



BRIGIDINE
COLLEGE

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Board Chair's Report

January 2022 – December 2022

Kildare Ministries Vision Statement

A community where all people are valued, where all creation is recognised as sacred and where hope, justice and courage are our hallmarks

Brigidine College Mission Statement

An inclusive community of faith and learning that challenges and inspires young women to be active voices of *Strength and Gentleness*

Brigidine College Vision Statement

We are a *sustainable presence* in the community providing an innovative education for young women in the Brigidine tradition

INTRODUCTION

Love and compassion are necessities not luxuries.

Without them, humanity cannot survive.

Dalai Lama XIV 'The Art of Happiness'

With acknowledgement to this year dedicated to a deeper understanding of the value of compassion (from Kildare Ministries *Living with Compassion*) in the operations of governance for the College, I am pleased to present this report on behalf of the Board.

Living with *compassion* recognises our common humanity and sacred dignity. It is intentionally reaching out and embracing those who are suffering, irrespective of their social or personal identity (Kildare Ministries *Living Justice, Living Peace* document).

One of the Boards goals for this year was to 'explore the Living Justice Living Peace charter and what it means for the Board'. Perhaps of greater significance is 'What does this mean for our governance and framework and responsibility?'

To gain a little appreciation and understanding of governance in a civil corporate sense is relevant. Governance has been defined to refer to structures and processes that are designed to ensure accountability, transparency, responsiveness, rule of law, stability, equity and inclusiveness, empowerment and broad based participation.

Corporate governance is concerned with holding the balance between economic and social goals and between individuals and communal goals. The governance framework is there to encourage the efficient use of resources and equally to require accountability for the stewardship of those resources.

The aim is to align as nearly as possible, the interests of individuals, corporations and society – Sir Adrian Cadbury

Good governance is putting people at the centre of the development process.

How then do we, as a Board package this all together to work corporately but continue to be Gospel people.

The answer lies in a combination of *Governance for Mission* and civil authority and an understanding and operations of each.

While we continue to navigate the impact of a pandemic and a future ‘not of our own’, the Board has maintained stability, set and achieved goals and continued to meet through a mix of forums convenient and effective for our Directors. I continue to be blessed with a Board of Directors committed to ‘governance for mission through a lived belief of bringing the good news with an earnest and generous spirit’. I offer my sincere appreciation to all associated in this mission – Directors, members of committees and the College Leadership Team.

The Board, through the Chair, is accountable to Kildare Ministries. Communication is maintained through regular formal and informal interactions, meetings with the Trustees, combined Kildare Ministries Board Chair meetings and a comprehensive reporting process for the Annual General Meeting. The Board, the policy making instrument for the College, ensures due diligence and transparency through regular meetings and its processes are directed through and in accordance with the Constitution and Board Manual. This year, for the first time, the Directors attended the Kildare Ministries Board Directors and Stewardship Council seminar. Not only were we able to gain an appreciation and understanding of the other Boards, their achievements and challenges, but we were able to come to the table to offer insights into better communication avenues and discussions around the opportunities for greater liaison with the Trustees.

Given the time constraints and full agendas for the Board meetings, the Directors enjoyed and appreciated the valuable time they were able to spend in developing relationships and also in-depth discussions on current governance issues. The Board thanks Kildare Ministries and the College for affording us this valuable opportunity. I am also appreciative of the commitment of the Directors in giving of their time to attend.

BOARD EVALUATION AND GOALS

Integral to the ongoing improvement of the Board’s processes, evaluation of each meeting, an annual survey and a regular external audit assists in highlighting the strengths and recommendations for a continual improvement agenda.

Following a review of the previous year’s goals and achievements, the Board as a team sets the direction for the year from the Strategic Plan.

This year, the goals for the whole Board included:

1. To explore the Kildare Ministries *Living Justice Living Peace* Charter and unpack what this means for the decision-making process for the Board.
2. To review and update the Board Manual (the Board’s procedural document).

3. To reiterate the Board's support of the College's *wellbeing mission* and continue to monitor the Staff Wellbeing Framework.
4. To endorse the External Review Audit.
5. To give consideration and actions for the recommendations from the audit to further the effectiveness of the Board.
6. To review and finalise the Principal's contract 2022 – 2027.

I am pleased to report that the Board has achieved successful outcomes for each of these goals.

Team Work is the essence of good governance. It is necessary to form a team with the party and also within the administrative system – Narendra Modi



COMMITTEES

Much of the preparation for the business of the Board meetings occurs through the operation of the Committees. The composition of these is determined by the objectives of the Strategic Plan and the annual outcomes desired from this plan.

This year, the Board determined the Committees:

- Mission, Formation and Governance
- Building and Property
- Finance and Risk
- Strategic Planning

A review of the year indicates the Board and Committees have planned and implemented an extraordinary number of policies and initiatives emanating from the Strategic Plan. This has been made possible through the positive close relationship the Board has with the College Leadership Team. Many hours in preparation and meetings have ensured that as a Board, we are securing a forward-looking progression for the College. The commencement of Years 5 and 6 in 2024, has been on the drawing board for some years and considerable and considered discernment about the future of education in the western corridor has taken place for the Board to come to this decision.

With increased enrolments and year levels, comes further master planning of the site and provision of additional resources all the while keeping to the forefront of our discernment the mission of the College.



Mission, Formation and Governance

Chair	Dr Kate Hall (Director)
Members	Sr Chanel Sugden (Director) Mrs Emma Beach (Directors) Mrs Robyn Killoran (Board Chair)
Ex Officio	Mr Andrew Beiers (Deputy Principal Mission)

This Committee has close oversight of the operations of the Board to satisfy transparency, accountability in mission and civil governance.

The Formation Program of the Board takes into account, updating Director responsibilities and understanding and enacting canonical regulations. As a Board, we note the responsibilities of governance is increasing each year – Safeguarding policies, Whistleblower policies and Cyber Safety to name a few.

The Board has committed to having two days per year, necessarily on Saturdays, and a session each meeting to ensure we have compliance in each area of responsibility, spiritual reflection, liturgical celebration and the annual commission of the Board by the Trustees continue to provide nourishment to us individually and together as a faith community.

Succession planning continues to be an agenda item when the skills required for good governance are reviewed and applied to nominations for prospective committee members and Directors. Programs of induction in understanding our Brigidine mission and Kildare Ministries entity, and authority have been developed and reviewed. Constant evaluation of good governance culture and Director responsibilities round out a comprehensive formation and development program.

Building and Property

Chair	Mrs Robyn Killoran (Director)
Members	Dr Kate Hall (Director) Mrs Cheryl Caughley (Director) Mr Nick Herron (Director) Mr John Auld (Director)
Ordinary Members	Mr Graham Killoran
Ex Officio	Mr Brendan Cahill (Principal)
Specialist Member	Mrs Claudia Mathews (Business Manager)

Goals for 2022 included:

- continue to maintain oversight of Building Project dispute resolution and defects
- in conjunction with the Finance and Risk Committee and in accordance with the goals from the College Strategic Plan (2022-2030) proceed with the master planning process
- maintain oversight of the College's environmentally sustainable processes and practices
- maintain oversight of the College's Maintenance Plan for 2022
- assume responsibility for the development of a College Environmental Charter/Sustainability Plan
- review committee membership and committee Charter.

This year, the Committee has focussed on the master plan for the long-term facilities plan. After a selection process, the College Board invited Mark Gibson Architects to complete the masterplan to address the present and future needs of the College. The plan has been delivered, approved by the Board and unveiled to the College community with much excitement and anticipation. Stage One will prepare accommodation and social spaces for the intake of our Year 5 and 6s in 2024. Work will commence during summer vacation and continue in 2023.

The Committee has also focussed on a number of smaller projects. These include completion of the fencing project along Fairley and Ward Street, including lights and banners, the replacement of the shade sails over the pool and Brigid Centre Court and the next stage in the solar project with the installation of solar on Delany and Tullow. The College is proud to have implemented the solar on two more College roof tops to continue to reduce our environmental footprint. Leak alert devices have also been installed on all water metres to alert the College staff via SMS when excess water is used.

The Committee continues to oversee the College's daily upkeep of the facilities through the existing facilities maintenance plan annual review. Maintaining these excellent resources requires the Committee to ensure budgeting priority is given to current and future facilities.

Finance and Risk

Chair	Mr John Auld (Director)
Members	Mrs Cheryl Caughley (Director)
	Mr Kieran McCarthy (Director)
	Ms Salwa Marsh (Director) <i>Retired AGM 2022</i>
Ordinary Members	Ms Joan Mackay, Mr Michael Hogg,
	Ms Catherine Moloney, Mrs Dot Lawson
Ex Officio	Mr Brendan Cahill (Principal)
Specialist Members	Mrs Claudia Mathews (Business Manager)
	Mrs Dani Sprenger (Deputy Principal Students)
	Mrs Angela Johnson (College Accountant)
	Ms Jackie Wood (Risk and Compliance Officer)

Goals 2022 include:

Finance:

- Successful completion of the College financial audit.
- Secure strong enrolment.
- Complete the Operational Risk reporting structures.
- Create a Business Continuation Plan.
- Review Risk Appetite Statement, Register and Matrix.

Risk:

- Oversight, writing and cyclical review of all policies.
- Monitor site risks including Work Health Safety, Cyber Security, business and financial.

The year commenced with the annual financial audit team from Bentleys, who are in their third year with the College, which resulted in an unqualified opinion on the College accounts. It was with great pleasure that the Annual General Meeting, held with the Kildare Ministries Trustees, was onsite rather than remotely as was the case last year.

The College focus in 2022 was planning for the introduction of Years 5 and 6 in 2024 and the updated College Facilities Masterplan 2022 – 2040, the Committee has reviewed the financial capacity to facilitate these exciting opportunities. Continuing challenges include the inflationary pressures on the College as well as our families and the community which are expected to continue.

The Committee continues to work with the College to oversee the enhancement of the College Board Risk Reporting to embed operational and strategic risks into the reporting. Regular activities of the Committee included monitoring the College policy renewal cycle, Work Health Safety incident reporting and the usual monitoring of the College Financial Reporting.

Continued oversight by the Committee in updating the 10 Year Strategic Financial Plan, designed to enhance the decision-making for yearly budget and long-term strategic master planning requirements.

Strategic Planning Committee

Chair	Ms Kay Gleeson (Director)
Members	Mrs Cheryl Caughley (Director)
	Mrs Robyn Killoran (Board Chair)
	Ms Helen Royan (Director)
	Dr Kate Hall (Director)
Ex Officio	Mr Brendan Cahill (Principal)
Specialist Member	Ms Melissa Dever (Deputy Principal Curriculum)

In 2022, one of the goals for the College and the Board was to begin to enact the co-created Strategic Vision and Plan for the College. The Committee's work for the year has centred around the following goals:

- In coordination and cooperation with the College, implement and regularly review the Strategic Plan 2022 – 2024 and a 10-year strategic outlook with a particular focus on the annual Action Plan.
- Provide strategic support and direction in the development of plans for the future enrolment strategy of the College.
- Continue the development of the open dialogue between the College, Strategic Planning Committee, Board and other Board Committees in the development and implementation of the strategy.

2022 saw the realisation of our first triennium of our new 10 Year Strategic Vision 2022 to 2024 – *Inspiring All to be the Difference*. The College Leadership Team develop their operational goals and strategies for the year and presented these to the Committee and to the College Board.

The Committees primary focus in 2022 was to further the work completed in 2021 exploring the *Touch Stone's Sustainable Presence* element, ensuring that the College enrolments remained stable and consistent. The feasibility study undertaken in 2021 provided the College with a clear direction to further pursue the possibility of adding Years 5 and 6 to the learning years of the College. After deeper demographic study, financial modelling, and a review of current and possible future facilities, the decision was made to add additional learning years of Years 5 and 6 in 2024. This decision informed the Building and Property Committee's Master Planning Project and the Finance and Risk Committee's work in policy and financial planning. The final decision was announced to the College and broader community in September when the application for additional years of schooling was submitted to the Office of Non-State Schools Accreditation Board (NSSAB). This was followed by a Marketing and Communication Plan entitled *Why wait*.

During the latter part of 2022, the Strategic Planning Committee focussed on their goal of developing and implementing goal setting, review and performance processes to enable the Board and the College Leadership Team to review their progress and its alignment to the strategy and mission of the College. The Strategic Planning Committee has continued to work collaboratively with all Committees of the Board, the College Board and College Leadership Team to bring to life the Strategic Plan and *inspire all members of our community to be the difference*.



Conclusion

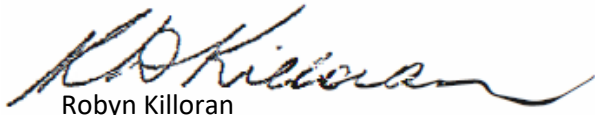
I am indebted to and sincerely thank each of these Committee members for their commitment, passion and persistence and sheer hard work to achieve outcomes at the conclusion of another year.

The College is congratulated on another successful year despite the ongoing challenges our current environment exposes. The Board acknowledges the significant achievements by all members of the College community and in particular Mr Brendan Cahill whom I am delighted has graciously and generously accepted a further contract to lead the College into the future. Schools continue to face a barrage of challenges – curriculum overload, competition, parental expectations and staff and student wellbeing. It is said often that when one first walks into a school, the spirit or essence of that school is felt – welcoming, caring and knowing its culture and value where the student is the centre of the enterprise – such is Brigidine College and the staff guided by the Leadership Team are to be congratulated on their commitment and professionalism in maintaining the balance of academic rigor and pastorally caring for the community. It is obvious that strength and gentleness is lived.

As Board Chair, it has been my privilege to guide the mission and serve the College. Thank you for permitting me to be a steward of this very special enterprise over the past seven years. My sincere thanks to each of the Directors for their courage and generous hearts, to Brendan for his Christian leadership and to each of you as members of this community.

May we be attentive to the spirit of wisdom that dwells among us and within us and within our companions and partners in Kildare Ministries.

Together in faithfulness to the gospel, may we act courageously, compassionately, and creatively.



Robyn Killoran
Brigidine College
Board Chair

