



2017

ANNUAL REPORT

**Daylesford Dharma
School Inc.**

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info@dharmaschool.com.au

**Our vision is to flourish as
a school abiding in the
view of compassion,
interdependence and
universal responsibility,
nurturing each child's
capacity to grow into kind
and wise individuals.**



FROM THE BOARD

The Daylesford Dharma School moved through a challenging year in 2017, that as a community, was transformed into positive change with renewed clarity and commitment. The School was unable to fulfil its 2017 strategic fundraising goal to meet the timeline for relocation of its buildings and the building program on its 22 acre property in Daylesford, which led to a sense of uncertainty within the community. Funding is always tight in education, with expenses continually increasing and from time-to-time this can combine with volatility in enrolments, making it challenging for a small school model. Additionally, the high level of compliance requirements regardless of school size are always a significant cost for the School both in financial and time commitment terms.

2017 saw movement of leadership within the school and at the Board level. Our Principal of many years, Joel Hines left his position to step into a new career path and joined the Daylesford Dharma School Board of Governance to assist the school in a time of transition and change. There was also significant movement at the Board level. By the end of 2017, the school had a new Board, with sound institutional knowledge, and a commitment to model the school's Buddhist philosophical approach in fulfilling its mission and strategic objectives to support and guide the school to thrive and grow.

This positive intent of the school community rallied the Buddhist community of Melbourne to stand behind the school and raise the funds to resume the relocation commencement target of May 2018. A significant and meaningful partnership with the Quang Minh Temple in Braybrook has emerged from this time of change. This is a wonderful partnership for our students, staff and the community, who have weathered the challenges of 2017 and held their deep committed to the unique education that we provide for them. The Quang Minh Temple share with the Dharma School a vision of education built on the foundations of compassion and wisdom and guided by the Australian Curriculum. Of significance was the School being successful in its application for a Federal Government Capital Works grant to enable the purchase of new buildings for the site. This level of support will enable the project to succeed to meet its relocation target date.

Another positive outcome from this time of reflection and change was the appointment of a new Principal for the school. In December 2017, we welcomed Jennifer Willis in her appointment as Principal to take up her role with the school in time for the 2018 school year. The school community was heartened and excited by this news and our capacity to close the year on a positive and strong note, with our staff united in enthusiasm for their new Principal and the potential held therein.

The School leadership team continues to work diligently in the final phase of fund-raising for our new buildings, that will see our students and community enjoying a thriving education facility after many years in rented premises. This is an exciting and grounding development for our school and we kindly ask our families and friends of the School and our Buddhist community to continue to support and contribute to the school, be it financially or in ways that can benefit the establishing of the building of our new home on our new site due to open in January 2019.

On behalf of Daylesford Dharma School and its leadership team, I thank you all for your ongoing support to us. In Buddhist terms, I hope we can all detach from the afflictions that arise in life and achieve the state of morality, compassion, meditation, and wisdom. Let us all be encouraged by the belief that all phenomena and behaviours are impermanent and all dharmas are devoid of self. With this in our heart, we can achieve great things.

Solomon Li
Chair, Daylesford Dharma School Inc.



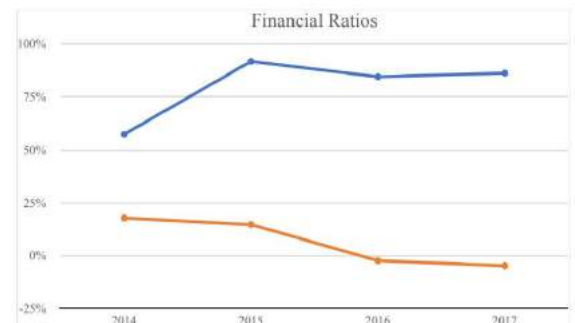
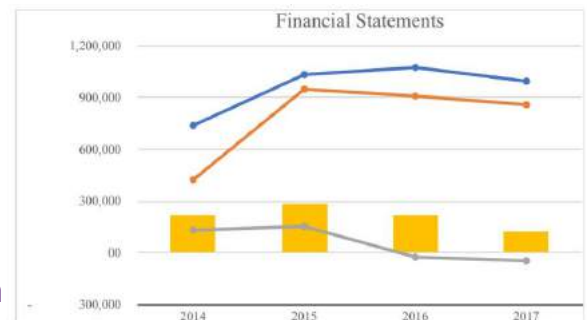
FROM THE TREASURER

2017 Report from the Treasurer- Solomon Li

During the 2017 school year there was a decrease in enrolments and a resultant decrease in revenue of \$79,392. The School was able to restructure its staffing to match the decrease in funding and tuition fees. Despite the restructuring, operations ran at a deficit of -\$45,751. This deficit was covered by cash reserves accumulated in previous years. The 2017 end of year cash reserve was \$127,176 which includes \$51,464 in the Building Fund.

The School's past financial performance is shown in graphs below

The school has projected a flow on decrease in enrolments into early 2018 when it will then stabilise. With this projected decrease in 2018, the School will closely monitor its budget to contain expenditure within the expected funding and tuition revenue. We aim to balance the book at the end of 2018. However, given that some expenses can be contingent and unpredictable, it is possible that the School may still run at a deficit at the end of this year. We are prepared to cover any operating deficit from the existing cash reserve and scheduled fund-raising activities.





PARENT, STUDENT, TEACHER SATISFACTION

Teachers:

When provided with an opportunity to review staff practice in supporting student engagement and wellbeing staff noted that they know their approaches work well because:

Students are largely focused and ready to learn and engage

Students demonstrate with confidence language of feelings, needs and requests

The peace-table process is requested and led by students

The language of feelings, needs and requests are utilised by many students

Parents have provided positive feedback to teachers regarding student's behaviours and actions - e.g. students behaviours have improved; students use of non violent communication at home has increased.

Staff highlighted the following factors and mechanisms that enable and sustain these approaches:

Visual resources in classrooms and around school are regarded as very useful - E.g. interactive NVC board, feelings thermometer,

Teachers supporting each other's practice - and reinforcing identified positive student behaviours

Students involved in decision making - establishing class aspirations and expectations to guide student's behaviours

Parents:

After a challenging period that saw a reduction in student enrollment, a forum was conducted, during which parents highlighted positive aspects of their experience of the Dharma School. A number of these are shared below:

The visual aesthetic – school is bright and cheerful, happy feeling, calming

There is equality between teachers and students

The emotional intelligence focus

The school responds well and willingly to requests from the community to participate in events, supportive.

Acceptance

All ages play together

Each child is treated as an individual with positive response to parent input

There is thought put into everything

Teachers value their own intuition and children pick up on this – gives children the gift of communicating comfortably with adults

The Awareness program

Unique communication between staff and the children is beautiful

There is a culture of openness and sharing between staff

The underpinning of dharma in all aspects of the school

Students:

One of the greatest testament to the student's experience of the Dharma School, is that recently graduated students, and students who have moved to other schools for various reasons continue to frequent the school to attend community events such as school fairs, and to also spend their days at the school during Pupil Free Days from the schools they are attending. In conversation with students, they frequently speak of feelings of inclusion, of community and of acceptance, and strong peer and student-teacher relationships are highlighted.

ANNUAL ASSESSMENTS

Student Results In Assessments

During the most recent 2017 NAPLAN testing period our year 3 and 5 students performed on average above or at the National Minimum Standards across all testing areas.

Year Level	Year	National Minimum Standard	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
Yr 3	2017	Above	100%	78%	80%	90%	70%
		At		11%			20%
Yr 5	2017	Above	50%	50%	50%	50%	100%
		At	33%	50%	50%	50%	
Yr 3	2016	Above	100%	100%	33%	67%	67%
		At			67%	33%	33%
Yr 5	2016	Above	75%	100%	100%	100%	100%
		At	25%				
Yr 3	2015	Above	80%	100%	60%	80%	60%
		At			40%		40%
Yr 5	2015	Above	86%	71%	100%	100%	100%
		At	14%	29%			

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Year 3 – In 2017, 100% of students achieved above National benchmarks in Reading. Results were consistent in other areas of Literacy with 80% and above achieving at or above the National benchmarks in Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation. Grammar and Punctuation results, in particular, have consistently increased over the last 3 years, with 90% of students achieving above the National benchmarks. Numeracy results saw 90% of students achieving at or above the National standards. These results continue to be consistent and indicate the Literacy and Numeracy programs at the Dharma School are supporting student learning in these areas.

Year 5 – In 2017 the scores in Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation demonstrate all students are meeting National standards. The Year 5 data trends demonstrate that for the last three years 100% of our students have achieved above the National Minimum Standard for Numeracy.

LITERACY

Across all year levels, students' scores for all areas of Literacy demonstrate the majority of students consistently achieve at or above National standard.

NUMERACY

There continues to be strong achievements recorded in Numeracy across the school with particular consistency demonstrated in our Year 5 results over the past 3 years, which have 100% of students operating above the National standards for Numeracy. This trend is consistent with the school's ongoing focus on professional development for teaching Numeracy since 2015.

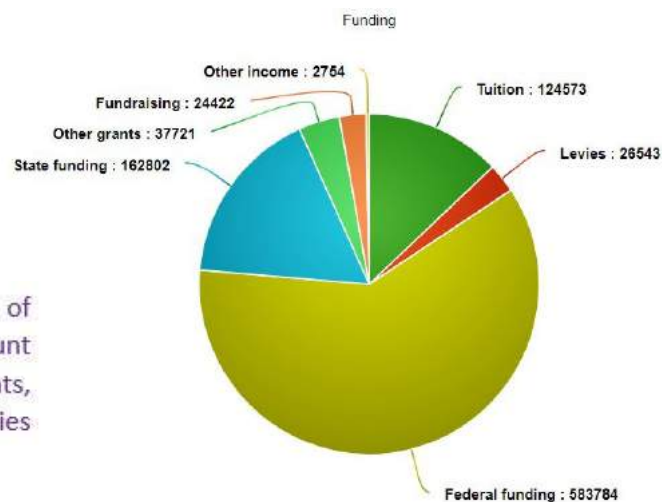
KEY NUMBERS

Enrolment by Grade	Male	Female	Total
Prep	5	9	14
Grade 1	6	3	9
Grade 2	6	6	12
Grade 3	7	8	15
Grade 4	1	4	5
Grade 5	3	3	6
Grade 6	3	3	6
Total Students	67 (is the total students enrolled at any time throughout 2017 including those that exited or enrolled throughout the year)		

Attendance is monitored three times daily. All absences, early leavers and latecomers are required to inform the school either by phone, text, email or by filling in the required form. Any unexplained absences are followed up by administration staff via phone call, text or email to parent or carer. Attendance rates are reported to parents in their students report twice a year.

Attendance across the whole school for 2017	87%
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Year Level	Attendance
Prep	88%
Grade 1	84%
Grade 2	78%
Grade 3	89%
Grade 4	88%
Grade 5	94%
Grade 6	92%



In 2017, the School received a total of \$962,599 in receipts for the year. This amount comprised the recurrent government grants, tuition fees and levies, fundraising activities and other income.

STAFFING

Rosie Berenyi- Mansell	Office Administration	Certificate IV in Business Administration
Jaala Freeman	Chaplain	Certificate IV in Pastoral Care
Ann Fitzgerald	Classroom Teacher	Diploma of Education (Primary)
Christina Halvy	Classroom Teacher	Bachelor of Education (P-6)
Juliet Johnstone	Classroom Teacher	Bachelor of Education (P-6)
Nicole Simirenko	Classroom Teacher	Graduate Diploma of Education (Primary)
David Edmonds	Classroom Teacher	Graduate Diploma of Education (Applied Learning)
Cameron Frost	Classroom Teacher	Graduate Diploma of Education (Primary)
Katarina Widderington-Oliver	Classroom Teacher	Graduate Diploma of Education (Secondary)
Rebecca Russell	Performing Arts Teacher	Diploma of Teaching, Graduate Diploma Drama in Education
Joel Hines	Principal	Bachelor of Occupational Therapy
Tanya Wiggins	Learning Manager	Graduate Diploma of Education (Primary)
Annshar Wolfs	LOTE Teacher	Bachelor of Education (P-6)
Emily Wilden	Classroom Teacher	Masters of Teaching (Primary)
Neil Jobson	Learning Assistant	Certificate of Education Support - Integration Aide
Selena McVeigh	Learning Assistant	Diploma of Community Services, Certificate of Education Support - Integration Aide (In progress)
Sandra Laudan	Finance Administration	No formal qualification

All teachers employed at the school have the appropriate registration required by the Victorian Institute of Teachers (VIT). Working with Children checks have been obtained for all other non-teaching staff and volunteers working at the school. Professional development for 2017 included:

- Annual Teacher retreat
- Specific training, seminars, workshops and events from approved Educational Training Providers.
- Inter school networking for teacher mentoring and support.

Non-Indigenous Full-Time Staff	Full-Time			Part-Time					
	Male	Female	X	Male		Female		X	
	HC	HC	HC	HC	FTE	HC	FTE	HC	FTE
Teaching Staff									
Principal	0	0	0	1	0.8	0	0.0	0	0
Teaching Staff (including librarians)	0	2	0	2	1.4	6	2.3	0	0
Total Teaching Staff	0	2	0	3	2.2	6	2.3	0	0.0
Non-teaching Staff									
Specialist Support	0	0	0	0	0.0	3	1.2	0	0
Administrative and Clerical (including aides & assistants)	0	1	0	1	0.6	2	1.0	0	0
Total Non-teaching Staff	0	1	0	1	0.6	5	2.2	0	0.0

*"When educating
the minds of our
youth, we must not
forget to educate
their hearts."*

HH the Dalai Lama