



Catholic Education  
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

File for ✓  
1/6/06

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## REPORT

ADD/SJ

<b>TO:</b>	ARCHBISHOP WILSON
<b>FROM:</b>	ALLAN DOOLEY
<b>DATE:</b>	14/2/06
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	SLATTERY REPORT

New file

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Archbishop Wilson,

During last year you asked for an analysis of the Slattery Report (St Ann's Special School) and action that has followed from that report. Paul Slattery was asked by you to review the Brian Hayes Report and to comment on related matters. His report (part 2) also discussed the Olsson Report.

This report of mine relates to his comments and reflections on matters associated with St Ann's Special School, Special School Governance and broader matters that he raises as a consequence of this work.

I make the following observations for your information:

1. The report refers to a number of reporting mechanisms and controls that should have existed at the time (to the Board) and appeared to have not been followed. Slattery notes in regard to the governance model of the Special Schools, *'it is difficult to understand why (now) there is a need for a structure which includes a Board of Governors'*. I note the following actions that have been taken:
  - A new publication, *Manual for School Board Members*, was published in 2005. Prior to publication this manual was reviewed by Paul Slattery QC and his recommendations from his review of the manual were adopted in the publication;
  - The Principals of the two Special Schools have been advised that in addition to reporting to the Board in the normal course that they should also communicate important and critical matters and incidents through their PC to me as Director of Catholic Education;
  - A Committee has been agreed and will commence work early this year on reviewing the Vision for, and Governance structure of the Special Schools. The Chair of this Committee was appointed late last year and is Mr Brian Martin AO. A copy of the Slattery Report will be provided to him for his background reading to this review.

2. The report refers to the appointment process that related to Brian Perkins. Slattery confirms that good progress has been made in this area in recent years. I confirm that appointment and police check processes have been promulgated as a policy across Catholic Schools in SA.
3. Paul Slattery refers to a direct line of reporting between the Principal and the Chair of the Board of Management. This is now in place and regular and full reports are provided to the Board of Management.
4. Slattery notes that little if anything was done for the families at the time, nor to assist staff with their emotions or to ensure that the Board could take steps to ensure that events were not repeated. Our structures and support, to the extent that they are able, now attend to these matters in professional and pastoral practice.
5. Slattery notes that it is critical that there be connections complemented by a culture of responsibility about the conduct and business of the Board and notes that it is essential that a corporate memory is created within the Board. The development of Board members, their induction, the keeping of records and the ongoing professional development of board members across Catholic Schools is now detailed in the Manual for School Board Members. Each PC works with their Principal in considering this work with the respective Board and is often involved in the development work personally.
6. In his report Slattery notes (paragraphs 26, 27 & 28) that there should be, *say*, a three year review of policies with the assistance of an outside facilitator which should include legal issues. I note from the Manual for School Board Members under responsibilities of the Board,

*Boards should seek to identify a preferred future and plan to achieve it over a period of approximately five years. A school's five year plan should reflect the values and beliefs of the school vision statement and incorporate policy development, curriculum, financial, building, and community elements. Such a plan should clearly establish the links between these elements and how they will be achieved. The plan should be reviewed annually. The Principal as Executive Officer of the School Board undertakes the development of a plan for school renewal in conjunction with the School Board and appropriate staff of the Catholic Education Office.*

I note that the PC for each school conducts an annual review of progress of the five-year plan with the principal. In addition an annual compliance audit is also conducted to ensure that SACCS and Diocesan policies are also being applied appropriately. A summary report from each diocesan school is made to me by the PC each year.

7. Finally I note that the reporting of critical incidents to me as Director is now embedded in our daily practice and through me the Vicar General and you are kept advised on critical incidents. Where appropriate these are also referred to the Special Issues Taskforce for the Archdiocese.

8. I note that one area that requires further attention is that of systemic training and development (as different to that provided individually through the PC to each school) for Parish Priests, Principals and School Board Chairpersons. I have asked Paul Sharkey to prepare a plan for ongoing work in this area.

I am pleased with the progress that has been made in recent years in relation to Governance, policy development, training and development and compliance reporting in a wide range of areas.

Should you require further information please let me know.

Regards,



Allan.

