



## 2014 Annual Report

### Chairman's Report

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As a vibrant school with passionate and talented teaching, executive and support teams and excellent facilities, Covenant has once again seen strong growth in student numbers, in buildings and in other facilities. We thank God, who is in control of all things, for His abundant provision.

Over the course of the last year as a Board, we have been asking what we feel is a very important question: "How does a strong financial position and increasing student numbers affect the culture of the school and our ability to faithfully serve God by adhering to our vision and mission?" We are told in the Word that from those to whom much has been given, much will be expected. Are we prudently managing this provision, and how do we resist the temptations that come with it? After all, our mission is not to be a wealthy, prestigious school, but one with a core purpose to assist parents in raising their children to live for God's glory.

Let's remember our Vision and Mission statements:

Our Vision statement: *To faithfully serve in God's plan to restore all things under the Lordship of Jesus Christ* means that everything we do needs to be furthering the gospel; that Jesus Christ, who died for us, is Lord of the universe, and that all people should worship Him.

Our Mission statement: *To assist parents in the nurture of their children, by providing a Christ-centred, biblically grounded, culturally engaging and academically rigorous education to equip the children to live for God's glory* means that our primary goal as a school is to partner with parents to help ensure that their children grow up ready and able to serve God and His people with all their energy as committed Christians.

As a result of our ongoing growth, we have had discussions throughout the year about how large the school should grow. Our discussions have taken us through a wide range of topics and considerations including culture, building facilities, class sizes, and the

shape of the management and teaching structures required to support future growth. Above all, these decisions need to be informed by asking "How does this decision help us to achieve our vision and mission?"

As Christians, the Bible tells us that we should submit to the authorities God has put over us, and our current limit as determined by Council is 900 students across Preschool to Year 12. Therefore, in order to inform our decisions, we decided that we'd formally approach Council to revisit the current size restriction. We commissioned some external professional assistance to help us prepare for this and ensure that our approach was well considered and prepared. We expect to finalise this and submit it this month. Internally, we also believe it's important that we limit our size to a number where we can continue to provide adequate pastoral support and maintain our community culture.

The Executive team, led by Bill Rusin, has also made some key changes to their structure to ensure that we are well positioned to meet the challenges growth has brought and stay true to our mission. Commencing 2015 we have added a new Deputy Principal (Curriculum 7-12) role, Peter Muddle, and a Director of Teaching and Learning role, Jay Trevaskis. Mrs Chris O'Sullivan will continue in her role as Deputy Principal but with specific dedication to Pastoral Care 7-12.

Please pray with us for all the staff; that they will grow in their knowledge and love of God, that they will abound in godliness, and that they will lead our children to grow in these things too. Pray for energy and patience for them as they teach and care for so many children. And please pray for the Board and Association that we will be faithful and wise in the decisions we make about the direction of the school. Finally, give thanks to God for all those who are faithfully helping us raise our children to serve Him.

*Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. – 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*

*Dean Stewart*

# Principal's Report

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2014 was a great year for Covenant Christian School. It was the first year of implementation of the Strategic Management Plan which gave direction to the school community and faculty and has enabled us to be more targeted in fulfilling the School's Vision and Mission.

Our school has continued to grow in student numbers, with a healthy intake at Kindergarten as well as in Years 7 and 10. In 2014 we employed a School Association Coordinator to nurture the association of parents that is the beating heart of our school. This is a very strategic position and we have seen the fruit of her work already.

Our students, in general, are both literate and numerate as shown in the NAPLAN tests, and our students have achieved many strong results in the HSC. As a school that is comprehensive and does not offer academic scholarships, the results are very pleasing. They reflect the ability of the students and show that our students have a high work ethic.

We continue to improve the assets of our school. We opened four new open plan classrooms in the Secondary School as well as a new staffroom. Both have been a great blessing. In 2014 we also planned for further improvements including two new Art Spaces as well as doubling the size of the Technics rooms and building two more Science laboratories. These should be completed by 2016.

As part of the Annual Action Plan for 2014 that arose out of the Strategic Management Plan the school has changed the administrative structure of the school. This

was done partly as a response to the growing Secondary School, but also because it will allow the school to be more deliberate in addressing the Vision and Mission of the school. Pastorally we have added more time for the Secondary School and have changed some roles. The position of Curriculum Coordinator (7 - 12) that was held by Peter Muddle was upgraded to a Deputy Principal position with the current Deputy Principal position (Chris O'Sullivan) being refined to oversight of the pastoral care of students. In addition to these positions, we created a new position of Director of Teaching and Learning starting in 2015. Jay Trevaskis has accepted this position and his focus will be on the practice of teaching and learning rather than the content. Personally, I am excited by the possibilities that this position creates and look forward to the changes that will arise out of the work in this area.

Again a number of staff have completed Masters Degrees at the end of 2014/early 2015. These include Neil Pierson, Fiona Butler (through NICE) and Phillip Pain completing a MEd Leadership degree through UNE. The depth of thinking and practice that this bring to our school is invaluable. There are a number of teachers who have indicated that they are ready to begin further studies in 2015.

Lastly, I must mention the Junior School Musical event in 2014. It was outstanding, both as a spectacle that showcased the students' enthusiasm and ability, but one that pointed those who participated, as well as those who watched, to our Lord and Saviour. Thank you to all who participated!

I commend this report to you.

*William Rusin*

# Registrar's Report

## Summary of Enrolment Policy

*Covenant Christian School is open to all children whose parents are seeking to give them an education which is consistent with the basis and aims of the school, provided the school has the resources to meet the child's particular needs, and subject to the availability of places.*

Initial priority for enrolment will be determined by parents' answers on the enrolment application and a letter of reference from the pastor of the church currently attended. This will be later confirmed through an interview with the parents.

Normally children are accepted into Kindergarten only if they have turned five before 31 May that year. In exceptional circumstances, after careful testing, younger children may be admitted if they are considered to be socially, physically and intellectually mature enough.

Children are accepted into the Preschool class only if they have turned three years of age and are toilet trained at the time they start.

## Student Population

In 2014 there were 843 students enrolled at the August Census from Kindergarten to Year 12. These students were predominantly from the Northern Beaches, Chatswood and Upper North Shore areas and represent a mix of cultural backgrounds.

The ratio of boys to girls was 53:47. The proportion of students from regular church attending families (representing over 120 churches) was 85%.

There are two preschool classes: a two day class on Monday and Tuesday for 3 and 4 year old children, and a three day class on Wednesday to Friday for 4 and 5 year old children.

In Junior School there were two classes per grade from Kindergarten to Year 6. In Years 7 to 10 there was an average of 90 students per grade and Year 11 and 12 averaged 86 per grade.

Enrolments			
	2012 (August Census)	2013 (August Census)	2014 (August Census)
K - 6	303	305	311
7 - 12	495	489	532
TOTAL	798*	794*	843*

\* Excluding 40 Preschool students

## Student Attendance and Management of Non-Attendance

99% of students attended school on average each school day in 2014. This included absences for sickness, medical appointments and approved leave.

Non-attendance at school is managed by an electronic attendance roll and mandatory attendance codes are used. If a parent letter of explanation for non-attendance is not received when the student returns to school, a text message is sent home seeking an explanation. If a letter of explanation is not forthcoming a follow-up email is sent. If no explanation is received senior staff are alerted to determine the appropriate follow-up, including consideration of potential student welfare issues. Where attendance patterns may affect the ability of a student to achieve educational outcomes for an external certificate, formal warning letters are provided to the student and parent.

## Percentage Attendance per Grade

Kindergarten	99.50%
Year 1	99.80%
Year 2	99.20%
Year 3	99.50%
Year 4	97.50%
Year 5	99.20%
Year 6	97.90%
Year 7	99.20%
Year 8	99.00%
Year 9	99.00%
Year 10	99.00%
Year 11	98.80%
Year 12	97.60%
School Average	98.86%

## Actual Retention Rates & Post School

### Destinations

94% of students who completed Year 12 at Covenant in 2014 also completed Year 10 at the school. 89 students completed Year 10 at the school in 2012. 86 students completed Year 12 at the school in 2014. Nine students left at the completion of Year 10. Nine students commenced in Year 11 2013. Four students left during Year 11 or Year 12.

We estimate that over 85% of students eligible to attend university were offered a place in the first round offers. Many also received later offers. The remaining students either continued their studies at TAFE or private colleges, entered employment in a variety of fields or commenced an apprenticeship or traineeship.

*Wendy Boase*

# Christian Perspectives

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2014 was another busy year in the area of Christian Perspectives at Covenant. As a school, the year provided many different opportunities to grow in our understanding of the nature and purpose of Christian education through our interactions with other schools within the Christian Education National (CEN) network, and with other schools. This report provides a brief snapshot of some of the activities in which we were challenged to grow in 2014.

## Conferences

In July, Nepean Christian School hosted the CEN NSW State Conference. The conference was entitled "Clashing Stories and the Christian Classroom." The keynote speaker was Bill Salier, and more than 450 delegates from many different schools joined together for the two days. In addition to Bill's talks, there were a number of helpful seminars run for teaching and non-teaching staff, and were varied in their approach, from curriculum-based to pastoral care-based. It was a time of great learning and challenge for our staff, and we were able to think deeply in regard to what it means to work in a Christian school. On a personal note, I was grateful for the opportunity to develop and run a new course on Teaching Mathematics in the Christian School, and was able to speak in South Australia (Torrens Valley), Western Australia (Geraldton), Wagga Wagga and Deniliquin, and also at the conference. It is wonderful to see the rich engagement with Teaching from a Christian Perspective happening in our schools across Australia.

## Postgraduate Study with the National Institute for Christian Education (NICE)

Several of our teachers continued with NICE studies in 2014, with more teachers commencing their studies. It is pleasing to see a number of our staff seeking to be faithful in their task in taking the opportunity to study courses that dealt with the importance of the Bible in Christian Education, the History of Christian Schooling in Australia, Effective Teaching, Stakeholders and the Christian Community, and many other courses as well. David Gray is now lecturing for the National Institute with me, and we look forward to taking many more teachers through this journey. It is clear that further study in Christian Education is yielding fruit in the school community. Congratulations to Neil Pierson and Fiona Butler who completed their Masters degrees at the end of 2014.

## Working with other schools

During 2014, we continued to develop our relationships with other Christian schools. We learn as much from what we are able to teach them about our experiences along the way, as we learn from them by working together. Last year we made a connection with Kuyper Christian School (Richmond) and Mountains Christian College (Blackheath), and see opportunities as part of the strategic plan to work more closely with these schools into the future. We are grateful for the opportunity to learn from these schools and to use the opportunities afforded to us as a larger CEN school. I am also pleased to report that many of our staff are using the opportunity to share resources through the Christian Educators' Professional Association (CEPA). CEPA is a forum for advice and a platform for the sharing of units of work that have been written from a distinctively Christian perspective.

## Teachers as learners

A number of our staff have improved themselves professionally, through in-service courses, and at school as a culture of collaboration has developed. We have continued on with regular 'TeachMeets' (an opportunity for teachers to show what they have been learning about education and an encouragement to others to think about different ways of teaching). We continued to encourage a culture of collaborative learning through the introduction of peer observation and reflection programs, and through our Perspectives afternoon teas where staff share what they have learned with one another. Our staff were privileged to spend some time with Michael Frost, Mark Glanville and George Glanville throughout the year, and we always attempt to create opportunities for our staff to learn from great thinkers. It was a great time of learning from these passionate and wise Christian educators.

*Peter Muddle*

*Curriculum Coordinator (Perspectives)*



# Teaching and Learning

2014 was an exciting time at Covenant Christian School in regard to teaching and learning opportunities. Our goal is to ensure that our teaching methods and our curriculum are designed to faithfully adhere to our vision and mission. We see this as being a vital part of who we are as a school.

In our Preschool classes, our teachers spent some time considering a Christian approach to the Early Years' Learning Framework (EYLF). During the conference week in July, some good work was done considering how the program can be delivered in a way that is honouring to God. The program continued to provide a steady stream of confident students into Kindergarten, and our teachers ensure a smooth start to the year for all involved. Students enjoyed a variety of shared experiences with the Infants classes during Term 4.

In 2014, further work was done refining the Australian Curriculum for the English NSW syllabus. Our staff taught the content through for the first time, and sought to implement a program that was engaging for the students, made helpful use of technology, and provided a strong framework to think Christianly about the task. Mathematics and Science and Technology had a strong focus as these programs began implementation also. Our staff attended some excellent in-service courses to assist them in their planning for a change in curriculum. Staff continued to better understand opportunities to *redeem the secular* curriculum in these courses, through the use of the Drivers/Detours/Destinations framework: *Drivers* – What spiritual truth is driving this unit? *Destinations* – What Godly understanding or act of Christian service is the destination of this unit? *Detours* – What incidental detours have been discovered, unplanned perhaps, but worth revisiting next year? We also undertook a review of the Biblical Studies program, so as to meet effectively the teaching of this most important course across the school.

Students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 also received a NAPLAN report for their test results in reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy. While NAPLAN testing is not the main game at Covenant Christian School, it is pleasing to see our students achieving at a level above state averages. Further information is available elsewhere in this report.

Our Secondary School continues to grow, providing some wonderful new opportunities, and also some new challenges. In 2014, Year 7 went to four streams, and included a large intake of new students (more than we have had before). We need to ensure that our new families understand who we are as a school, and as such, we are spending significant time working with the students and parents in articulating our vision. This growth is expected to continue. English and Mathematics classes are sorted according to ability and

need while the other subjects are mixed ability classes. ICT skills are integrated into all subject areas.

Students were offered a wide choice of electives in Year 9 and 10:

- ◆ Drama, Music, Visual Arts
- ◆ Information and Software Technology
- ◆ German
- ◆ Timber Technology, Food Technology, Design and Technology
- ◆ Commerce
- ◆ Physical Activity and Sports Studies
- ◆ Students could choose between elective Geography and History in Year 9, with the mandatory Australian History, Geography, Civics and Citizenship studied in Year 10
- ◆ There are also a number of language options available through the Open High School.

Year 10 students completed the "All My Own Work" program on ethical work practices, plagiarism, copyright and group work, in readiness for study in Years 11 and 12.

Year 11 and 12 students were able to choose from a broad range of subjects:

- ◆ English Standard, English Advanced, English Studies, ESL, English Extension 1 and 2.
- ◆ General Mathematics, Mathematics, Mathematics Extension 1 and 2
- ◆ Visual Arts, Drama, Music 1 and 2, Dance
- ◆ Business Studies, Economics, Legal Studies, Society and Culture
- ◆ Ancient and Modern History
- ◆ Biology, Physics, Chemistry
- ◆ PDHPE, Exploring Early Childhood, Sport Life and Recreation Studies
- ◆ German Beginners and Continuers, French Beginners
- ◆ Software Design and Development, Information Processes and Technology
- ◆ Design and Technology, Industrial Technology, Textiles and Design, Hospitality
- ◆ Studies of Religion 1 Unit or 2 Unit or Biblical Studies.

It was pleasing to see the work of our students on display at the various Dance and Music evenings, and the Fusion evening, when Visual Arts and Design students showcased their Major Works. It is wonderful to see the students in our school given the opportunity to explore their interests through the many subjects offered.

*Pete Muddle*

*Curriculum Coordinator (Perspectives)*

# Key Policy Outline

## Welfare

Our Mission statement declares that we "...assist parents in the nurture of their children, by providing a Christ-centred, biblically grounded, culturally engaging and academically rigorous education to equip the children to live for God's glory."

This means that as a community of staff, students and parents and caregivers, we seek to treat each other in a Christ-like way. The well-being of the students is thus closely tied to our mission as a school.

As a Christian school we aim to:

- ◆ make the school a safe place to work and play
- ◆ witness the Christian qualities of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Specifically, Covenant Christian School is committed to:

- ◆ a safe and nurturing environment in which students can learn
- ◆ effective teaching and learning experiences which engage students in the activities of the school, including extra-curricular activities
- ◆ a fair and effective discipline system which encourages good behaviour and seeks to improve the behaviour of students who do not behave well
- ◆ an environment in which students can come to understand how God has given them abilities and gifts, and how they can use them
- ◆ an understanding that we are all made in God's image but with many different strengths, and that we need to be accepting of and loving towards those who are different from ourselves
- ◆ an environment in which it is clear that bullying, violence and aggression are unacceptable
- ◆ a community in which parents, students and staff can communicate well with one another
- ◆ employing staff who are committed Christians, well qualified teachers and who seek to care for and nurture the students in their care.

Specific requirements are set out in our Child Protection and Anti-Harassment policies and procedures, among others. These include:

- ◆ ensuring that staff appointed are fit and proper people to occupy those positions through interviews and employment screening
- ◆ requiring staff to commit to a Staff Code of Conduct which is actively monitored
- ◆ training staff in Child Protection and Anti-Harassment measures
- ◆ implementing procedures to identify when a child is at risk of harm and to notify the proper authorities
- ◆ implementing procedures to notify and investigate complaints of improper conduct by staff and report to appropriate authorities
- ◆ recognising that dealing with harassment is the shared responsibility of parents, staff and students
- ◆ establishing procedures which will ensure an effective response to incidents of harassment
- ◆ ensuring that all occurrences of harassment are dealt with fairly and consistently
- ◆ encouraging openness among students about all forms of harassment
- ◆ taking pro-active preventative measures against harassment
- ◆ raising awareness about harassment among school staff, students and parents.

Bullying is when a person or group of people with more power at that time deliberately upset or hurt another person, their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion. We are committed to minimising hurtful and bullying behaviour in our school. The school is investigating the use of PeaceWise principles as a tool for dealing with conflict across the school.

## Discipline

Covenant's Discipline Policy is based on the following principles. It recognises the primacy of restoration of relationship over substantive issues and seeks to address relationship breakdown first if required. We try to manage the tension between acting both justly and mercifully in all situations. Discipline must always be procedurally fair.

Discipline should:

- ◆ be founded on love and concern for the child and those around him/her
- ◆ contribute towards a student's growth in Christ; thus it may involve repentance, reconciliation and restitution
- ◆ include positive and negative elements - confirming, commending and encouraging, as well as correcting, reproofing and punishing
- ◆ be clearly defined as to expectations and, wherever possible, be exercised promptly
- ◆ be consistent and administered justly, but with mercy
- ◆ reflect on the action or attitude, not the person, so that it is clear we love the child
- ◆ take into account the maturity of the child
- ◆ seek to develop self-discipline and thus not depend too heavily or exclusively on external motivation, such as structured rewards and punishments.

## Grievance

When dealing with any complaint, grievance or concern in relation to another person it ought to be done with the best intentions for the other person at heart, and according to the principles of procedural fairness. Whilst this is not necessarily easy to do, those involved in conflict ought to see it as an opportunity for growth. Specifically, all parties ought to:

- ◆ first speak directly about the issue to the person most concerned
- ◆ treat the matter seriously
- ◆ act fairly towards each other
- ◆ expect that they will be treated in the same way
- ◆ treat others involved in the situation with respect and graciousness
- ◆ act discreetly and maintain confidentiality.

If a person feels they cannot speak to the person concerned directly (e.g. in a case of bullying or fear), they should speak with another more senior person. In the case of a student, this may be the Home Class teacher or some other person they trust.

If a resolution is not achieved then the matter should be taken to the next most senior person, and so on, until it reaches the Principal for a decision. Any parent who is unhappy about a decision of the Principal, or who for other reasons would like to take a matter further, may take it in writing to the Board.

Full copies of these and other school policies can be obtained from the school office and are on the school's web site, [www.covenant.nsw.edu.au/community/forms-policies](http://www.covenant.nsw.edu.au/community/forms-policies)

# Co-curricular and Extra-Curricular Activities

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## Secondary School

The Secondary School continued to grow in 2014 and the opportunities for students to problem solve, create, explore and take part grew also. Whether students had sporting, dramatic, creative or academic gifts, there were challenges available to interest them.

Our upcoming athletes competed in swimming, cross country and athletic carnivals which were well attended and produced strong individual performances by students to Combined Independent School level. Teams were entered in local and Gala Day events in sports such as football, rugby, netball and basketball. Students were offered a range of sports during the year ranging from beach walking to futsal, rock climbing to tennis. The lease of the adjacent tennis courts in Dell Street provided an additional excellent venue for tennis and futsal as well as an area for school sport and recreational tennis.

The Secondary Music Team continues to lead assemblies as well as Christmas and Easter celebrations while Concert and Stage bands and choirs can be heard, especially in the Performing Arts Space (PAS). There was an Evening of Music as well as a Music tour to the South Coast. The Dance Academy was a vibrant section of the Creative and Performing Arts Faculty and held an end of year concert as well as the HSC night. The standard was very high and the spectacle was always striking and colourful. Visual Arts, Design and Technology and Industrial Technology students were able to showcase their Major Works at their respective Display Evenings. Christopher Symes' beautifully crafted Major Work was selected for display at Intech 2015. Finally there were Drama, Dance and Music evenings to showcase these specialist subjects.

Public Speaking maintains its popularity. The Public Speaking Carnival is now an annual event in Term 3 with all speakers reaching a high standard. The interschool carnival between Covenant Christian School, Northern Beaches Christian School and Oxford Falls Grammar was again successful.

Language students were able to visit the Retirement Home at Allambie Heights which caters for German speaking elderly people. Songs, chats and Christmas activities brought pleasure to the residents and improved spoken German for the students. French students hosted a Saturday Practice speaking exam for Covenant students and those from other nearby schools.

Students were trained and prepared for the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. Students safely completed arduous walks in the Royal National Park and the Blue Mountains and along the Great North Road in preparation for the final trek along the Overland Track in Tasmania. Students achieved Bronze, Silver and Gold awards.

Our Senior Students in Years 10 and 11 again trained for the trips to the Aboriginal community of Yarrabah in far North Queensland. This was a great opportunity for our students to share the gospel while undertaking a cross cultural experience. We continue to forge strong links with this community. A group of the women from Yarrabah came to Sydney to spend time with some of our teachers and parents.

Leadership skills have been developed within the Student Council which has raised money, run assemblies, assisted at various functions and represented the school at outside events. Bus Supervisors and House Captains also take on roles of responsibility and help in the smooth running of the school. Our Chaplain again organised the 40 Hour Famine for World Vision. About \$6000 was raised and a presentation of a High Achievement Award was made at Assembly. Student Council supported a number of other charities, represented the students on various issues and purchased additional equipment for the school. The school prepared shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child, hampers for the Salvation Army while some Home Classes continued their support of sponsor children.

Camps are an integral feature of school life: Year 7 students experienced an outdoor education camp while students from Years 8-10 had a choice of multi-age camps. These involved trips to a sheep station, orienteering in the city and helping out at Hope Street with homeless people, riding mountain bikes around the South Coast and hiking in the Wollemi State Forest. We plan to increase the number of options next year. Year 11 attended a retreat to develop leadership and study skills in Term 4. There was also an Art Camp, Drama Camp and a Maths Camp to extend students with a passion in these areas.

Excursions and visiting speakers were a regular feature of each term as our students continued to learn in a variety of ways.

*Chris O'Sullivan*

*Deputy Principal - Secondary School*

## Junior School

Junior School engaged in a number of activities throughout 2014 with the musical 'BitterSweet' playing a significant role in shaping school life, especially the Creative Arts. Once again this was a home-grown production that drew upon the resourcefulness of the entire community. Our fundraising for the year targeted a family in the school who was doing significant work in South East Asia. Our aim was to raise \$4000 over the year, yet through immense generosity of the children we managed to raise over \$6000. Our bi-annual speech giving assemblies continued to feature and our Outer Limits Day, a day devoted to extension and enrichment across Years 3-6, was once again very successful.

Co-curricular and extra-curricular activities throughout 2014 included:

### Extra-Curricular

- ◆ Training Band
- ◆ Junior Band
- ◆ Brass Band
- ◆ Student Council
- ◆ Bible Club
- ◆ Chess Club
- ◆ Sport training

### Co-Curricular

- ◆ Year 5 / 6 Camps
- ◆ Year 3 / 4 Sleepover
- ◆ Maths Extension Camp
- ◆ Comedy Workshop
- ◆ Writers Workshop
- ◆ Maths Olympiad
- ◆ Musica Viva
- ◆ Infants Fun Day (games run by Year 10)
- ◆ Infants Swim Program
- ◆ Year 6 Community Day

- ◆ Art Exhibition
- ◆ Film Festival
- ◆ House Captain training
- ◆ Speech-Giving Assemblies
- ◆ Billy Cart Race Day
- ◆ Kinma Friendship Day
- ◆ Library: Author visit
- ◆ StartSmart (financial literacy)
- ◆ ICAS Competitions
- ◆ Excursions for Year 3-6: Imax, Hyde Park Barracks, Canberra, Bushland, Powerhouse Museum, CARES-Bike Education day, Extension English, Surf Awareness
- ◆ Incursions for K-2: Musica Viva, Snake Tails, Fire Brigade, Ambulance, Nurse and Police visits
- ◆ Student Representative Council Mufti Days
- ◆ Book Week Assembly
- ◆ Premiers Reading Challenge

### Sport

- ◆ Athletics Carnivals: School, Zone, CSSA, CIS
- ◆ Swimming Carnivals: School, Zone, CSSA, CIS
- ◆ Cross Country Carnivals: School, State, CIS
- ◆ Tennis Gala Day
- ◆ Eagle Tag Gala Day
- ◆ Soccer Gala Day
- ◆ Netball Gala Day
- ◆ Gymnastics Gala Day
- ◆ AFL Gala Day
- ◆ Inter School Competition: Netball, Tee-ball, Soccer, Rugby League and Cricket.

*Wayne Morton*

*Deputy Principal - Junior School*

## 2014 Staff

Staff numbers have been increasing steadily each year. In 2014 there were 128 staff, of whom 94 were teaching staff and the remainder administrative or ancillary staff. There were 21 part-time and 73 full-time teaching staff. The retention rate for teaching staff was 98%.

Of the teaching staff

- ◆ Six were provisionally accredited at the start of 2014. Four of these were accredited at the Professional Competence level during the year.
- ◆ 48 were existing teachers under the NSW Institute of Teachers criteria
- ◆ All had a BEd or a Bachelor degree plus DipEd or equivalent
- ◆ Seven had additional degrees or vocational certificates
- ◆ 15 had an additional Master's degree
- ◆ Teaching experience ranged from 0 to 38 years with an average of about ten years.

The following staff joined us in 2014:

Sally Antcliff (School Nurse), Ruth Benfield (Teachers' Aide), Samantha Burrell (K-6), Emma Collins (Science), Geraldine Lian (TAS), Elisabeth Murray (Teachers' Aide), Natasha Roberts (History), Sarah Ryan (School Association Coordinator), Gabrielle Smith (English) and Heidi Stead (Junior School Curriculum Coordinator).

The following staff were on leave during 2014:

Rachel Purcell (Education Support / Mathematics / PDHPE), Penina Stafford (Music).

The following staff left the school during 2014:

Jeremy Fox (ICT Support), Sharyn Holmes (TAS), Meredith Knowles (History), Rachel Pym (Teachers' Aide), Tracey Staples (K-6), Janelle Trail (K-6) and Simone Waters (Music).



# School Performance

## Higher School Certificate Results

In 2014 Covenant Christian School had 86 students studying 34 different HSC courses.

The HSC results were again extremely encouraging and a reflection of our student and staff's work. Covenant is consistently placed in the top 200 schools in NSW.

While we celebrate with students who have registered in the top performance bands, and received high ATAR results, we also rejoice with those students who have given their best and worked in a committed and consistent manner. Some students far exceeded their own, or parent, expectations.

We believe God has a place and a purpose for every student at Covenant. Therefore we celebrate with each student who has found work and are utilising the gifts that God has given them.

We estimate that 85% of students eligible to attend university were offered a place in the first round offers. Their chosen courses include: Social Work, Science, Exercise and Sports Science, Nursing, Arts, Engineering, Design, Psychology, Law, Management, Commerce, Medical Science, Fine Arts, Business, Communication, Information Technology, Hospitality, Food and Agribusiness, Media, Primary and Secondary Teaching, Theology, Animal and Vet Bioscience, and International and Global Studies.

Fifteen students received an ATAR (Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank) of 90 or higher. The highest ATAR was 98.2.

Twenty-eight students received a mark of 90 or higher, placing them in Band 6, the top performance band in the State for the HSC. These students were therefore published in the Board of Studies Distinguished Achievers List. Subjects in which students achieved a Band 6 were Armenian Continuers, Biology, Business Studies, Chemistry, English Advanced, English Extension 1, English Extension 2, Entertainment Industry Examination, French Beginners, General Mathematics, Hospitality Examination, Industrial Technology, Information Processes and Technology, Legal Studies, Mathematics General, Mathematics, Mathematics Extension 1, Music 1, Personal Development, Health and Physical Education, Physics, Textiles and Design, and Visual Arts.

Covenant is a comprehensive co-educational school. We do not offer academic scholarships as we believe those in need of financial support are those who struggle to afford a Christian education, not only those with high academic ability. Our excellent results reflect the high standards and hard work of our staff and students and the prayerful support of our community.

## In General

- ◆ In the majority of subjects taken at Covenant, students performed at a level equivalent to or better than State average.
- ◆ Covenant students sat 34 different HSC courses in 2014.
- ◆ Six subjects exceeded the State average by more than 5%.

Course Name	School Mean	State Mean	Variation
Industrial Technology	86.03	70.66	15.37
IPT	86.30	72.94	13.36
Mathematics	84.96	78.37	6.59
Physics	80.70	73.49	7.21
French Beginners	83.57	76.09	7.48
Hospitality Examination	81.73	75.23	6.50

- ◆ There were 28 students who received marks in the 90's, placing them in Band 6, the top performance band for the State. There were an impressive 54 marks between 90 and 100.
- ◆ There were also an extraordinary number of individual performances where students gained an HSC mark of over 80 – 89, placing them in Band 5, the second highest performance band for the State. Overall there were 172 marks between 80 and 89.
- ◆ Covenant students were significantly under-represented in Bands 3, 2 and 1, the lower Performance Bands.
- ◆ In many subjects offered at Covenant there were no students in the lowest 3 performance bands. Four subjects are shown here as an example.

## Mathematics

- ◆ 34.61% of CCS students were significantly over represented in Band 6, the top performance Band when compared to the State average of 21.71%
- ◆ 34.61% of CCS students were also significantly over represented in Band 5 when compared to the State average of 27.7%
- ◆ 30.76% of CCS students were represented in Band 4 when compared to the State average of 27.7%
- ◆ 100% of CCS students achieved HSC marks placing them in Bands 6, 5 and 4. There were no CCS students represented in the lowest 3 Performance Bands

## Geography

- ◆ 55.55% of CCS Students were significantly over represented in Band 5, the second top performance Band when compared to State average of 36.16%
- ◆ 44.44% of CCS students were also significantly represented in Band 4, the third top performance Band when compared to the State average of 25.16%
- ◆ 100% of CCS students achieved HSC marks placing them in Bands 6, 5 and 4. There were no CCS students represented in the lowest 3 Performance Bands

## Physics

- ◆ 10% of CCS Students were over represented in Band 6, the top performance Band when compared to the State average of 8.54%
- ◆ 40% of CCS students were represented in Band 5, the second top performance Band when compared to the State average of 22.55%

- ◆ 50% of CCS students were represented in Band 4, the third top performance Band when compared to the State average of 35.21%
- ◆ 100% of CCS students achieved HSC marks placing them in Bands 6, 5 and 4. There were no CCS students represented in the lowest 3 Performance Bands

## Visual Arts

- ◆ 14.28% of CCS Students were over represented in Band 6, the top performance Band when compared to State average of 10.63%
- ◆ 42.85% of CCS students were over represented in Band 5, the second top performance band when compared to the State average of 37.97%
- ◆ 42.85% of CCS students were over represented in Band 4, the third top performance band when compared to the State average of 36.55%
- ◆ 100% of CCS students achieved HSC marks placing them in Bands 6, 5 and 4. There were no CCS students represented in the lowest 3 Performance Bands

## Record of School Achievement (RoSA)

Eligible students who leave school before receiving their Higher School Certificate (HSC) will receive the NSW Record of School Achievement (RoSA). The RoSA records completed Stage 5 (Year 10) and Preliminary Stage 6 (Year 11) courses and grades, and participation in any uncompleted Preliminary Stage 6 courses.

In 2014, five students were nominated for the RoSA via the Board of Studies website.

*Sharon Sopher*

*Secondary Administration Coordinator*

## National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy

NAPLAN (National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy) is an annual assessment for all students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. It tests the types of skills that are essential for every child to progress through school and life. The tests cover skills in reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy.

In the 2014 NAPLAN tests, our students generally exceeded the benchmarks in all areas. In most cases results are above or well above the national averages. From Covenant, very few students with disabilities were exempt from NAPLAN and therefore are included in these statistics.

NAPLAN RESULTS	Reading	Persuasive Writing	Spelling	Grammar and Punctuation	Numeracy
Covenant Year 3	448	403	436	449	427
National Year 3	418	402	412	426	402
Covenant Year 5	556	507	526	554	532
National Year 5	501	468	498	504	488
Covenant Year 7	591	557	569	587	593
National Year 7	546	512	545	543	546
Covenant Year 9	625	600	623	619	645
National Year 9	580	550	582	574	588

According to the NAPLAN analysis, Covenant is close to, slightly above or greatly above other schools that are considered statistically similar to Covenant, except in year 3 where we are slightly below for Reading, Persuasive Writing, Grammar & Punctuation and Numeracy.

Also statistically, Covenant is substantially close to or above, all areas when compared against all schools nationally.

Those students who have fallen below the benchmarks have been identified by the Education Support staff and extra teaching time and support has been provided. Strategies have been put in place to assist them by a combination of working alongside students in their classrooms, individual tutor groups and other individualised programs where necessary. Also, where required, the coordinators of the related faculty areas are consulted so they are aware of the issues and can set up teaching structures and strategies within their faculties.

*Lesley Bennett*

*Education Support Coordinator*

# Financial Report

## Overview

I am pleased to present the financial report for the year ending 2014 on behalf of the Board. Good progress in a number of key areas was made in 2014. We completed E Block 1<sup>st</sup> floor project providing much needed additional Secondary classrooms and a staffroom large enough to cater for the Science, Mathematics and English faculties. The classroom set up was designed to be very flexible, including the ability to remove all internal walls to create one large space for examinations. This takes the pressure off the hall which is already in great demand. This development is a wonderful addition to the school and we give thanks to God for his provision.

In addition we had good growth in Secondary student enrolments. As a result, we achieved a pleasing operating surplus.

Our financial performance is a direct result of the school exceeding student enrolment expectations, of generous Australian Government recurrent and capital funding, of parents paying their fees on time, as well as the school's ability to manage payments and bank accounts to maximise interest income. The school met its obligations to staff and creditors in 2014.

Under the guidance of the Board, the Finance Committee, consisting of Board, Association Members and Executive, are involved in the financial management of the school. The committee is invaluable, as a number of financial improvements have come about as a result. The committee is actively involved in the budget process.

## Fees & Enrolments

The Board's goal is to provide affordable Christian education to Christian parents, by keeping the fees as low as possible while yet still delivering a high standard of Christian education, and maintaining and improving buildings and grounds to satisfactory levels.

Our student numbers for 2014 were budgeted at 825 and at census we achieved 843. This year our enrolment target is 850.

## Financial Accounts 2014

A budgeted net operating surplus of \$414k was approved for 2014. The Financial Accounts for the year ending 2014 show a net operating surplus of \$788k. The cash position at the end of the year increased from \$1.17m to a total of \$1.3m. This was satisfying given the building works also undertaken during this period. The Board recognises the need to create an appropriate surplus each year with a view to future projects.

During 2014 we reduced our loans by \$240k. This is a good achievement which speaks volumes to bankers and others about our solid financial credentials.

It is the school's accounting practice that the Business Manager can write off some of the capital projects and building improvement costs in the year the work was carried out. This is instead of capitalising, when the school's recurrent cash surplus permits, and is above the budget surplus. This practice is with the full knowledge of the Finance Committee and the school's auditor, IL Struthers & Associates.

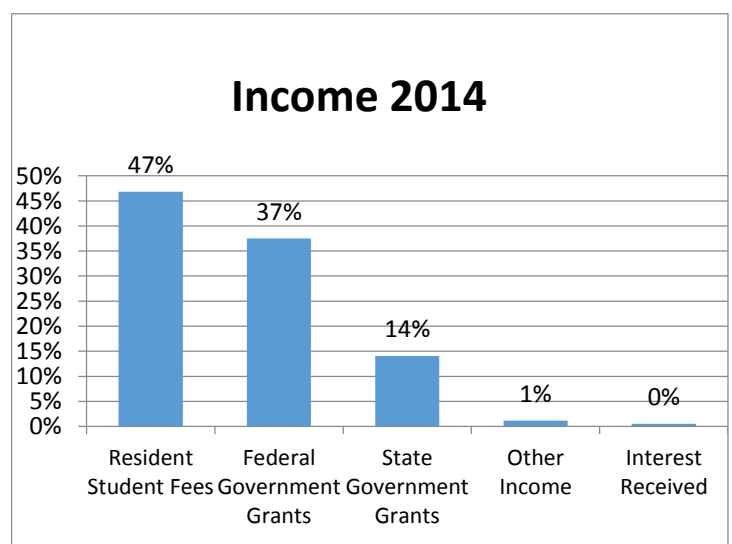
A number of great new additions and refurbishments have taken place to improve the school facilities in 2014. This includes extending the shade structure over the basketball court adjacent to the hall, a large climbing frame for the Junior School, and additional outdoor teaching area and shade structure designed for the lower Secondary year groups on the west side of the hall.

In addition, we also took on the lease of the Belrose Tennis Courts located on Dell Street. This area is now referred to as the Covenant Christian School Sports Centre and provides additional sport facilities including Tennis, Futsal and Netball. It also provides more playground as required.

The School continued to invest in technology. The use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) grew in 2014 throughout all year groups. This included additional iPad devices for the Junior School. Also much planning and preparation took place throughout the year including various reviews of our current infrastructure with a view to meeting best practice standards for a school environment. Our iPad program will expand into Years 7 and 8 in 2015. In 2015 every Secondary student will have access to a portable device.

## Income

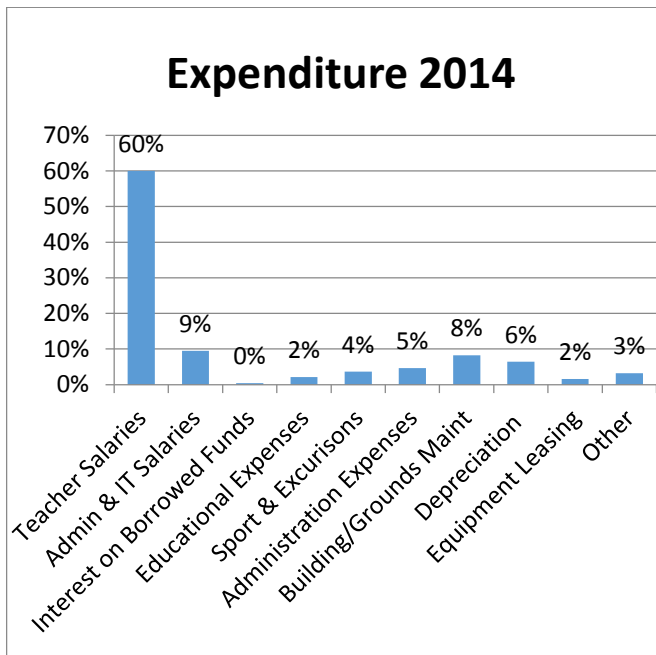
Income from families equates to 47% of total income and government grants equate to approximately 51% of total income. We are thankful for government support. In more simplistic terms, for every \$1.00 a parent paid, grants from the Federal and State Governments contributed \$1.10.





## Recurrent Expenditure

Our expenses in 2014 will show that our major recurrent expense is salaries. In 2014 salaries represented 69% of our total recurrent expenditure. This does not include capital expenditure.



## The Year Ahead

We believe the 2015 budget has been established with an achievable net operating surplus target. The cash flow is going to remain steady in line with capital investment. We still anticipate more than \$1m in the bank by year end. This is seen as prudent. The key to achieving our budget largely falls to meeting our enrolment numbers of 850.

In 2015 we will continue to position the school with the financial stability required to proceed with higher student enrolments in subsequent years. This includes the facilities to meet the capacity and the staffing needs to meet the enrolments. As part of the school Master Plan, the E Block TAS, Science development (yet to be approved by the Board) is planned to open in Term 2 2016. This will provide great benefits to the school community. We hope that all community members will find an opportunity to return to the school and take a tour. In addition, there are other projects that will be undertaken to add value to our school.

The school continues to be committed to preventative maintenance for the long term benefit of the school. We ask for your continued financial and prayer partnership over the coming year.

*Andrew Lowry*

*Business Manager*

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