuring we are able to provide the resources for the on-going sustainability of the high-quality educational product offered at this school. The third group, of course, are the various parent groups including the Parents & Friends Association, our wonderfully supportive, small but dedicated parent group chaired by Mrs Margot Henry, and the many parents who have fundraised and supported our sporting teams throughout the year. Without these highly committed groups who do so much behind-the-scenes work, our school would struggle to offer the broad range of activities and support our students require for a well-rounded education.

I began by speaking about buildings and facilities. It would be remiss of me not to mention and thank most sincerely the College’s intrepid ground staff whose tireless efforts in keeping our College looking its best and the pride they take in its care are always very much appreciated.
As you can see, there have been so many ‘rainbow’ moments in 2015. You know: we can do things, build things, and amass material resources. What is at the heart of it all, though, is our reason for being here.

Pope Francis, last year in speaking to a gathering of parents, educators and students in Rome, made two interesting observations. In the first instance he said:

“Education cannot be neutral. It is either positive or negative; either it enriches or it impoverishes; either it enables a person to grow or it lessens, even corrupts him.”

Those of us who are educators, you as parents and we as teachers, cannot simply teach an empty and irrelevant curriculum or create rules for rules’ sake. Nor do we ever contemplate teaching a curriculum that incites negativity as we have sadly witnessed in other very troubled parts of our world.

Our duty must always be to impart that which is enriching and that enables growth. This is reflected in the beautiful icon on the right of the stage which depicts the Year 12 motto for this year “Growing Together in Service”. It is a kaleidoscope of colourful pieces of perspex put together by students across all Homerooms, each containing a word or phrase that for them encapsulates the motto. I invite you to inspect it at the conclusion of tonight’s gathering.

Pope Francis went on to say, and I quote: “The mission of schools is to develop a sense of truth, of what is good and beautiful. True education, he said, enables us to love life and opens us to the fullness of life.”

So there it is. When we come together at evenings such as this, we see the results of that education, that mission. We see and give thanks for the dedication of you whose vocation it is to develop that sense of truth, that love of life, that opening up to the fullness of all that is good and beautiful in these young people.

At the same time, we see in the faces of those whom we educate, you – our children and our students – an energy that drives this life-long continuous journey that is education, a journey that is not paused at the end of a school term, a school year or at Graduation.

It is a journey that must always be hope-filled and hope-directed if our young people are going to be true to all that this College stands for – a lived Gospel spirituality, the experience of an education that is liberating for all, the richness of learning within the inclusive community that is St James, and a personal commitment that witnesses to social justice and solidarity with those at the margins – in fact, all that gives life, all that makes us fully alive.

Let us all be ‘faithful forever’ to this journey.

Gerry Crooks
Principal