PRESIDENT’S REPORT 2014 TO 2015 – A SYNOPSIS

Outgoing president acknowledged the very supportive and active contribution of the office bearers of the executive committee and the representatives of the four affiliated organisations of ACSSQ. She expressed the association’s appreciation to Mike Byrne, QCEC Executive Director, and Bob Knight for their attendance at ACSSQ meetings and for keeping the members well informed on issues.

Following this thanks, Ann outlined the activities of ACSSQ and the four affiliated associations:

• ACSSQ DP/APA “Spirit of Harmony” conference
• ASREAP “Catholic School Leadership in Uncertain Times” conference and their Nuts & Bolts days
• ACCSSQ (Counsellors) “Sea Change and Coping with Transitions” conference
• CASPA (Principals) “Who is my Neighbour” National conference

ACSSQ facilitated the Ave Atque Vale dinner (although thwart by hail storm in Brisbane, November 2014). A small group made their way to the Royal Exchange Hotel, Toowong, where Pat Elsworthy’s contribution to the association over the past years was acknowledged and celebrated. In addition the group raised money for Caritas.

At the Annual General Meeting, Ann described the significant contribution to ACSSQ of Mike Byrne and Pat Elsworthy, both of whom were awarded with Life Membership at the meeting.

Ann recognised the association, as it is the only organisation across Queensland that brings together Catholic secondary school leadership teams and counsellors. ACSSQ plans for the future involve supporting conferences in each affiliated group and facilitate other professional development opportunities such as travelling scholars. The aim discussed in 2014 was for a combined conference that will bring together all our members of the parent body.

To conclude, Ann stated that the association, representing leaders within Catholic education in Queensland, provides a vehicle to help us steer Catholic education into a strong educational future.

DATE CLAIMER

AVE ATQUE VALE DINNER 2015

World Teacher’s Day, Friday evening, October 30

Venue to be determined

PLEASE NOTE THAT DINNER HAS BEEN BROUGHT FORWARD FROM THE TRADITIONAL LAST WEEK IN NOVEMBER.
2015 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting and dinner on Thursday March 5, was well attended with 59 members and three life members—Pat Condon, Laura Keating and Ed Riley. New executive office bearers were elected. President’s and Treasurer’s reports were delivered and two new life members were awarded.
COUNSELLORS (ACCSSQ)

“WELLBEING FOR LEARNING”

This year’s conference was held at the Mercure Gold Coast Resort from June 3 to 5 and was officially opened by Professor Jim Nyland, Associate Vice Chancellor (Brisbane) of the Australian Catholic University.

The conference was very well attended, with school counsellor delegates from a number of educational systems. The theme “Wellbeing for Learning” acknowledged the increasingly complex needs of young people in our schools and the integral role of school counsellors within the whole school community approach to improving wellbeing and a student’s capacity to learn.

The focus of the first full day of conferencing on Thursday was “The Role of the School Counsellor”, with the first keynote speaker, Dr Monica Thielking of Swinburne University emphasising the importance of school counsellors working collaboratively with others to improve student outcomes. The second keynote speaker, Dr Christine Grima-Farrell from Australian Catholic University (Sydney), offered numerous positive psychology strategies and frameworks for enhancing student wellbeing and resilience for learning.

Reflecting concerns about the increasing numbers of students presenting with anxiety symptoms within our schools, the Friday theme of the conference was “Managing Anxiety in Children and Adolescents”. Associate Professor James Scott from the University of Queensland presented a very well-received keynote address on causes and care of anxiety, with Associate Professor Allison Waters of Griffith University following up with an in-depth evidence-based presentation of the cognitive neuroscience of emotional disorders. An excellent plenary session with keynote and workshop presenters concluded the day and the conference.

This annual conference once again provided school counsellors with the opportunity to participate in relevant professional learning within a reflective and collegial environment.

Barb Davies
President, ACCSSQ

ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (ASREAP)

An Invitation to attend the ASREAP conference.

Catholic identity is emerging as a critical focus for Australian Catholic educational organisations seeking to articulate and develop the identity of Catholic schools in what has been described as a detraditionalising and pluralising culture. It is an endeavour that has significant implications for all teachers in Catholic schools not least religious education coordinators, assistant principals religious education and their equivalents.

Our 2015 conference will explore what we mean when we talk about Catholic identity and discern how it can be enhanced in a way that is responsive to the religious and cultural experiences of staff, students and families within our schools. Our keynote speaker, Rev Dr Kevin Leneham will lay the theoretical foundations that will be engaged more practically through three workshop streams: curriculum, leadership and spirituality. Together with our chaplain-in-residence, after dinner speakers and InspiRED talks series, the ASREAP coordinating team anticipates the conference will stimulate the mind, move the heart and stir the soul.

Leaders and classroom teachers in Catholic schools are warmly invited to join the ASREAP conference at Mooloolaba in July to participate in the conversation with colleagues from Catholic secondary schools in Queensland. Come to inspire and be inspired.

Richard Rogusz
ASREAP President
ACSSQ CONGRATULATES MIKE BYRNE ON HIS LIFE MEMBERSHIP

At the recent Annual General Meeting of ACSSQ, Mike Byrne was awarded life membership of the Association of Catholic Secondary Schools of Queensland. His central message was a vote of thanks for the work that the association does to keep the story of Catholic education alive in Queensland. The peer support offered by the association allows for those in senior leadership to share stories and develop a sense of collegiality amongst those involved in Catholic education. The support offered to each other in leadership positions is vital to effective delivery of Catholic education.

He referred to the transformation of religious staff within our schools to non-religious personnel. Mike praised those in leadership as they carry on the religious stories in our Catholic schools in Queensland, making Catholic education stronger. “It is who we are, is what we catch.” Colleges in Catholic education are ‘catching’ the religious traditions.

ACSSQ CONGRATULATES PAT ELSWORTHY ON HIS LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Deidre Young, Principal and former Treasurer of ACSSQ, introduced Pat as a newest life member of ACSSQ. She outlined Pat’s extensive history with the association that should be admired, celebrated and acknowledged. His continuous involvement in ACSSQ for the past 20+ years reflects the value Pat has for the objectives of ACSSQ. He has been a driving force in bringing together leadership teams within Catholic secondary schools through the promotion of the biannual dinner gatherings and his commitment to the publication of the To Keep In Touch newsletter. Pat has often been the publisher, editor and distributor of the magazine, a means to disseminate information about the work of the organisation and its associated groups.

Pat’s involvement commenced with the DP/APA committee in which he was Vice President for two years and President for three years. Following this he was elected President of ACSSQ, a position he held for 10 years. In 2012 he took on the role of Vice President and retired in 2014 from ACSSQ.

Pat was conscious of the dynamic and diverse nature that ACSSQ represents. To cater for all members throughout Queensland, Pat introduced the concept of a biannual travelling scholar sponsored by ACSSQ. The scholar would offer professional development and networking opportunities in all of the five dioceses in Queensland.

Pat was committed to succession planning in our association and has encouraged many to get involved in executive committees both in the parent body and affiliated committees.

A SHORT BIOGRAPHY PRESENTED BY ANN REBGETZ

As Executive Director of the Queensland Catholic Education Commission, Mike Byrne articulates educational policy at State level as determined by the Queensland Catholic Education Commission. Mike is chief advocate for Catholic education on a State-wide basis and the chief negotiator in dealings with governments and other sectors of education within the State. In this role, Mike interacts with the 22 autonomous Catholic school authorities who own and operate Catholic schools in Queensland.

Prior to this appointment, Mike was the Director of the Catholic Education Office in Townsville from 1993–2006 and in that Diocese he also held positions as Assistant Director, Education Consultant, Secondary Consultant and Principal. In his teaching career, which began in 1969, Mike taught in a number of Queensland secondary schools.

As part of his responsibility as Executive Director, Queensland Catholic Education Commission, Mike serves on a variety of National and State commissions, committees and boards. Mike will retire from this role on 29 May 2015.

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