School Advisory Council

Chair Report

Annual Community Meeting – November 18th 2025

2025 has been a year of new beginnings and fresh starts to many areas of Kearnan College. At the start of the year, along with new student faces and families, we also welcomed our new Principal, Dr Lisa Gallin and our new Parish Priest, Fr Joseph Sousa. Joining a new community has its challenges and I truly hope that both Lisa and Fr Joe have felt welcomed by our Kearan community. In particular, I'd like to recognise that Lisa had to coordinate the School Audit as soon as she arrived in 2025, no mean feat and was thoroughly completed ensuring our compliance with government requirements. The strength of Kearnan College lies in our close ties to our community, where each of our community members (students, staff and parents) are known and valued within our College. To Lisa in your first year as Principal of the College – thank you for all of your hard work and new vision – we really look forward to you continuing to lead our school into the future.

The primary function of the School Advisory Council is to support planning for the present and future operation of the Catholic school. It has been a pleasure to serve on the Advisory Council and have regular and fruitful conversations as a group as to how best serve our College community, be that through finance, resources, staffing or operational considerations for school. Lisa has been proactive throughout the year in both keeping the SAC informed of relevant events and changes and also in seeking members input for many decisions. From a parent perspective, this willingness to listen is deeply appreciated.

The College continues to operate in a very challenging financial position, of which the Advisory Council is plainly aware. We continue to operate small classes, meaning very limited income from government sources, honour our ongoing loan repayment for historical builds and the newest edition of the early childhood building and ensure that cashflow is adequate to maintain the day to day running of the school. These small classes are a hallmark strength of Kearnan and always appreciated by parents, but they do make for budgeting challenges for the Principal. As an advisory council, we are aware of the difficulties that this has meant for Lisa in making decisions about prioritising maintenance and improvements, along with structural changes which are appropriate within the school. These difficult decisions will need to continue to be made as we work hard to improve our financial position, with the support of our families. For families, this includes recognising that moderate fee increases are needed and appropriate in order to allow our school to keep pace with increasing costs. Parents, I implore you to keep at front of mind the differential funding that Catholic education receives – please continue to advocate in any way you can to

address this imbalance as students in Catholic schools deserve access to funding as much as those in public schools.

I'm pleased to have been involved in a number of staffing appointment panels this year, as is appropriate to CEWA's appointment of staff policy and it has been a real pleasure to be able to support the College in selecting and securing quality staff for our future improvements, something that the Advisory Council will continue to support in future years.

The College has held a number of fabulous events throughout the year, which have continued to build upon the strengths of our community and these events have ranged in size from every day events, such as class assemblies to whole school celebrations of patrons and, of course, the community wide event of the College centenary, which was an amazing celebration of 100 years of Catholic education at Kearnan College. Recognition must be given to Leah Kilrain and Jess Durbin for all of the efforts put in throughout the lead up and on the day to ensure this celebration was truly a wonderful milestone.

The recent grandparent day at the College was another example of a wonderful event to welcome community members into our school, and it amazing to see so many grandparents in attendance, particularly those who in previous years were visible in our school as their own children attended. Year 12 Graduation at the start of Term 4 was a joyous send off for our eldest students, some of whom have been here for 14 years of schooling. The entire community wishes them the very best for their next journey.

Our new Early Childhood building was officially opened this term, although it has been in use for a year already. The opening was beautiful celebration appropriate to this warm and inviting learning space for our youngest students. The building was a much needed improvement to our College, has been long awaited and I'm sure it will be enjoyed by our students for many years to come.

Members of the Advisory Council give freely of their time for the improvement of our College and they provide a critical listening ear in our community, advocate in many forums for our school and provide input and suggestion where appropriate to our College Principal. I extend my sincere thanks to all Advisory Council members who have been so generous in sharing their gifts this year. Particular thanks are extended to Lee-Anne Pardini who has fulfilled the role of SAC Treasurer and given us many valuable insights into College finance and guided us through the financial reports. Recognition goes to Julie Brown, our hardworking finance officer who continues to work closely with Lee-Anne to produce these reports. Jess Durbin must also be recognised for her willingness to take on the role of SAC Secretary, despite her heavy workload in the role of P&F Chair. To Fabio Renzullo and Scott Giacomel who joined the SAC as co-opted members this year – thank you for your insights and willingness to participate. Steele Jacob is finishing with the SAC this year, and we appreciate the time and dedication he has offered the SAC over several years. We also look forward to working with incoming SAC members who will join us next year.

We should also ensure that we recognise and continue to support our P&F committee. This very small group of dedicated parents not only run fundraisers to assist with extras for our children, but they also make sure that they are working hard to continue to build community and provide opportunities for families to connect with each other through our community walk, class representatives and events throughout the year. Please consider supporting them through your involvement in 2026.

I'd like to also thank the College staff for their hard work and dedication throughout the year to ensuring that our children have access to a Christ centred, child focused education each and every day. This includes our teaching staff, support staff, administration officers, grounds staff, canteen and cleaning staff. The school cannot operate without any of these people and we are very blessed to have such a group of people to welcome our children every day. I wish all members of our College community a deeply restful and restorative Christmas break. May the joy of birth of Jesus surround your families at this time.

Alanna Otway
SAC Chair