

T1 2022 School Board Report

In a sign of the times, the MPPS Board held its Term 1 meeting online last week – the first time we have done so in the school's history. The setting was appropriate given the impact COVID is having on our school.

Unfortunately, the virtual setting allowed only a muted welcome to our newly elected parent and caregiver representatives – Andrew Thomson, Suzy Watson and Clayton Hanrahan – and our new teaching staff representative Mai White.

We now have 12 Board members drawn from parents/caregivers, teaching staff and community in addition to our ex-officio Board members Paul Andrijich, Narelle Alver and Megan Mohr. I am hopeful – in fact, confident – that our Term 2 meeting will again be held in the library for a much-preferred face-to-face engagement.

From the Board's perspective, another impact of COVID was the inability to hear from this year's Year 6 councillors – Ethan, Indra, Jack and Max – about their plans and ambitions as elected student leaders at MPPS. The Board traditionally hears from the councillors in Term 1 and then again in Term 4. In addition to fostering a relationship between the Board and the student cohort, it is also wonderful to hear from our young leaders. Again, I am confident that by Term 4 we will be able to resume these sessions.

Not surprisingly, much of the Board's discussion last week was around COVID. We received a detailed report from Mr Andrijich on how his leadership team was dealing with the additional imposts set by the Education and Health departments to manage the COVID cases at school and minimise the spread of further infection. These are confusing and – for many – stressful times so it was reassuring to hear how much effort and dedication the MPPS leadership team has been investing in the processes and communications necessary to keep the school operating as smoothly as possible.

One of the benefits of the breadth of experience among the Board members is that we are all living with COVID across our respective workplaces and communities, ranging from mining, universities, small business, local government, logistics and supply chains, parliament and academia.

It enables us to provide relevant insights and feedback, not just in relation to COVID but other matters of importance to MPPS such as traffic conditions in and around the school. The Board has for some time now been discussing student safety along the streets that surround the school and has been kept up to date with the Safe Routes to School program. We were pleased to learn last week that one of the student crossings on Kelvin Street will shortly be turned into a "wombat" crossing to enhance pedestrian safety.

One of the Board's roles last week was to sign off on the 2021 Annual Report, which will soon be posted on the MPPS website. The report highlights the many wonderful achievements and activities that took place at MPPS last year, despite COVID. I have no doubt that this year – even with continued interruptions because of COVID – will deliver an equally impressive and enjoyable performance.

I would be delighted to discuss the Board or any relevant matters with you. You can email me at schoolboard@mpps.wa.edu.au. Or feel free to have a chat with our five parents and caregiver representatives – Andrew, Suzy, Clayton as well as Marina Males and Elli Petersen-Pik – around the school grounds.

Peter Klinger

MPPS School Board Chair