

"ANNEXURE B"

Draft

Confidential

PERFORMANCE REVIEW REPORT

IAN HUNTER

Senior Education Officer

Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Toowoomba

3rd – 4th August 2009

Panel: Dr John Davis

Adj. Prof. Anne Benjamin

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Introduction

Ian Hunter was appointed to the role of Senior Education Officer, Staff and School Development, within the Toowoomba Catholic Education Office in 2005. This Performance Review covers the period from 2005 to 2009.

The overall purpose of the role of Senior Education Officer, Staff and School Development, (hereafter in this report referred to as SEO) as stated in the Role Statement is to: *To supervise, support and report on the operation of school leadership as well as provide consultancy in the areas of staff and school development.* There are four Key Result Areas (KRA) specified in the SEO role and the findings of this report are organised around them.

The role statement specifies that an SEO "will be accorded a comprehensive and collaborative review by the end of semester one in the last year" of a five-year contract. Correspondingly, this performance review was conducted in the fifth year of Ian's appointment.

1. Process

The Performance Review panel convened by the Assistant Director, Staff and School Development, comprised Dr John Davis, Consultant and former Assistant Director, Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Rockhampton, and Dr Anne Benjamin, Adjunct Professor in the School of Educational Leadership, Australian Catholic University, and formerly Executive Director of Schools, Diocese of Parramatta. The panel met at the Catholic Education Office on 3rd and 4th August to conduct interviews, to collate survey data and to finalise the review report.

Evidence for the review was obtained from the following sources:

- * Self-review from Ian Hunter (forwarded in advance)
- * Surveys returned from principals, Catholic Education Office staff and persons external to the Toowoomba system (18 returns from 34 surveys.)
- * Interviews with: Ian Hunter, Assistant Director, Staff and School Development, Senior Education Officers (3) and Principals (6).

2. Self Review Perceptions

In an extensive introduction to his self-review document, Ian summarised his statement of educational philosophy and the professional context in which he exercises his role.

Ian identifies his main achievements over the past five years as being in the following areas:

- * Student Protection
- * Relationships forged with fellow SEOs and with Principals
- * Improved processes, (eg, around School Visits) and
- * Integrating the spiritual journey of school leaders.

Ian has identified his achievements under each of the Key Result Areas in his role statement as follows.

KRA 1 Supervision, encouragement and support of school leaders occurs especially with regard to compliance with accreditation requirements.

- Negotiating and implementing more focussed informal visits with Principals
- Regular phone and email contact with Principals
- Thoroughness in completing Formal annual School Visits, and
- A “firm, fair and friendly” approach which finds a balance between *support* and *supervision*.

KRA 2 Consultation and support in regard to the leadership and management of staff and school development is provided.

- Extended reflection with Principals on their annual goal-setting and reviews,
- Informal support for Principals through participation in school celebrations,
- His ability to listen non-judgementally to Principals and provide advice, either from himself, from Principals themselves or from external sources,
- Consulting frequently with the Assistant Director, Staff & School Development, and other SEOs, and
- Involvement in other system processes, (such as staffing, induction, Principal selection, Staff performance).

KRA 3 Catholic Education Office representation duties undertaken.

In his self-review document, Ian has presented a very long list of representation duties undertaken over the previous five years. These include representation at functions and key events, (eg, launch of Catholic Education Week in Brisbane), membership of Toowoomba-based education committees (eg, NAPCAN Toowoomba Committee, Diocesan ATSI Advisory Committee, CEO Strategic Plan Committee), State committees/forums (eg, QCEC Student Protection Working Party), Inservice/programs (eg, New Principal Induction, Student Protection Inservice to Diocesan Priests, CEO Reflection Days) and participation in Diocesan network meetings (eg, Learning Support Teachers, Counsellors.)

Ian describes these duties as a rewarding part of his work, but also comments that he needs to balance these in order to honour the core responsibilities of his role in Staff and School Development.

KRA 4 Professional skills and knowledge are current.

* Ian’s self-review lists a range of professional development activities that he has completed over his five years in the SEO role. In 2006, he completed a Graduate Certificate in Education Law from Australian Catholic University. About a third of the professional development completed over the five years relates to some aspect of either Law or Student Protection.

Other prescribed junctions

Ian's self-review documents his activities in other areas, namely induction programs for early career teachers and principals, his support for School Boards, especially in the early years of their establishment and support for School Renewal activity. The self-review document reports at length on Ian's extensive involvement in the area of Student Protection. He comments on the present Catholic Education Office structure of having three Student Protection Officers (SEOs) across the system as one about which he has "always been nervous". Further, he adds, this structure "is not, I believe, the best way to ensure that Principals and schools receive the level of support, advice and monitoring needed in the often complex and crucial area of Student Protection. Individual SEOs (including acting SEOs) have varying levels of experience and knowledge of Student Protection policy and procedure and, at times, there has been confusion as to who, of a number of people in the Office, is managing particular situations."

3. Review Findings

▪ *Strengths and Achievements*

KRA 1 Supervision, encouragement and support of school leaders occurs especially with regard to compliance with accreditation requirements

KRA 2 Consultation and support in regard to the leadership and management of staff and school development in provided

These two Key Result Areas are being treated together as the Reviewers found considerable overlap in the two areas and wish to avoid duplication.

Ian Hunter was described to Reviewers in a variety of ways during the Review, but there was one consistent message: he is, as one person remarked, *a wonderful person to work with*. Data gathered during this review strongly endorses Ian's professionalism and competence in exercising his wide-ranging and complex role. Respondents agreed that he "is excellent in following up issues and providing guidance". His personal style of guiding was described as "mentoring" which achieves "excellent results". This mentoring is seen as building leadership skills in Principals, particularly in the area of community-building. He is seen to think "strategically" and to provide advice which is always considered and reflective and therefore of a high quality.

One voice during the review suggested that Ian should follow up some in-school matters with greater firmness. However, this view was inconsistent with the overwhelming majority of responses and the Reviewers were satisfied that this was, perhaps, the opinion of a Principal who was reluctant to handle some of the more difficult issues within the school themselves. Far more typical were comments such as that submitted by another principal, that *Ian's communication and problem-solving skills are a valuable source for not only myself as a Principal but also the staff*. Another Principal commented that, *in his quiet, firm but gentle way, he can challenge me when needed*. Other Principals readily gave examples of instances when they had been challenged by Ian.

The work that Ian has done over the years to bring greater formality and regular processes to School Visits by SEOs has been appreciated by his SEO colleagues. The Reviewers note that this has, at times, involved negotiation with colleagues from other teams within the Catholic Education Office (CEO) so that reports on each school are prepared in a timely manner prior to SEO visits. Ian is to be commended for this initiative and this attempt to bring the work of the different CEO teams towards some limited integration for the sake of the learning of children in diocesan schools.

In all this work, Ian's deep spirituality and faith comes through, inspiring, teaching and challenging the Principals and school staff he works with, as well as helping them integrate their own faith in their professional lives.

KRA 3 Catholic Education Office representation duties undertaken

It was made clear to the Reviewers that Principals appreciate the efforts made by Ian to participate in school celebrations. His generosity in attending such events is welcomed. He is described as a "valued member" of the Queensland Catholic Education Commission Student Protection Working Party. He has contributed in creating "a very positive impression for Catholic education" with members of the State-based Queensland Child Protection Week Committee.

His attention to detail and methodical approach to all his work are appreciated and noted, as well as *his thorough approach to the delivery of staff training and the monitoring of compliance at diocesan and school levels in this area.*

KRA 4 Professional skills and knowledge are current

The Reviewers commend Ian for his continued commitment to his professional learning over the five years he has been in the role of SEO. In the light of his responsibilities, he has undertaken considerable learning in the areas of Student Protection and law. One observer commented, *I have noted his strenuous efforts to maintain his expertise in student protection matters.* The review gave consistent indications that Ian has used this learning for the good of children in Diocesan schools through regular Student Protection Updates at the quarterly meetings of Principals and in his contribution to the development of Diocesan policy and documentation.

- ***Emerging Issues and Future Directions***

During the review, it became apparent that there is a high emphasis in the current exercise of the role of SEO on monitoring compliance. The necessity of attending to compliance issues was not disputed. However, the Reviewers noted a concern that this emphasis on compliance has the potential to reduce the impact of an experienced educator such as Ian Hunter in influencing school improvement. In many conversations, reference was made to the boundaries which Ian as SEO is expected to respect in his interactions with Principals, especially with respect to discussions around curriculum and teaching and learning in the school. Comments such as, "He is not allowed to talk about curriculum" posed a contradiction with Ian's role to provide "consultation and support in regard to the

readership and management of staff and school development, or as the SEO statement of Responsibility 3.5 states, *The role-holder will assist with the implementation of a vision for quality leadership in Catholic education.*

Another issue emerging during the review likewise was more cultural and systemic rather than directly related to Ian's individual performance. However, it is relevant to his exercise of the role. This concerns the concept of "supervision" as it pertains to Ian as an SEO. A senior respondent remarked that *the role of supervision is watered down, with regard to Principal formative reviews. (This is perhaps) more systemic than individual. Ian is well-placed to fine-tune skills of supervision.* In the light of the data received during the review, the Reviewers believe there is considerable confusion about the nature of "supervision" expected of Ian both by the system and by Principals. Further, some Principals expressed views which similarly suggested lack of clarity of responsibility regarding the respective roles of the SEO and Principals in addressing agenda in the school. (For example, the Principal referred to in the previous section on achievements under KRA 1 & 2 seemed to assume that Ian would deal with staff issues in her school rather than herself.) Ian himself suggested that it would be helpful to him (and presumably other SEOs, Principals and others in the CEO) to clarify and discriminate more between the concepts and practice of: "supervision", "support" and "encouragement".

In a similar vein, some respondents suggested that the precise delegation of powers held by Ian in his role as SEO could be clarified to better reflect his seniority and experience. This was not a generally held position, but the Reviewers consider it is worthy of attention.

Ian's work in Student Protection is applauded. He would be the first to maintain that there still remains much to be done in this area. In his report, he referred to his "nervousness" about the adequacy of the present structure within the school system for managing student protection issues. From the interviews which they conducted, the Reviewers believe that not all Principals and other staff are clear regarding critical issues in Student Protection (eg, reviewers were told Principals were not all clear about what is a reportable matter). There remains some confusion in staff understanding and observance of diocesan processes and procedures. A number of people commented that a Student-focussed Aware Culture is still under-developed.

In addition to this perception, it was strongly reported that the size of the Student Protection agenda is too big to be added on to another full-time role. *Ian is overworked in his current role* was a strong message, but not one that Ian himself gave. Obviously, such a large area of responsibility has the potential to impact on the SEO role performance. More importantly, without adequate time being given to Student Protection responsibilities, there is a risk that there is not a uniform approach to matters when they arise and insufficient time is available to think-through the approaches being taken.

The two issues identified above (ie, the balance within Ian's role as an SEO and the management of the Student Protection agenda) are significant issues, both for Ian and for those with whom he works. We draw them to the attention of Ian's supervisors. Two other issues arose which will be named more briefly.

One was the advice that there was scope for greater potential in the mentoring of beginning Principals if the skills and experience of other Principals could be utilised, thereby freeing Ian to act as coordinator of Principal-mentors. Experienced Principals who opted for, and were selected for, Mentoring roles might be assisted in their schools with some small addition in administrative support.

Finally, it became clear to the Reviewers that Ian's role performance is enhanced, or otherwise, by the quality of relationships between Teams in the CEO. Where these relationships are less than productive, or compartmentalised, it can reduce outcomes for schools and children's learning. A number of respondents suggested that Ian's work as an SEO would be more effective if the structure and communications provided for a greater integration/focus in CEO service to schools. This last comment might go beyond the precise brief of the Performance Review, but in the context where a review of the CEO structures has already been signalled, the Reviewers have chosen to pass on these comments, since they arose during Ian's review process.

Overall, one of the hardest tasks the Reviewers faced during the review was to elicit from respondents clear advice to Ian for his future performance in his role. This is seen as a great compliment to Ian. However, the Reviewers believe that they have a responsibility to honour Ian's own request for feedback and direction.

4. Recommendations

In the light of the data gathered in the process of this performance review, we make the following recommendations to Ian. We have addressed these directly to Ian:

Regarding your work with Principals and Schools (KRAs 1 & 2)

- i. It is readily recognized that as Senior Education Officer you have assisted positive growth and change through the depth of your constructive relationships with the Principals with whom you work. We encourage you to continue to broaden and strengthen those interdependent relationships with Principals and their communities for the benefit of the students in our Catholic Schools. This will include challenging Principals to seek assistance when appropriate whilst at the same time having them accept that looking for a *de facto* principal substitute in the difficult times does not equal collaboration or co-responsibility.
- ii. The issue of what is *supervision* and how that definition fits with the Vision of Catholic Education in the Dioceses of Toowoomba vis-a-vis your role, needs to be explored, agreed to and communicated.
- iii. It is suggested that there would be considerable benefit gained by your visiting other like dioceses to assess how they manage compliance issues. Through such a process there will be an opportunity for refining roles and perhaps restoring a greater emphasis to the outcomes as provided in the *purposes and scope* of the current role

statement, so that the compliance agenda can be appropriately and efficiently addressed and put, as much as possible, at the service of children's learning.

- iv. The number of schools you serve together with your additional responsibilities provides a demanding and challenging role. This in turn means that time in schools may not be as frequent as desired and that it must be *quality time*. It is suggested that ensuring quality time may be assisted through the practice of you and principals of individual schools sharing a possible/probable agenda well in advance of the visit so both parties can be well prepared ensuring quality time and quality outcomes.

Regarding your work in Student Protection (KRA 3)

- v. System change occurs when enough kindred spirits coalesce in the same direction. We have commended you for your quite tireless and exemplary efforts in ensuring safe learning environments for students through Student Protection materials, professional development, processes, guidelines and support for school communities. However, you are reminded, as you are yourself aware, that the whole area of student protection will present ongoing challenges that include keeping abreast of legislative and other changes, refining materials to ensure clarity of understanding, continually seeking processes for Principals and communities that are unambiguous in form (eg flowcharts) and, very significantly, managing a lasting transformation that sees all involved in Catholic schooling are kindred spirits who are the initiators rather than the recipients of a change processes relating to Student Protection.
- vi. Recognising the diversity of responsibilities in your portfolio and the high demands in the area of student protection, we believe you would benefit greatly from some "time-out" to explore best practice in student protection in Catholic schools in other dioceses and systems.
- vii. In serving the Student Protection agenda, the reviewers recommend that you give consideration to seeking additional clerical/administrative support in this area. This should be deployed in a way which assists you with some of the administrative and procedural aspects of the responsibility, and enables you to improve the provision of staff training for policy compliance and to develop an appropriate and consistent culture in schools in this area. This will also assist your achieving a better balance of time for application to your other SEO duties and responsibilities.

Regarding overall role and relationships within CEO

- viii. Successful schools that meet changing needs give emphasis to leadership as a shared function rather than to a status-orientated role. It is important that the Senior Education Officers continue to model this *shared-leadership approach*. You are encouraged to work with your office colleagues to explore models of operating that

may result in changed role statements and ways of relating to and serving school communities.

- ix. Additionally, you are encouraged to further explore ways that greater co-operation between/across divisions can occur for the benefit of students and overall quality in Catholic Education. One suggestion might be to have Faith Education and Curriculum provide in-service/professional development for Senior Education Officers to keep them abreast of change issues and for SEOs to reciprocate.

Regarding your professional skills and knowledge (KRA 4)

- x. It is noted that you continue to pursue your own professional development and this is to be commended. It is suggested however, that in order to maintain your status as a well-rounded educator who maintains his currency, you consider future Professional Development in curriculum even though this area may be outside your current responsibility.

Regarding yourself

- xi. Unquestionably you have a strong commitment to Catholic Education as expressed through your role and seek quite naturally to have mastery of that role. Such an approach will call upon a multi-faceted approach that includes personal, professional, organizational and home life. To suggest that we can simply divorce or separate the needs of the role from our personal/home life is probably a *nonsense* as each of us operates quite differently. However it is timely to recommend to you that you continue to remind yourself of some necessary balance and the necessity of ensuring quality time for you and those outside the organization that are dear to you. This will include ensuring adequate physical rest, more importantly adequate emotional rest and most importantly adequate spiritual rest.

5. Conclusion

Respondents were generous in their appreciation for Ian's work and presence in Toowoomba Catholic schools. The Reviewers congratulate him on his outstanding service as a SEO from 2005 to 2009. We think it is fitting to conclude this report with this comment from one of the survey responses, *Ian's combination of knowledge, experience, spirituality, approach and personal commitment is a true gift to us all.*

John Davis
7th August 2009

Anne Benjamin
7th August 2009

**CATHOLIC EDUCATION OFFICE – TOOWOOMBA DIOCESE
ROLE STATEMENT (27/05/00)**

1.0 Position Title

Senior Education Officer – Staff & School Development Services

2.0 Purposes and Scope of Role

2.1 PURPOSE

To supervise, support and report on the operation of school leadership as well as provide consultancy in the areas of staff & school development.

2.2 KEY RESULT AREAS

2.2.1 Supervision, encouragement and support of school leaders occurs especially with regard to compliance with accreditation requirements.

2.2.2 Consultation and support in regard to the leadership and management of staff and school development is provided.

2.2.3 Catholic Education Office representation duties undertaken.

2.2.4 Professional skills and knowledge are current.

3.0 Statement of Responsibility

- 3.1 One of the key groups of services provided by the Toowoomba Catholic Education Office, centres around staff and school development. The major functional responsibilities are found in the Officer Charter, with which it is essential that every roleholder be familiar.
- 3.2 The Catholic Education Office aims to nurture a life-giving Catholic culture (to) foster opportunities for holistic education (through) quality service, support and promotion (for) student, family, school, parish and agency development. (Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic Education Charter)
- 3.3 The support of Principals is a critical element if Catholic schools are to be successful. It is this support to which the role of the Senior Education Officer is directed.

- 3.4 Much of the interaction with Principals will be based on Gospel values, of faith, hope, love and compassion. This role balances supervision and advice.
- 3.5 Supervision, encouragement and support are given to Principals through communication and visitation which employ processes of consultation, collaboration, networking, alignment, pastoral care and empowerment of school communities. The roleholder will assist with the implementation of a vision for quality leadership in Catholic Education. Successful experience as a school administrator is essential as is a knowledge and practice of contemporary leadership and management.
- 3.6 The statement "The Teacher in the Catholic School" by the Diocese of Toowoomba has been prepared to inform the Catholic community of the teaching ministry within the Catholic school. It assists those whose responsibility it is to select, appoint and support teachers. It is an essential resource along with the Employment Guidelines in ensuring suitable staff are employed in Catholic schools in the Diocese of Toowoomba. The role holder needs to be conversant with these documents and the staffing schedule in order to facilitate staffing in schools within staffing allocations.
- 3.7 As a member of the Staff & School Development Services section of the Office it is expected that the roleholder will, on a number of occasions, and even regularly, represent the Catholic Education Office. This may be because of his/her particular portfolio responsibilities or at times because of his/her unique gifts.
- 3.8 Personal professional development is needed in order to maintain competency and effectiveness in role performance. It is therefore presumed that the roleholder will avail himself/herself of opportunities in a planned way.
- 3.9 The roleholder, who is appointed on contract for five year periods, has the right to expect, and will be accorded a comprehensive and collaborative review by the end of semester one in the last year of his/her contract. This performance review will be based on the key result areas of this role.
- 3.10 Compliance with Occupational Health and Safety legislation is required.

4.0 Prescribed Functions and Examples of Activities Undertaken and/or Services Provided.

- 4.1 Supervise and consult with Principals with regard to leadership and management of their schools.
- 4.2 Visit schools formally on an annual basis and informally as needed.
- 4.3 Conduct annual formative Principal Performance Reviews and report on these.
- 4.4 Support the management of significant issues (eg. teachers with special needs)
- 4.5 Assist and support staff recruitment, appointment and relocation when and as required.
- 4.6 Participate in induction programmes for early career teachers and principals.
- 4.7 Support schools boards.
- 4.8 Support school renewal activity.
- 4.9 Act as Student Protection Officers and ensure compliance with legislative responsibilities.
- 4.10 Ensure Principals comply with accreditation requirements, enlisting support from other divisions in the office if required.
- 4.11 Undertake professional development as appropriate.

5.0 Authority Limits

- 5.1 The roleholder is delegated by the Director, through the Assistant Director: Staff & School Development Services the necessary authority to produce the desired outcomes. Such delegations will be within policy, supervision, budget, legal and ethical parameters.

6.0 Reporting and Other Significant Relationships

- 6.1 The roleholder is responsible to the Director but reports to the Assistant Director: Staff & School Development Services. Other relationships of significance include members of the Leadership Team, other Catholic Education Office personnel (especially those in the Staff & School Development division), Primary and Secondary School Principals,

Diocesan Education Board, Diocesan General Manager – Finance and Administration and certain members of the QCEC Secretariat.

SENIOR EDUCATION OFFICER: STAFF & SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT

FIVE YEARLY PERFORMANCE REVIEW

SELF REVIEW

IAN HUNTER

27TH July 2009

The purpose of this self review is to report to the Validation Panel on my performance in the role of Senior Education Officer in the Toowoomba Catholic Education Office for the five year period of my appointment from 2005 – 2009. The Role Statement for the position of Senior Education Officer: Staff and School Development provides an essential resource for the review which takes the following format:

1. A Statement of Educational Philosophy.
2. A Brief Overview of Professional History.
3. A Description of Professional Context.
4. Reflection on Performance.
5. Future Plans/Goals within the Senior Education Officer role.
6. Conclusion.

1. A STATEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

As a young child growing up in a large Catholic family in Ipswich and attending Catholic schools run by the Sisters of Mercy and the Christian Brothers, I was taught to pray before meals: "God is great. God is good. Thank you God for our food." Through many years of life's ups and downs, joys and sadness, achievements and failures, wonderful mentors and communities, life with the Christian Brothers and the special relationship of marriage, I have learnt that God and life are greater than my limited understandings and narrow interpretations. God is not a distant, remote, 'out there' person or entity. God is found in the face of each and every person. No matter how different their ways or circumstances each person is made in the image and likeness of God. In each moment and each interaction of each day, life provides us with opportunities to discover who we really are, to discover the personal and present God within us and every other person and creation. As

such, one of the core beliefs guiding, directing and energising my professional action is that every child, parent, staff member and colleague is an essentially good person with the innate, God-given dignity of being invited into partnership with God through the relationships, communities, places and experiences we share. Each person should be treated with respect and dignity. Each person is unique and possesses gifts which should be developed.

God is great and God is good and we thank him/her for our food, our friends, our family and our life with all its ups and downs, its joys and sadness, and its achievements and failures. Our Catholic tradition – mixed, flawed and great as it is – does provide us with meaningful and effective ways of celebrating and deepening the sacramentality of life and God with us. The messy, small mustard tree rather than the strong Cedar of Lebanon, the life and the history of the Catholic tradition reflect our human frailties and failings as well as the mystery of inspiration and enthusiasm that have brought life to many.

While the windows of change that were opened at Vatican II have been somewhat flapping in the breeze in recent times in some quarters, the core vision and mission for ourselves and our Catholic school communities remains the same. Catholic Education at its best provides a unique opportunity to learn how to integrate faith and life. It allows people of like mind to meld reason, affectivity and imagination in the development and education of the whole child and person. To do less, and avoid the fostering of spiritual and religious growth and development as well as all other areas of academic, physical and emotional learning is to deny who we are as good people with dignity made in the image and likeness of God and called by life to be the best person we possibly can be.

To be the best that we can be is an inner and an outer reality reflective of the values modelled by Jesus: joy, peace and love accompanied by a respect for and desire to act in truth, freedom and justice. The essence of our Vision and Mission as agents of the Church and life are captured in the Vision Statement for Catholic Education in the Diocese: "...act justly, love tenderly; walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8). Core to this Vision and Mission are the values of: embracing action for social justice (especially with those who are marginalised); being inclusive and open to all (no matter what background or faith tradition others come from); and service of our Catholic school families and communities and our wider society.

As system leaders, I believe that Senior Education Officers are called and challenged to bring a sense of responsibility, authenticity and presence to their role. In our attitudes, our policy, process and procedures we need to be people of energy, enthusiasm and hope reflective of the beliefs, vision, mission and Christ-centred values we personally and communally espouse. In our professional action and interactions, we are called to promote a love of life-long learning that leads to wisdom, choices and relationships that support fullness of life for all. Through our work with supporting, advising and supervising Principals, we are employed

to promote good stewardship of human, physical and financial resources and to assist with monitoring, reviewing, reporting and providing accountability to the Church, the government and the wider community.

We are engaged to design structures and to build relationships and school communities characterised by service, subsidiarity in decision making, genuine participation and patterns of cooperation. If we are not bringing people together we are driving them apart.

We also need to be real and practical, accepting that some unsatisfactory situations may not be ready for change and growth yet. In the words of Eckhart Tolle:

All problems are illusions of the mind. Ultimately, this is not about solving your problems. It's about realizing that there *are* no problems. Only situations – to be dealt with now, or to be left alone and accepted as part of the “isness” of the present moment until they change or *can* be dealt with.

At the same time we are called to promote and encourage internal and external commitment to creative thinking and new visions which ensure that “more good things happen and fewer bad things happen.” (Michael Fullan) Sometimes it is our mistakes that provide the greatest opportunity for learning.

In these ways we will be able to make a difference in the world. We will be able to develop ourselves, help others, care for the environment and, when things fall apart, we can be reconciled with ourselves, with others and with God. We pray together:

“God is great. God is good. Thank you God for our food...”

2. BRIEF OVERVIEW OF PROFESSIONAL HISTORY

This brief overview of professional history, I believe, gives ample evidence of my strong personal commitment to Catholic faith, practice and Catholic Education in a broad spectrum of educational settings including significant experience as a successful founding Principal of two new schools. Many of my life and career choices have taken me into creative and innovative areas of education which have fuelled my passion to explore and share the best principles of Catholic education and faith in action. In the past five years, the role of Senior Education Officer has allowed me to contribute positively to school staff and development across the system which has nurtured and developed me personally and professionally over the years.

Qualifications:

1973	Xavier Teachers College (Indooroopilly)	Diploma of Teaching	Full
time			

1978	University of Queensland	Bachelor of Educational Studies	Part time
1981	Polding College (Glebe, now part of ACU)	Grad. Dipl. In Religious Studies	Full time
1993	Centre for Justice & Spirituality (Woolongabba)	Certificate in Preparation for Urban Mission	Full time
2004	Toowoomba Education Centre	Cert IV in Workplace Training	Part time
2008	Australian Catholic University (National)	Grad. Cert. In Education Law	Part time

Work History and Appointments:

2005 – present	Toowoomba CEO	Senior Education Officer: Staff & School Development (Acting AD: SSD 5 weeks Term 2, 2008)
2000 – 2004	Youth & Community Learning Centre, Toowoomba	Founding Principal/Coordinator
July – Dec 1999	Marist College Ashgrove	Teacher
1996 – 1998	Christian Brothers Province	Province Leadership Team Member Leadership Team, Indooroopilly (Acting Deputy Province Leader 1998)
1993 – 1995	Centre for Justice & Spirituality Wooloongabba	Lecturer and facilitator
1987 – 1992	O'Loughlin Catholic College	Founding Principal Darwin
1973 – 1986	Queensland Catholic Education	Teacher & School Leadership Team member Primary & Secondary, day & (including 8 years as APRE)

boarding schools (Mackay,
Dalby, Shornecliffe, Abergowrie,
Yeppoon)

Membership of Associations:

QCEC Student Protection Working Party

ACEL

ANZELA

Queensland Child Protection Week Committee

NAPCAN Toowoomba

Catholic Mission Australia

Diocesan ATSI Advisory Committee

3. DESCRIPTION OF PROFESSIONAL CONTEXT

The Diocese of Toowoomba, founded on 28th May, 1929 covers 487,000 square kilometres reaching from Toowoomba in the east to Quilpie, Cunnamulla and the NT border in the west; Goondiwindi on the southern border with NSW and Taroom in the north. Distance and travel are major factors when visiting and supporting schools outside Toowoomba with a 10 hour drive to Quilpie and 4 hour drive to Taroom. Phone, email and fax form a large part of communication. A number of western schools also now have video conferencing facilities. The Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Toowoomba administers 35 primary, secondary and P-12 schools teaching over 8300 children with more than 1100 staff. Each school maintains a connection with the Special Religious Character of the religious order who originally founded the school.

The Catholic Education Office is the educational executive arm of the Bishop. It operates under the authority of the Director, to whom the Bishop has delegated the leadership, management and administration of Catholic Education in the Diocese. Key relationships exist with the Bishop, clergy, Catholic Education Board, schools (both Diocesan and Religious Institute owned), parishes, agencies and commissions within the Diocese and with similar Catholic and Government bodies at State and National levels.

The current organisational design of the Office was established in 1998 and incorporates service teams of Faith Education and Curriculum; Staff and School Development; Finance, Information Systems and Administration; and the Director's Office.

State and Commonwealth governments provide financial resources for the provision of education on a needs basis to the contracted authority (QCEC or the Diocese) with the expectation that distribution of these resources be on a similar principle of need to the schools.

Key Result areas for Catholic Education Office staff include:

- Community: formation, pastoral care, communion and continuing education in faith and professional development.
- Policy: support for Catholic Education Board Policy development, implementation and review.
- Representation: Catholic Education representation and committee support.
- Alignment: personal application of leadership, management and administration skills to professional practice.

Specifically the Staff and Development Team is responsible for:

- Accreditation of Schools.
- Principal selection, supervision, appraisal and networking.
- Staff allocations, appointments and induction.
- Coordinating targeted Commonwealth Programs including Indigenous Education.
- Education Support Services.
- School Board support.
- School Renewal support.
- Personnel performance/intervention.

The 1100 staff in our schools range from early career teachers (located mainly in smaller, remote western schools) to long serving, continuous status staff located mainly in schools in and around Toowoomba. In recent years there has been an increase in the number of contract positions necessitated by enhanced leave provisions – particularly in the area of

maternity leave – granted in Enterprise Bargaining Agreements. Along with the difficulty of attracting qualified and experienced staff to the remoter western schools, the enhanced EB provisions have increased the workload and complexity of engaging, employing, inducting and supporting staff across a diverse and far flung system of schools.

Similarly there are a wide range of complex and diverse needs amongst the range of Principals that SEOs are required to supervise, support and provide consultancy for in the area of staff and school development. A number of long serving, well qualified and experienced Principals at primary and secondary school levels is complemented by a relatively high turnover of younger, inexperienced Principals who are learning the ropes in terms of their leadership, management and development. At least 5 or 6 new Principals are inducted across the system each year. Strong links of collegiality and hospitality between Principals has been a strong tradition across the Diocese.

A profile of the 8000 students in our schools reveals a wide range of gifts, talents and needs with Education Support Services and Targeted Programs forming an increasingly important part of the services offered by the schools. Our students also belong to families whose circumstances reflect an increasing plurality of values, attitudes, beliefs and lifestyles. A considerable percentage of students enrolled are not Catholic and only a small proportion of families are practicing Catholics.

Increasing rates of family dysfunction impacting on students' learning needs are exacerbated by changing societal values, attitudes and needs as well as the impact of the recent drought and the downturn in the global economy. Responding to the significant needs of Indigenous students and newly arrived migrant families also remains priorities.

This professional context is also coloured and influenced by other new and changing social, ecclesial and education contexts which significantly impact on the role of SEOs, including

- The challenges of rapid change, new technologies, new workplaces and the need for pedagogical and curriculum innovation.
- The influence of government mandates in relation to measuring achievement through national benchmark testing; evidence-based accountability and compliance requirements. Students follow the curriculum provided by the Queensland Studies Authority, however, the wider educational context is outlined in the Diocesan Learning Framework, which each school is required to interpret in the development of the school curriculum.
- The impact of changing family structures with an increasing number of divorced parents, blended families and single parent families. With increasing mobility and

flexibility, many parents tend to shop around for what they consider to be the best school for their child.

- Changing ecclesial and religious contexts such as:
 - Movement to a God-centred rather than a Church centered theology of mission.
 - Movement from religious to lay leadership and ownership of Catholic schools and parishes.
 - Growth in religious pluralism and ecumenism.
 - Restructuring of parish life and the role of the Parish Priest.

4. REFLECTION ON PERFORMANCE

The Role Statement for the position of Senior Education Officer – Staff and School Development Services outlines the purpose of the role:

To supervise, support and report on the operation of school leadership as well as provide consultancy in the areas of staff and school development.

My belief and hope is that I have brought responsibility, authenticity and presence to this role during the past five years. My reflections on performance focus on: A. the Key Result Areas, and B. Other Prescribed Functions, as listed in the SEO Role Description.

A. KEY RESULT AREAS:

2.2.1 Supervision, encouragement and support of school leaders occurs especially with regard to

compliance with accreditation requirements.

Supervision, encouragement and support of school leaders has occurred in many areas and is evidenced by:

- During my first two years in the role I was instrumental in negotiating and implementing a more focused approach to first term informal visits to Principals. A checklist was designed to facilitate shared discussion between Principal and SEO in relation to shared plans and goals for the year. This process developed shared understandings and professional relationship building with each Principal – key

groundwork and a solid basis for providing ongoing supervision, encouragement and support during the year.

- Regular phone and email contact as well as informal visits as needed. This contact provided frequent opportunities to encourage and support Principals as well as keep a supervisory eye on compliance with policy and procedure, especially during the handling of contentious issues and situations. The extensive nature of this contact and my level of commitment (and patience!) is evidenced by documentation from one of many incidents from an out-of-town school where the Principal sought assistance with managing a young teacher who was displaying inappropriate behaviour in his relationships with students. The documentation tallied more than 75 emails and letters on the incident between us over a twelve month period. This does not include numerous phone messages and personal conversations about the situation during school visits. In this case the Principal needed specific support in relation to complex industrial, legal and employment issues which I was able to provide or access for him. While not as extensive or needed in each case, this scenario of supervision, encouragement and support has been repeated numerous times with each of my assigned Principals over the five year period.
- Formal Annual School Visits. Involving much more than a “cup of tea”, these annual visits to each of my 12 schools as well as participation in Formal 5 and 10 year Review processes when needed have provided more focused opportunities to offer commendation and recommendation to Principals, especially with regard to compliance with accreditation requirements. There have been occasions when the pressure of other commitments or the difficulty of securing reports from other Office staff have meant delays in finalising Visit Reports, however, I believe that the Reports deserve careful, considered and thorough work and that the end result in each case has been professionally and personally beneficial for the Principal concerned and satisfies the need for the checking and reporting of accreditation compliance to Office Leadership.

The challenge in these formal and informal interactions is to strike a balance between encouragement/support and supervision – especially where Principals have been struggling or when Special Case Performance Reviews have been involved. Patience, persistence, clear communication and a positive, professional approach have been needed and, in the vast majority of situations, appreciated. A ‘firm, fair and friendly’ approach and a focus on addressing the behaviour while supporting the person have also been helpful approaches to use in seeking resolution of the inevitable issues that arise from time to time. John McArdle’s consultancy approach of negotiating and clarifying what the Principal really wants early in the piece and Ros McSwan’s guidelines on how to have difficult situations have also

been useful strategies which respect both the good will and goals of the Principal and the needs of the system and the Office at the same time.

2.2.2 Consultation and support in regard to the leadership and management of staff and school

development is provided.

Consultation and support in regard to the leadership and management of staff and school development have also been provided. One of the more rewarding and enjoyable aspects of the role are the occasions of extended reflection with Principals on their goal setting and reviews each year. These opportunities usually occur during formal and informal visits to schools when the business side of the meeting is completed and there is space and time to 'chew the fat' on how they are going personally and professionally and how the school, the staff and the students are progressing and developing. In the business of school life I believe that these times of reflection are key to the support, advice, relationship and balance we as SEOs can offer our Principals. Being present and joining in with key school celebrations such as Openings, liturgies, end of year functions and the like have also been important times of support for the Principal that I have endeavoured to be involved with at each school.

Consultation is always a balancing act between the "Thank God you're here" approach and finding out what the Principal (or staff member or parent) really wants. I believe that my ability to listen non-judgementally and keep an eye on the bigger picture and process happening has enabled me to provide informed and useful consultation to Principals and others. At times this has involved helping those I am working with to discover that they already know the answer to the presenting dilemma, or it might involve researching specific industrial, legal or employment advice – Colin O'Neil (QCEC Industrial Officer); Pat Nunan (Diocesan lawyer); Bev Patterson (Student Protection consultant) and others are on my speed dial

Other key areas of consultation and support have included:

- Principal selection, supervision, appraisal and networking;
- Staff allocations, appointments & induction;
- Staff performance/intervention.

Before giving advice I have also made a practice of consulting frequently with my fellow SEOs and with Margaret Hendriks (Assistant Director: Staff & School Development), particularly where contentious issues are involved.

2.2.3 Catholic Education Office representation duties undertaken.

representation of the Director and of the Office, have, on reflection, been a regular and enjoyable aspect of the Senior Education Officer role. It has included:

- Member of the QCEC Student Protection Working Party (quarterly meetings and teleconferences over 5 years).
- Member of the Queensland Child Protection Week committee (2007).
- Attending Official Openings and Blessings; start of year and end of year school ceremonies and functions on a regular basis each year.
- Co-chairing ETRF Indigenous Futures Working Party (2005-2007).
- Consultation Forum for DET Skills and Qualification Reforms (2006).
- Attending Official Launch of Catholic Education Week in Brisbane (2006).
- Co-facilitating QCEC Student Protection In-service for School Authorities across Queensland in Brisbane each year.
- Inaugural Chair (2007) and member (2007 – 2009) of Diocesan ATSI Advisory Committee.
- Attending NCEC Indigenous Education Conference in Brisbane (2007).
- Member of inaugural NAPCAN Toowoomba Committee (2008 – 2009).

Closely associated with these representations have been other times and areas where my experience, skills and past involvements have led to further involvements. Examples of these involvements include:

- Coordinating the New Principal Induction Program each year.
- Chairing the Youth & Community Learning Centre (YCLC) Working Together with Indigenous Youth (WTIY) Steering Committee (2005 – 2006).
- Participating in YCLC/SQIT negotiations and agreements.
- Chairing the Beginning Teachers Induction Committee and Research Project.
- Delivering Catholic Mission Appeal presentations regularly in parishes in and around Toowoomba as well as assisting with advice in relation to the CEO support of the Getting Involved Globally (GIG) overseas immersion program which Catholic Mission had engaged me to design, establish and lead for several years during the late 1990s.

- Delivering student protection in-service for Diocesan Priests (2005) and St Ursula's College staff (2007).
- Assisting with process and planning for various CEO activities as needed eg. CEO reflection days
- Co-facilitating the CEO School Deputizers' Meetings.
- Regular attendance at CEO functions: Annual Long Service Awards; Annual John Baptiste de la Salle breakfast for teachers; Indigenous Games; Principal Farewells; DOTSPA Dinners; Annual School Officer functions; etc.
- CEO staff representative on CEO Strategic Plan group.
- Involvement with the Indigenous community: Launch of the Indigenous Boarders' Support Program; annual NAIDOC Week activities; Launch of the Next Step Program; Whatup program negotiations; etc.
- Attendance at School Parties presentation at Empire Theatre;
- Attendance and support of CEO Counsellors' Network meetings.
- Attendance at CEO LST conferences.
- Teleconferences and research on National Partnership Plans for low SES schools in the Diocese.
- Co-facilitating the Mentoring Research group meetings.

These involvements and representations are a reflection of my interest and skill in: process work; group dynamics; the bigger picture view; consultation and collaboration; and an eye for detail. They have also proved personally energising and professionally rewarding as well as being beneficial in developing strong networks and relationships on behalf of the Office. The balancing act though has been to ensure that my core responsibilities to Staffing and School Development are not compromised by the time and effort expended in maintaining these community development networks and relationships.

2.2.4 Professional skills and knowledge are current.

During the past five years I have received generous support and encouragement to update professional skills and knowledge. Regular attendance at seminars, conferences and workshops as well as wide reading and research in formal and informal study courses have

been most beneficial personally and professionally. They have enabled me to keep abreast of recent thinking, developments and approaches particularly in such areas as: education, leadership, consultancy, student protection, legal and industrial issues, thus enabling me to offer more informed and helpful advice and support to Principals, school personnel and colleagues.

Some of this Professional Development has included:

- 2005:
 - Workplace Investigations Workshop
 - Catholic Missions visit to Peru
 - Working with Children Training Workshop (CCYPCG)
 - Regular attendance at Legalwise Seminars in Brisbane (each year)
 - Attendance at CEO Consultants' Conference in Hobart
 - Consultants' Training Days conducted by John McArdle
 - Attendance at IDEAS in-services
 - Attendance at LST Conferences (each year)
 - Student Protection Risk Management Strategy Training (CCYPCG)
- 2006:
 - ACEL Conflict Resolution Workshop
 - Department of Child Safety Student Protection Consultation Day
 - QIEU in-service on Leading Teacher applications
 - Childwise Choose With Care training workshop (Brisbane)
 - Student Protection School Contacts workshop (Suzanne Brooks)
 - Spirituality of the Heart Conference (Sydney)
 - Protecting All Children Today Conference (PACT) (each second year)
 - Managing Difficult Conversations workshop (Ross McSwan)
 - Legal Liabilities of Directors and Executive Officers (TCEO)
 - Conducting Effective Focus Groups CRRIQ (UQ Gatton)
- 2007:
 - Graduate Certificate in Education Law (ACU online) 2007-8 (HD in all assignments)

- INCEC Indigenous Education Conference (Brisbane)
- Change Leaders In-service (Fairholme)
- Cyber Safety Workshop
- CEO Consultants' Conference at Gold Coast
- 2008:
 - Professional Officers In-service: System Leadership Framework (ACU)
 - Presentation Skills Workshop
 - ANZELA Seminars: Disability Standards; Cybersafety (Brisbane)
 - ACEL Conference (Melbourne)
 - Fire Evacuation Instructions (TCEO)
- 2009:
 - Cybersafety In-service Training ACMA (Brisbane)
 - PACT Conference (Brisbane)

B. OTHER PRESCRIBED FUNCTIONS

The second part of this reflection on performance focuses on other Prescribed Functions and Examples of Activities Undertaken and/or Services Provided that have not been covered fully in the discussion of the KEY RESULT AREAS of the role above.

These other prescribed functions include:

4.6 Participate in induction programs for early career teachers and principals.

Following on the great work of Chris Fry (SEO) and others in establishing the New Principal Induction program in previous years, I have enjoyed the experience of continuing to develop, manage and coordinate the program during the past five years. New Principals have been consistently appreciative of the value and usefulness of the program as well as the collaborative and consultative approaches used. The opportunity, with other SEOs and Office staff, to creatively and positively contribute to the growth and development of new Principals has been a source of great satisfaction.

Involvement in facilitating the early career teachers research project with other CEO staff has also been rewarding. Dr John Davis has produced an excellent and practical set of resources and processes for Principals and school communities to use with early career teachers and many have begun to put these to good use. Further development of these resources and full implementation of the research recommendations remains a budgeting challenge for the Office.

Similar involvement with the Principal mentoring project over the past 12 months has potential for improved support and development of new Principals. The next step here will also be in securing the financial assistance necessary to implement the findings of the project.

4.7 Support School Boards.

Each of my current 12 schools has a functioning School Board. During the past five years I have assisted the Principals of Highfields, Our Lady of Lourdes, Holy Name, Pittsworth and Taroom to either establish or re-establish a School Board. This has involved a commitment to trying to attend each School Board meeting for the first 12 months of each new Board – a total of 45 School Board meetings over the five years, not including regular Board In-services at other schools as needed. This involvement has provided invaluable opportunities to assist with the development of schools through the empowering and skilling of parents to participate in the work of their School Board. It has also provided a great opportunity to support, advise and coach Principals on their leadership and management of school development issues and processes.

4.8 Support School Renewal activity.

While external consultants have assisted Principals with School Renewal processes, I have sought to support and become involved in processes and meetings where possible. Each year, through Principal goal setting and Annual School Visit processes, there has been regular review and discussion of school renewal and development goals with each Principal. These have been significant opportunities to affirm and encourage Principals in their leadership and management roles and responsibilities. The biggest challenge each year is usually to encourage Principals to limit the Annual School Renewal/Development goals to a couple of key goals – Principals, in their eagerness to do their best in the school, sometimes try to achieve too much by having too many goals.

4.9 Act as Student Protection Officers and ensure compliance with legislative responsibilities.

On one level, I am satisfied that I have provided informed and effective support and advice on Student Protection issues for the Principals of the 12 schools that I am Student Protection Officer for. Each school has and is developing a greater awareness and openness in providing safe environments for its students and staff in complying with legislative and Diocesan policy and procedures in Student Protection. This has been achieved through the use of Annual Student Protection Compliance checklists and through regular and frequent phone and email discussions of issues as they arise. Any issues relating to concerns about

particular staff in relation to Student Protection have been shared with the Assistant Director: Staff & School Development and also with the Director when needed.

On another level, I have always been nervous that the present Office structure of having three Student Protection Officers (SEOs) across the system is not, I believe, the best way to ensure that Principals and schools receive the level of support, advice and monitoring needed in the often complex and crucial area of Student Protection. Individual SEOs (including acting SEOs) have varying levels of experience and knowledge of Student Protection policy and procedure and, at times, there has been confusion as to who, of a number of people in the Office, is managing particular situations. Hopefully, the three-year external compliance review (planned for 2009, but delayed until 2010) of Student Protection policy and procedure, as well as the recently announced Office Review for next year, will address this issue.

On yet another level, one of my other delegated responsibilities has been driving and directing the policy, procedures, training and resource development areas of Student Protection across the system. I believe that I have contributed significantly and diligently, in collaboration with others across each of these areas. Some of these contributions include:

- Finalizing, publishing and distributing the Diocesan Student Protection Policy and Procedures Manual for each school across the Diocese in 2005.
- Designing, publishing and distributing the Diocesan Student Protection Risk Management Strategy for each school across the Diocese in 2005. Individualised school strategies were also developed and refined in 2008.
- Designing, managing and coordinating the All Staff Student Protection In-service every second year (2005, 2007, 2009).
- Designing, managing, co-ordinating the delivery of Student Protection School Contact In-service each year.
- Designing and maintaining the Student Protection site on the CEO Intranet.
- Providing Student Protection Updates on policy, procedure, resources and law for Principals and School Contacts as a regular feature at each Principals' meeting.
- Developing Student Protection Resources for use with staff, students and parents eg. Fact sheets; Child Protection Week materials; newsletter inserts; etc.
- Researching, designing and publishing a Student Protection Code of Conduct in 2006 (Integrity in Relationships) and 2009 (updated inclusive staff Code of Conduct).

- Ongoing and regular liaison with other student protection groups and agencies including: QCEC; Department of Child Safety; CCYPCG; QPS; NAPCAN; Childwise; Taskforce Argos; etc.
- Managing the Targeted Program, Education Support Funding Program for Children in Care of the State, across the system.
- Advice and consultation with: Student Protection experts; legal firms; Office staff and local RI schools.

This aspect of my role, because of past experience, background and training with the Christian Brothers, has been an area of particular interest and relevance for me. My initial reticence to take on the role in 2005 was based on first-hand experience of the difficulties and challenges of working in the areas of policy, procedure, structural and cultural development and change in relation to Student Protection matters. This reticence was balanced by an awareness of the crucial importance and need to work with others in developing openness and awareness in relation to Student Protection matters. The protection of children from abuse; the provision of safe environments for students and staff; and the protection of the Diocese from the devastating effect of child abuse in its midst have been motivation for my ongoing involvement – one which I know is shared by many others. This involvement in Student Protection over the past five years has proved to be a large, complex and demanding commitment – one which sometimes runs the risk of challenging my ability to be fully present to some of my other SEO areas of responsibility. Having said this, I also believe that I have much wisdom, experience and expertise to offer in the area of Student Protection and look forward to being able to continue my involvement and contribution in appropriate, sustainable and negotiated ways into the future following next year's Student Protection and Office Reviews.

5. FUTURE PLANS/GOALS WITHIN THE SEO ROLE

At present my future plans/goals within the SEO role are dependent on the outcome of upcoming reviews of the structure of Student Protection management at the Office level and the overall Office review.

On reflection, if I were to be the system Student Protection Officer with expanded responsibility for managing and reporting on all Student Protection issues as well as fostering Student Protection policy, procedure and resource development, then further training and study in Student Protection skills and capabilities, including especially the dynamics of cultural change, would be high on the agenda.

it, on the other hand, I were to continue in the current role of SEO: Staff & School Development, this self-review has helped me to see that future training and study in the areas of: consultancy, school community development; cultural change in dysfunctional school communities; diminished performance appraisal, review and processes, would be the way to go.

Whatever scenario emerges in the fullness of time and with the spirit's guidance, my future plans and goals would also include:

- Continuing to be the best that I can be at contributing to the growth and development of leaders and school communities in the Diocese of Toowoomba;
- Regular professional and personal supervision and development;
- Maintaining clear and healthy work/family boundaries;
- Maintaining a healthy and active lifestyle; and
- Maintaining connections with mainstream church life and pursuing intentional community development.

6. CONCLUSION

This self review has provided the opportunity to reflect on: my educational philosophy; professional history; performance over the past five years; and future plans/goals within the SEO role.

The Statement of Educational Philosophy revealed a commitment to the Christian integration of faith and life both personally and professionally in the context of the education of the whole person for life-long learning for the benefit of the communities, the society and the world in which we live.

My Professional History reflects life and career choices that have taken me into creative and innovative areas of education as well as a desire to contribute positively to a system which has nurtured and developed me personally and professionally over the years.

The Professional Context of my current SEO role reveals a local Church and Office structure of positive support and resourcing of school staff, parents, students and communities across a vast and diverse Diocese. This diversity and complexity is reflected in the nature and needs of the students we serve and the staff and Principals which SEOs are engaged to support, advise and supervise. A strong ethos and long history of shared wisdom,

collaboration and hospitality underpins the commitment and professionalism of staff in helping each student to reach their full potential. The SEO role, within this context, is to support and encourage the leadership and management of school leaders and assist with monitoring accreditation compliance across all schools and the system.

This reflection on my performance shows, I believe, that I have brought responsibility, authenticity and presence to my role during the past five years. Despite the challenging and sometimes difficult aspects of the role, I have found the following involvements to be both inspiring and rewarding: the supervision, encouragement and support of school leaders with staffing and school development; the many opportunities to consult and support in relation to the leadership and management of staff and school development; the representation of the Office; the development of professional skills and knowledge; work with induction, School Boards and Student Protection. None of this would have been possible without the support and guidance of numerous colleagues – especially that of fellow SEOs, Peter Lynam, Chris Fry, John Coman and Michael Cash, as well as my Assistant Director, Margaret Hendriks and Director, John Borserio. The support, encouragement, affirmation and challenge (when needed) of my wife Mary has also enabled me to be the best person I can be in the role.

Future goals and plans, while dependant on the outcomes of reviews, focus on areas of further training and/or study and would continue to fuel the enthusiasm and passion I have to continue contributing positively to the educational life, vision and mission of the Catholic Education Office and system which has nurtured and brought me life over the course of many years.

“God is great. God is good. We thank God for the food of our life so far.”