



February 2022

Dear Parents,

Sacred Heart, Emmaus, Cana: School Advisory Council

We, the Principals are writing to you about setting up a School Advisory Council.

As you may be aware, all the Catholic parish and diocesan schools in the Melbourne Archdiocese, are now under the guidance and governance of Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (MACS). In keeping with the objectives of the MACS Constitution, which states "The good work of educating the young, undertaken in the light of the Gospel, is a co-responsible task led by every member of the Catholic school community", the School Advisory Council provides a crucial point of connection between the wider school community and school leaders.

A separate School Advisory Council will be established, at each Primary school: Sacred Heart, Emmaus and Cana, however one meeting will be held each year which brings all Council members together.

While the School Advisory Council does not have governance responsibility or decision-making authority, it supports the Principal and school leadership teams and provides an important connection to the parish.

Serving on the School Advisory Council of a Catholic school is a form of Church lay ministry. It is a response to the call to support the local Catholic parish and school communities in a particular way. It is also a means for members of our community to share their skills and talents for the common good. A well-functioning council provides rich sources of wisdom and insight as well as a means of strengthening community links and potential for partnerships.

The School Advisory Council is not a governing body, but its role is to support the overall governance of the system as it "is to give consideration to, and advice on, important school matters in order to support the Principals and the strategic interest of the school." (MACS- Working Together in Mission p.11)

It is important that School Advisory Council members understand that their primary role is to provide support and advice on important school matters to support the Federation Principals in the context of the MACS governance arrangements. School Advisory Councils do not have a legal identity and do not become involved in the day-to-day management of the schools.

This two or three-year appointment to the School Advisory Council is made according to the parameters of the MACS School Advisory Council Terms of Reference. The following are some examples of ways the School Advisory Council may support Principals:

- articulating and enacting the vision and mission of the school
- giving advice to the Principal on issues such as school improvement
- supporting school policies as required
- The Religious Education program
- Curriculum
- Enrolments and enrolment policy
- School resources
- Improvements in the school
- Annual Report to the school community
- Family partnerships
- engaging in discussion with the Principals about annual school budgets and other financial matters
- capital resource planning and maintenance support to the Principals

I am excited by the idea of having a School Advisory Council and hope many of you will also see this as another chance to support your school and your children.

We are asking parents and guardians to register their interest in being a part of the Federation School Advisory Council by emailing to [principal@shstalbans.catholic.edu.au](mailto:principal@shstalbans.catholic.edu.au)

Once your expression has been received, you will receive via email a Federation School Advisory Council Application Pack, which will outline in further detail the application requirements.

If you would like more information about MACS School Advisory Councils, please refer to the following link: <https://governance.melbourne/sac-faq/>

Dianne Blake  
Principal