



# From the School Board Chair 2020

**The definition of gratitude .... the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness.**

We made it, what a year, 2020 was the year that turned all of our lives upside down. In years gone by I would stand in front of you all and read out the report that I have written for the school annual report. But this year it feels appropriate to do something different ...

Let's take a moment to pause ... to reflect on the year that has been ... the things we had to learn to do without in our lives ... the rapid adjustments we all needed to make ... to stay safe the impact of the things we needed to do on ourselves, our immediate family, our extended family, our friends, our school, our workplaces ... the hardship, sorrow and suffering experienced by many, and continuing to be experienced as 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> waves hit a number of countries ... the pandemic has affected each of us in very different ways ...

I'd now like you to think about all of things that you are grateful for. I went to Thanksgiving at a Holy Spirit family's house last weekend where prior to our meal we were all asked to go around the table and to give thanks to something. It was a wonderful time to pause, to reflect, and to express on a personal level what you are most thankful for. For me, I am grateful that

- my family is safe,
- that there is no current community transmission in the state, city and we are getting close to country where we live,
- that after the adjustment and settling in period, including the two weeks of trying to home school three young children, work and parent which almost broke me, the time I got to be present with my little family.
  - For the daily Covid Break out sessions we planned into our days.
  - Rollerblading around and stopping for a picnic at Lake Monger.
  - For the beach, all but two days, where we would frolic and surf the waves
  - For life slowing down, for lazy afternoons watching family movies. Taking the gymnastics mats over to the park to work on the girls gymnastics strength, conditioning and routines. Completing two 1000 piece puzzles and the sense of achievement that brought to our girls lives. For daily runs around lake Claremont with Jacob hot on my heels on his bike.
- for my employer who adapted quickly and enabled remote work and to this day for still embracing flexibility into each and every role and last, but by no means least,
- for our school, words will not do justice to the gratitude each and every one of us has for Holy Spirit's management team, administration, teachers, teaching assistants, cleaners, grounds keeper



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- and bursar ... for their commitment to ensuring every decision made put our children at the centre and to do what was right.

On behalf of the school community we'd like to say THANK YOU. Out of this challenging Covid-19 period has come much kindness, support and encouragement from our students, staff and families who make up our courageous community. It has bought us together stronger as a school community and I'd like to congratulate each and every one of you for manoeuvring yourselves and your families through 2020 and for prioritising being here tonight.

We have a passionate and committed group of high quality, caring and professional staff supported by a community who are most supportive and extremely eager to see our strong and inclusive community school flourish.

The school Board represents the school community and is not only responsible for the financial administration of the school, it is also entrusted with planning to meet the present and future needs of its students.

Together we have robustly discussed, imagined, planned and worked collaboratively to ensure that the very best decisions possible are made for our children's education and for the benefit of our whole school community.

A key focus this year has been the development and delivery of two important planning documents for Holy Spirit. This year we included a survey of our parent's, our student's and our teachers to help inform the deliverables for the Holy Spirit ICT Digital Learning Plan and for the 2021-2023 school Strategic Plan. For this we give special thanks to both Ciemone Rowbottam (Strategic Plan) and Thanh Nguyen (ICT Digital) who have gone above and beyond working with the Board and school management team on these deliverables.

As a parent you can participate in our school in a variety of ways such as the school board, parents and friends, working bees, excursions, volunteering in the classrooms and just by staying up to date with school news and happenings.

It has indeed a pleasure to Chair such an active and progressive School Board in this, my fifth year on the Board. I'd like to personally thank Ciemone for her two years of service on the board, your



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professionalism, drive, capabilities, willingness to donate your precious time and commitment is second to none and you will be missed. Thank you to Samantha, what an asset you have been for our school in the P&F president role. Thank you to Tom, for renominating along with myself, for another two years where we will work with (and I give thanks for their service), Thanh, Franca, Aleisha, Father, Steve and the incoming P&F president, to complete the consolidate and growth phase of our financial plan for our school.

**I thank everyone for their support of the school.**

**Natasha Ogonowski**

**Board Chair**