bishop’s message

My dear friends,

As your newly appointed Bishop I would like to endorse the 2009 Catholic Education System Annual Report.

2009 saw the start of more than two years of building for our schools as the Australian Government’s Building the Education Revolution program enabled unprecedented construction of new buildings and renewal of existing facilities in our schools.

2009 was also a year for another kind of development: building on the collaborative work of our schools and parishes of previous years to ensure solid foundations, not just in buildings, but in the faith and values of our young people.

Catholic Schools are an integral part of the mission and day-to-day life of the church in this country. Young people are the hope for the future and need to be nurtured in their faith and learning if they are to carry our church and nation forward. In their pastoral letter Catholic Schools at a Crossroads the NSW and ACT Bishops recommitted to ensuring that all our schools:

- are truly Catholic in their identity and life – which includes a strong pastoral focus, quality relationships, orthodox teaching and the best Christian morals
- are centres of ‘the new evangelisation’ – so that we reach out to others and bring them into contact with Christ and his church
- enable our students to achieve high levels of ‘Catholic religious literacy’ – as in all other disciplines at the school and all other aspects of their personal development
- are led and staffed by people who will contribute to these goals – which is why we are so proud of our staff and so committed to their professional and faith development.

This report is evidence of the dedication of our school leaders, staff and families, our parish priests and parishes, our Catholic Education Office, the Parramatta Diocesan Catholic Schools Council, its sub-committees and the Parent Representative Council. Together they all contribute to the evangelising mission of the Church to share the Gospel with all people and to the teaching mission of the church to ensure the all-round development of every young person.

I take this opportunity to recognise the very significant contribution of Bishop Kevin Manning, over the past 13 years within the diocese, in shaping the direction of Catholic education for the future. It is a privilege to inherit his mantle and I am very excited to now be working with the Catholic education community of Parramatta.

I commend this report to you and pray that God will continue to bless all in Catholic education.

Most Rev. Anthony Fisher OP
Bishop of Parramatta
executive director’s message

Dear parents and colleagues,

Catholic schools have come a long way since Blessed Mary MacKillop and the Sisters of St Joseph founded their first schools in the Diocese of Parramatta in the late 1800s.

In 2009, our system marked the centenary of the death of Blessed Mary MacKillop with a Mass of Thanksgiving. The Josephites’ work in, and for, the communities of western Sydney is an inspiration and a challenge for us as Catholic educators to respond to the needs of our students, teachers and the communities we serve.

2009 was a year of building on our educational foundations and laying new ones as 76 of our schools received funding for new facilities and refurbishments under the Australian Government’s Building the Education Revolution program. Once completed, these wonderful facilities will support the delivery of contemporary learning and teaching for current and future generations of Catholic school students.

In building the capacity of our teachers and leaders, we also committed to bridging the gap between what good learning and teaching looks like (theory) with how it is implemented, shared and improved upon in the learning spaces (practice).

In response to this, we invited Professor John Hattie of the University of Auckland to deliver the 2009 Ann D Clark lecture. Professor Hattie challenged us with the results of his extensive 15 year research into the educational practices that have the greatest impact on student outcomes: teachers working collaboratively and the effective use of data and student feedback to improve teaching practice within the context of literacy and numeracy.

As much as this report is a summary of the work of Catholic education, it also recognises the tremendous achievements made across all areas of our system of Catholic schools.

I wish to thank our principals and teachers who take up the daily challenge of improving their own professional learning in order to improve student learning, and to the staff in schools and the Catholic Education Office who support them in this valuable work.

Gregory B Whitby
Executive Director of Schools
Diocese of Parramatta
about the system

The Diocese of Parramatta is located in one of the fastest growing areas of New South Wales. The diocese is west of Sydney and reaches from Dundas Valley, west to Katoomba, south to Luddenham, and north to Richmond.

There are 77 systemic schools in the diocese (55 primary and 22 secondary) with a population of more than 41,000 students and 4,000 staff.

Parish priests and principals work collaboratively to ensure the mission of Catholic education in the diocese is realised through pastoral care, sacramental and liturgical celebrations as well as the shared management of school sites and on matters relating to school reviews and enrolment processes, stewardship, and appraisal and employment of staff.

The Parramatta Diocesan Catholic Schools Council, under the Chair of the Bishop assists and advises on matters pertaining to the operation and conduct of systemic diocesan schools and Religious Education. Its core functions include providing strategic direction, stewardship and accountability.
strategic planning

The system leadership, comprising the leadership teams of all schools and the leadership team of the Catholic Education Office (CEO), has the responsibility under the Bishop and the Parramatta Diocesan Catholic Schools Council for affecting the strategic intent. During 2008 the system leadership developed the priorities for 2009.

The strategic intent of Catholic schools in the Diocese of Parramatta is to provide quality Catholic schooling by:

- improving learning outcomes for all students
- promoting a professional and rewarding working life for teachers

There are four domains of activity which bear upon quality Catholic schooling. These are recognised in the structure of the education framework (see diagram right).

During 2009, the system focused on four priorities, building on the work of 2007 and 2008.

These priorities were:
1. improving literacy from Kindergarten to Year 12
2. improving numeracy from Kindergarten to Year 12
3. enhancing formation
4. further developing teacher capabilities by building leadership capabilities.
During 2009, a key priority for Religious Education (RE) in the diocese was to develop an action plan drawing on the themes that emerged from diocesan discussions of the NSW-ACT Bishops’ pastoral statement, Catholic Schools at a Crossroads.

The discussions with principals, pastors and school personnel identified Catholic identity and life, new evangelisation, Catholic Religious literacy and the provision of suitable diocesan leadership and staff, as the major themes from the document. These themes contextualised the work of the Catholic Education Office in the areas of Religious Education and Catholicity and gave life to the Parramatta Catholic Education Leadership Framework for school leaders, specifically in the areas of Catholic culture and stewardship.

Throughout 2009, the following was achieved:

At school level
- a commitment to improving outcomes in the teaching of the diocesan RE program, Sharing Our Story
- whole-school staff participation in spiritual formation
- regular opportunities for school communities to come together to pray and celebrate their shared faith
- retreats and reflection days for students

At system level
- 61 teachers completed the two year Parramatta Certificate of Religious Education in 2009
- 24 teachers commenced or continued studies in the Masters of Religious Education (Australian Catholic University) with 4 having completed the course
- 170 CEO staff participated in a staff renewal day
- 5 teachers were granted conditional RE accreditation and 44 teachers were granted unconditional RE accreditation
- an Exploring Scripture network has been set up allowing RE coordinators and RE teachers to share their ideas, resources and successes
- induction and support for new RE coordinators, beginning teachers and teachers of Religious Education in their first and second years of teaching, and mentoring of early career teachers
- support for training of catechists to teach Special Religious Education (“Scripture”) in government schools
- the Leadership Development program for assistant principals and coordinators including units on Religious Education, Catholic school mission, identity and culture and religious leadership
- planning for introduction of assessment of religious literacy in Years 4 and 8 (pilot) in 2010
- formation programs including ELIM and Touching the Heart of Teaching
- opportunities and support for prayer and reflection
- principal groups, individual schools, evening gathering for principals conducted by Kevin O’Shea, and in the CEO Lent and Advent reflection group
Parramatta Marist operate a Project Based Learning model in Years 9 and Year 10 which is a modification of the American New Tech Network model based on research from the Buck Institute for Education. At Parramatta Marist student learning is directed by projects that run for periods of between two to five weeks. Students work in groups of between two to five students depending on the complexity of the problem. Subject integration for the Humanities, ICT and Religious Education have proven effective while Science maintains its independence and Mathematics is taught in the traditional mode.

The model attempts to better address ‘21st century skills’ ie - teamwork, organisation, presentation skills, verbal and written communication. These are assessed throughout the projects and have created a new set of learning and teaching skills. The model is not content-dominated, and covers syllabus outcomes with the 21st century skills. Teachers also try, where possible, to bring outside experts/clients into the project so that staff can be facilitators of learning with the students assisting them to prepare for their presentations for outside experts/clients.

Numerous studies have been undertaken by the Buck Institute for Education and the New Tech Network indicating specific learning gains for students. Parramatta Marist’s professional observations have indicated that students are more engaged in their learning. Students are faced with, and instructed on, how to deal with the challenging tasks of working in groups, presenting to an outside audience, and using effective verbal communication and organisational skills. The students evaluate their own learning, the projects and their peers. The level of academic maturity of the Year 9 and 10 students has improved significantly.

Teaching practice at Parramatta Marist has been revolutionised as the program has resulted in the establishment of vibrant teaching teams. The model allows for team teaching which has lead to a continuous program of professional dialogue. The teachers, like students, have established teams and have adapted to the larger, more flexible learning spaces. The combination of young and experienced staff has seen some remarkable improvements in passion for subjects and project development. Teachers are also learning from their teaching partner and sharing their own specific disciplines. For example, Religious Education staff teaching with ICT staff.

Around 12 teachers have undertaken PBL training in the US and four teachers are now accredited trainers who have facilitated training for many other staff in-school. Further training in the US has been planned for 2010. Staff-accredited trainers have run whole staff developing days on group dynamics, team teaching, authentic assessment, scaffolding and classroom management.

CASE STUDY

Parramatta Marist High School, Westmead
PROJECT BASED LEARNING

Parramatta Marist School, Westmead
St Columba's High School, Springwood

STEPHEN HEPPELL COLLABORATION

St Columba’s High, Springwood collaborated with Professor Stephen Heppell for a series of professional learning workshops focused on how learning could be improved for all members of the St Columba’s community. In September 2009, Professor Heppell worked with the school leadership team, the middle leaders and the whole staff around the question – how good do we think our students can be?

Teachers are engaged in professional learning teams that are focused on research of, and practice in, assessment for learning. They developed goals that link to providing feedback in the classroom, engage in action research and have learning buddies. The role of student voice, as identified by Stephen Heppell, has been an area for considerable work by teachers.

All learners at St Columba’s are focusing on feedback to improve learning and teaching. Teachers are looking at teacher-to-teacher feedback, student-to-teacher feedback, student-to-student feedback and teacher-to-student feedback. Students are now more engaged in the learning process, taking greater responsibility for their learning and providing feedback about how learning takes place. This has led to greater collaboration between teachers and students.

Teachers are measuring student engagement and responses to learning, and are using this data to inform their practice, thereby personalising the learning for students. By raising their expectations of the students’ involvement in the learning process, the students are more able to discuss their learning in a meaningful way. There have been more opportunities to celebrate student learning with displays, wikis and videos to give greater purpose to the students’ learning.

CASE STUDY

Learning and teaching is the core work of our system of schools. The Catholic Education Office provides direct support at the school level through the Religious Education and Learning Services (REaLS) team of teaching educators lead by team leaders across a variety of support areas.

In response to the system priorities, a number of learning and teaching initiatives that encompassed a range of areas were introduced, such as the Australian Government programs - Smarter Schools National Partnerships (SSNP) and the Successful Language Learners (SLL) pilot, visiting educators and student services including counselling, drug education, transition and Indigenous education programs. Innovative approaches to VET and student performance were also supported in diocesan schools.

School participation in government programs including the SLL pilot project were supported by team leaders and teaching educators. Research demonstrates that such context-specific approaches are effective in supporting teachers and leaders to interpret and apply their learning within their own school context. This approach allowed school leadership teams to focus on improving data use to support growth in student literacy and numeracy outcomes, while building their own leadership capacity to sustain new approaches once formal projects were concluded.

Feedback from the schools involved in the SLL pilot has been positive to date particularly the above average growth of students in literacy and numeracy, this was result of teacher professional learning using English as a Second Language (ESL) scales to plan teaching programs, develop student profiles and individualise programs for targeted students.

Visiting educators played a critical role in building teacher and leader capacity in the diocese. The CEO supported a range of schools in ongoing global and local collaboration with renowned academic Stephen Heppell, ‘best practice’ educator Marco Torres and the leadership team from the innovative Silverton Primary School in Victoria. Such encounters challenged leaders and teachers to continuously reflect and refine practice to improve student learning outcomes.

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RESPOND
Holy Spirit Primary, St Clair
iLEARNING PROJECT

Holy Spirit Primary, St Clair introduced the iLearning project as an integrated learning project for the key learning areas of Human Society and its Environment (HSIE) and Science and Technology. The ‘i’ in iLearning stands for independent, investigative, inquisitive, inquiry and ICT. The project was designed to engage the children’s natural curiosity to learn, and to share this learning with their peers in interesting ways, developing their critical inquiry skills which are essential for the 21st century world.

The students are able to collaborate more closely with their peers and their teachers in planning and developing their iLearning projects. The students further develop their literacy and numeracy skills through sharing and discussion. The students are more actively engaged in their learning, taking ownership of their planning, checking, critical research and sharing skills which have all improved. The student’s literacy skills have also developed and improved as a result.

The teachers working collaboratively in a flexible, shared learning space has enabled them to share their expertise, experience and strategies so that they can learn from each other and improve teaching practice. The iLearning project has also provided a framework from which teachers can support student learning in a focused way and provides consistency from K-6 to build on student skills.

The iLearning project was developed from the school’s work with the Quality Teaching Framework. It has improved collaboration skills and enhanced student’s learning and teacher practice. Holy Spirit has been collecting student data for over five years and last year achieved their best-ever literacy results from the school’s own formal assessments and from external assessments e.g. NAPLAN.
Counselling and drug education
Counsellors in 54 primary schools worked individually with more than 600 students and promoted student wellbeing for all students, through individual and whole school approaches. The Intensive Behavioural and Family Counselling teams supported the school counsellors with over 200 referrals.

Educational psychologists provided more than 400 assessments and consultations. Students with additional hearing, vision and communication needs, and their teachers, were supported by specialist Itinerant teachers. Drug education was facilitated through teacher release for planning and in-school workshops for students, teachers and parents. Resources were also provided to schools and to the Jarara Indigenous team to support student learning.

Transition program
The Transition program assists secondary students with disabilities with their transition from school to employment, or further studies or training. The Transition program was highly commended for Training Initiative in the NSW Training Awards 2009.

Other significant achievements in 2009 included:
- development of competency-based credentials for Certificate I in Work Preparation
- development of in-school pre-vocational programs
- integration of employability skills in all training material and student documentation
- database to map student competencies and introduction of industry-based learning logs
Lighthouse program

Lighthouse is an 18 week workplace mentoring program based on the eight key employability skills. Students are matched with mentors who have completed mentor training delivered through the Western Sydney Institute of TAFE. In 2009 the program expanded by 70 per cent and students undertook TAFE training and completion of Certificate I in Work Preparation. Students and teachers also had access to the Lighthouse ning - an online networking tool which provided a place for students to share experiences of their workplace and for teachers to integrate key employability skills within the student’s workplace.

Indigenous education

The Jarara Indigenous Education team hosted the Catholic Education Commission’s 4th Aboriginal Education Workers (AEW) Conference, Damarawa Gumerah - Hands around the Spirit. The conference ran over two days with 110 attendees representing 11 diocesan and congregational schools across NSW.

In 2009, there were a total of 488 indigenous students enrolled in our schools (236 primary and 252 secondary students). The prior to school literacy program, Bridging the Gap, attracted 12 families, and 94 primary students received in-school support through Literacy Pathways. Secondary students participated in a variety of programs. Leadership workshops attracted 57 students, 10 Indigenous students engaged with Lighthouse and five new mentors joined the Lighthouse program. The year concluded with a successful awards night in front of 400 proud family members.

VET and Trade Training Centres

The Vocational Education and Training (VET) program engages students in vocational studies, providing them with access to multiple pathways and curriculum choices. The Trade Training Centres in Schools Program (TTC) provides a dual qualification of the first year equivalent of an apprenticeship and the HSC.

Throughout 2009, the McCarthy Catholic College TTC was in the planning stages for enrolment of students in 2010 offering Automotive, Brick and Block Laying, Hairdressing, Electrotechnology, Hospitality, Metals and Engineering and Carpentry. Loyola Senior High, Mount Druitt, in a consortium with Emmaus Catholic College, Kemps Creek, St Andrews College, Marayong, St Clare’s Catholic High, Hassall Grove, St Agnes High, Rooty Hill and Terra Sancta College, Schofields was approved and granted funding to open the diocese’s second TTC in 2011.

VET continues to grow with 2,157 students participating in classes delivered by schools and a further 213 students participating in courses delivered by TAFE and other providers. Stage 5 (Years 9 and 10) VET was piloted at St Agnes and St Clare’s Catholic high schools with 107 students participating in Business Services or Information Technology courses. School-based apprenticeships commenced in hairdressing and plumbing.

Loyola Senior High school commenced a traineeship program, sourcing employment opportunities and providing training for 17 students. The Information Technology traineeship program continues to grow...
with 18 Certificate IV completions and 16 Certificate III completions. Five students were awarded an Australian Vocational Student prize and a trainee was awarded IT Trainee of the Year for western Sydney. The Registered Training Organisation was externally audited by VETAB and has been re-registered.

Captivate

'Captivate - the spirit of expression' is the creative and performing arts initiative for Catholic schools in the Parramatta diocese offering a broad range of opportunities beyond the scale and capability of an individual school. Key priorities to build creative learning pathways and practices for all students and staff were met in 2009 through the following initiatives:

- Eight Captivate ensembles featuring choral, instrumental, dance and dance theatre students drawn from five primary and seven secondary schools, provided the opportunity for students to train and perform together. Under the artistic directorship of Shaun Parker, one of Australia’s leading arts practitioners, 207 students performed in the 2009 Captivate showcases. Captivate also provided inclusive programs within the timetabled day to provide arts learning opportunities for students of all ability and experience levels, including a beginner instrumental program engaging 300 students across five primary schools.

- In nine secondary schools Captivate specialists worked with Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) faculties to provide increased performance opportunities and extension programs for the highly motivated. At the 2009 Royal Easter Show, 300 students from 12 secondary schools performed over 14 days. At this event, the first diocesan indigenous dance ensemble made its public debut.

- Industry linked workshop projects including Making Tracks (a music composition workshop using GarageBand) supported by Apple Asia reached 40 schools within the Parramatta diocese.
MOVIES FOR THE MINDS PROJECT

Movies for the Minds (M4M) was introduced in 2009 to celebrate and enhance student learning at St Canice’s. Students film, edit and present movies at a festival that capture some of their learning experiences. The film preparation forms part of the unit and for younger years the teacher takes a more directive role. In older years (Years 4 – 6) students are more able to manage their own production.

M4M is a yearly highlight for the school as it celebrates, not only the current learning that the children have experienced, but allows the children to express themselves in a form/media that is so much a part of their world.

M4M improves student learning because it provides freedom to create in such a way that allows personal expression in a media that is contemporary and relevant. The children are engaged and motivated by the experience which drives their learning deeper.

M4M is a multimedia-based project for a generation that is surrounded by multimedia. It has directly influenced the teachers to reflect on the content and strategies they use to engage students and help them develop the knowledge and skills that are needed by 21st century learners.

Teachers have also learned from the experience in regards to development of technical skills. M4M has encouraged the teachers to reflect on the needs of their class to ensure that they are facilitating learning that is relevant.
St Monica’s Primary, Richmond
QUALITY TEACHING FRAMEWORK

Since 2007, St Monica's Primary, Richmond has been participating in professional learning using the Quality Teaching Framework (QT).

The framework uses three main dimensions to describe what constitutes quality teaching: the intellectual quality of the work students engage in; the quality of the learning environment in which it takes place; and the significance of the learning to students.

Importantly, QT provides a framework for teachers to reflect on, affirm and extend the quality of their teaching practice.

In 2007 and 2008, St Monica’s participated in Phase 1 of the Quality Teaching program offered by the Catholic Education Office (CEO). Julie Bowe, an academic from Newcastle University, worked alongside school teams, including the principal, to provide first hand experience in coding lessons, assessment tasks and student work samples. Schools came together in small clusters to work with each other and Julie over a five week period. At this stage, together with St Matthews Primary, Windsor, St Monica's were successful in gaining a grant which assisted in providing extra in-servicing across the whole school.

In 2009 schools involved in Phase 1 were invited to be part of Phase 2. One teacher involved in Phase 1 and two extra teachers worked with an academic partner from Newcastle University. Five teachers also participated in the Pedagogy in Practice Conference hosted by the Newcastle University. This conference was designed to support teachers, principals and other educators in their professional learning to deepen their understanding of quality teaching.

These professional learning experiences led to a higher level of discussion between teachers about quality teaching. QT has also provided teachers with a method to ensure teacher learning activities are meaningful and relevant. QT has improved student engagement, enthusiasm for learning and the quality of student work. Students are more engaged in their learning as a result of greater planning by teachers. Students are showing a deeper understanding of concepts, stemming from a greater emphasis on deep knowledge.

In 2010, all teachers will be involved in observing and coding their peers. The discussion which follows this activity has been invaluable in teacher professional development.

CASE STUDY

Teacher learning

The 2009 system leadership learning framework, Learning Together, focused on bridging the gap between ‘what we teach’ and ‘how we teach’. The work of New Zealand educationalist, John Hattie was influential in identifying the two high yield strategies of data and feedback as the bridge between the ‘what’ and the ‘how’ of learning and teaching. School leadership teams used a ‘learning story’ framework to explore the concepts of data and feedback through one student’s experience, and identify the implications for leading learning in their school.

Teacher learning is most powerful when the school leadership is deeply involved. The CEO supports school leadership in leading teacher learning within the school context, with 43 schools receiving intensive in-school support during 2009. This work of leading learning addresses both elements of the diocese’s strategic intent, improving learning outcomes for all students and promoting a professional and rewarding working life for teachers.

Quality Teaching (QT) is a research based framework for learning and teaching, supported by the University of Newcastle. In 2009, the CEO worked in partnership with principals and leading teachers in 26 schools implementing QT in their learning spaces. Four schools are deepening their learning by partnering with the University of Newcastle in an Australian Research Council research project on the impact of a whole school approach to implementing QT.
Recruitment and Orientation
The CEO continues its emphasis on attracting new teachers and supporting them in their role of teaching. The focus is to attract the best possible candidates and provide intensive support in their initial years so that they can provide the best possible learning experiences for students. The CEO supports and supplements the most important work of schools in their orientation of new staff.

Initiatives to attract new teachers into the teaching profession in the diocese included the graduate recruitment program, the offer of scholarships to university students, and the Step Up Into Teaching program. Teachers then engage in extensive system and professional learning at the school level. There were 124 teachers who commenced their teaching careers in the diocese in 2009.

NSW Institute of Teachers
2009 saw further consolidation of the NSW Institute of Teachers (NSWIT) mandatory accreditation process for New Scheme Teachers in the Parramatta diocese. Key priorities were developed from teacher feedback including a greater emphasis on educating staff about the accreditation process, the quality of the accreditation applications and the provision of more timely feedback.

Key milestones for 2009 included:
- 84 teachers accredited at Professional Competence and provided with information about Maintenance of Accreditation requirements
- approximately 270 teachers undertaking the mandatory accreditation process at the end of 2009
- development of improved staff resources for NSWIT information (implementation in 2010)

As the numbers of New Scheme Teachers continues to rise, future challenges will include the integration, management and promotion of both the mandatory and optional levels of NSWIT accreditation processes, as well as the transition to a national accreditation framework.

The Learning Environment
The learning environment is an important element of the quality Catholic schooling framework and supports the strategic intent. In 2008, a set of guiding principles was developed for all future capital works projects to ensure the Parramatta diocese maximised educational benefits for P-12 students and available funding. Planning Reference Groups, established at the school, play a critical role in the planning and coordination of projects for provision of built environments that support contemporary learning and to ensure projects are aligned with the strategic intent.

The capital works program for 2009 totalled $24,589,713 (2008: $30,880,834) and involved major projects at eight primary schools - Corpus Christi Primary, Cranebrook; St Andrew's Primary, Marayong; St Margaret Mary's Primary, Merrylands; St Monica's Primary, North Parramatta; St Nicholas of Myra Primary, Penrith; St Monica's Primary, Richmond; Our Lady of the Angels Primary, Rouse Hill; and John XXIII Primary, Stanhope Gardens and two secondary schools - St Patrick's Marist College, Dundas; and Catherine McAuley Westmead.

The Catholic Education Office intends to continue investing in schools to further the mission of the Church and of Catholic education. The budgeted expenditure for 2010 is $37,047,000 (2011: $25,648,000). The above expenditure does not include the Australian Government, Building the Education Revolution program.
Throughout 2009, St Monica's Primary, North Parramatta were in the process of designing a completely new school. Designed for learning rather than schooling, connected, contemporary learning spaces for each stage group within one learning centre, were designed to replace traditional 30-student classrooms.

The original capital grants project was to design an area for four stages to be located in one space so that students and teachers could work together, have flexible learning spaces, share resources (particularly technology) and create the culture of a learning community. The Building the Education Revolution funding enabled the school to incorporate additional facilities within the large learning centre such as a kitchen, a library space and a shared learning area.

St Monica’s community wanted bright, welcoming and inclusive spaces. The learning spaces needed to be flexible in use, conducive to listening and comfortable to work in. The challenge was to maximise space and cater for the diverse needs of 200 students in one learning space. There needed to be places for teachers to meet, plan, assess students and work in small groups. Several physical conditions such as light, heat, noise insulation, storage space size, access to water and amenities were considered. Access to technology was also considered, as well as storage areas and placement of computers, interactive whiteboards, cameras, MP3 players, etc.

In the final design the school incorporated large, colourful storage cupboards to take student bags and teacher resources as well as use the storage as display space for student work. Noise levels would be managed through the use of acoustic ceiling tiles, pin board material on the walls and classroom management strategies. Breakout rooms were provided for students to have separate, discrete areas to work alone, provide places for students with special needs to be instructed, or for small group activities, music, drama, etc. Moveable, adjustable furniture allowed for the changing and flexible nature of the learning and meeting spaces.

Contemporary education theory and research guided the leadership team in their planning and design. The shared vision with the system around the possibilities for new learning spaces and ongoing system support has been highly valued by the St Monica’s leadership team. Honesty, transparency and open dialogue with the whole school community have been vital in achieving the successful planning and subsequent transition into the new learning spaces.

The space was completed for the students to move in at the start of the 2010 school year.
Project Genesis: Building the Education Revolution

The Australian Government announced a $14.1 billion package in 2009 to support job creation and deliver world-class education to all Australian schools.

Project Genesis is the Parramatta diocese’s response to the Building the Education Revolution program which has three components:

- Primary Schools for the 21st Century (P21): libraries, multipurpose centres and learning spaces
- National Schools Pride (NSP): minor capital works and maintenance or refurbishment programs
- Science and Language Centres for Secondary Schools (SLC)

The Diocese of Parramatta will receive total funding of $160,505,000, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Average per school</th>
<th>Anticipated completion date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NSP</td>
<td>$175,000</td>
<td>30 June 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLC</td>
<td>$2 million</td>
<td>31 December 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P21</td>
<td>$2.6 million</td>
<td>31 March 2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

School facilities and maintenance

The funding of major maintenance works to ensure effective functioning of school environments, is at times, beyond the capacity of the local school communities. In these cases system support is provided to schools through the major maintenance initiatives. In 2009, $4,295,170 was provided in maintenance work to 57 schools.

ICT and learning technology

The improvement of the technological resources available to students and teachers is a significant way in which the diocese can achieve both elements of the system strategic intent. Three major initiatives impacted positively on the technological resources of the system in 2009.

Catholic Network Australia, in partnership with Telstra, developed a proposal to connect nearly all Catholic schools in Australia to a virtual broadband network well in advance of the Australian Government’s proposed National Broadband Network. The Parramatta diocese has elected to have this access as optic fibre cable in order to give improved performance. The network will be in place in the diocese by mid-2010.

The Australian Government’s Digital Education Revolution provided the funds for both the purchase of laptops for the use of students in secondary schools, and for a major upgrade of the wireless infrastructure within secondary schools. The Layer 3/Wireless Network is state-of-the-art technology to support learning and teaching.
Throughout 2009 Our Lady of Lourdes Primary explored the use of contemporary learning tools such as Nintendo DS to improve students’ mental computation. Dr Kawashima’s Brain Training was introduced in Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4) as part of each student’s daily Mathematics program. The students played the hand-held Nintendo DS games designed to stimulate the brain and help students solve maths problems. Through the quick recall of number facts, memory and mental problem solving games on the touch screen, the aim was to improve speed and accuracy thus lowering the student’s personal ‘brain age’.

Staff noted during the year that Stage 2 students found it fun and motivating. It catered for differentiation in learning, challenged students to compete against themselves and challenged students to develop strategies subconsciously, particularly with the word games. Other incidental learning noted by teachers were that it provided students with a real purpose to improve their math skills against themselves and improve their mental computation.

Each Stage 2 teacher also played their own Nintendo DS with Dr Kawashima’s Brain Training to put themselves in the learner’s shoes. Through this approach, teachers noted and identified strategies that students would be required to use, and identified three specific goals for focus - memory, recall and visual processing; mental computation; and mathematical confidence.

At the beginning of the year the Stage 2 students completed a test of 50 numbers facts. They were timed to see how long this would take to complete with accuracy. The test was readministered at the end of the year with students dramatically improving their speed with a positive development in accuracy.

Students’ personal competitiveness encouraged them to develop strategies to improve, with strengths identified more readily by students. Teachers assisted students to ‘unpack’ their thinking by reflecting with peers and teachers. At the end of 2009 students had decreased their mental brain age by up to 60 years. Many students also began playing the games at home for further practice. Feedback from the students’ comments said that it was ‘fun’, ‘engaging’, ‘challenging’, ‘made me think’, ‘I got better at my number facts’. 
OH&S and work safety

The OHS management system aims to assist and ensure that the Catholic Education Office (CEO) fulfills its health and safety obligations for all employees, students and other persons who are legally present on school and related premises. OHS online is monitored centrally, using databases to collect and analyze the compliance activities as well as monitor injury and return to work programs. This information is used to continuously improve the OHS Management System.

Throughout 2009:

- 25 Schools had whole school OHS Reviews and 76 internal audits were conducted
- Hazardous substances database was developed and hazardous materials audits conducted
- Centralised contract coordination of fire safety equipment inspection, first aid training and electrical testing and tagging
- 4 four-day OHS consultation courses and online learning training, and hazard awareness programs delivered

The return to work team has been proactively managing 189 premium impacting workers compensation claims.

School compliance and audit

During 2009, the compliance team continued to embed ongoing self-monitoring of compliance in schools, conducted external school audit visits for selected schools, refined processes for support of schools, and reported on schooling outcomes through the annual school report and returns to the Catholic Education Commission NSW.

Eleven primary schools and six secondary schools successfully undertook external compliance audits with the remaining 58 schools completing self-monitoring using the compliance audit tool. All identified issues within these audits were satisfactorily resolved. One systemic primary school undertook a curriculum-only compliance audit to monitor the addition of new years of schooling.

The Board of Studies NSW monitored system processes in March 2009 and attended an external school audit and verified system processes. The 2009 School Internal Audit Program was completed on schedule. A total of 76 scheduled school audits were completed. The 2009 School Internal Audit Program has shown that Parramatta diocesan schools continued operating at a generally good standard in relation to financial and administrative management.
highlights 2009

Catholic Schools Week
The fourth annual Catholic Schools Week (CSW) 2009 was held from 22 March to 28 March and involved the communities of all 614 Catholic primary and secondary schools across NSW and the ACT. The week, with the theme ‘Youth in action: Active in Faith, Active in learning’, was a celebration of the strength and distinctiveness of Catholic schools. During the week, over 240,000 Catholic students from across NSW and the ACT celebrated with masses and special liturgies, concerts, open houses, and displays, fundraising activities on behalf of local charities, career fairs, science displays, grandparent and volunteer days, technology demonstrations and workshops on computers and parenting.

Staff Recognition Awards
The fourth annual Parramatta Diocesan Catholic Schools Staff Recognition Awards were presented in October to mark World Teachers’ Day. Sue Roberts, TAS coordinator at St Agnes Catholic High, Rooty Hill was awarded for Catholic School Leadership through Service and Layla Aziz, teacher at Terra Sancta College, Schofields was awarded for Innovation in Learning and Teaching. A $3,000 account towards professional learning was awarded to recipients thanks to the generous sponsorship of the Diocesan Development Fund, Parramatta.

McCarthy teacher wins prestigious Churchill fellowship
In August, Heather Gwilliam, career’s advisor at McCarthy Catholic College, Emu Plains was one of 106 Australians to be presented with a 2009 Churchill Fellowship at Government House, Sydney.

The fellowship will allow Heather to visit schools, agencies, government departments and vocational projects that are enhancing the transition of young people into employment and training in Singapore and the UK.

Gilroy principal receives civics award at the CEFA NSW Awards for Excellence 2009
Brad Campbell, principal at Gilroy College, Castle Hill, received an award for Outstanding Support of Civics and Citizenship at the Constitution Education Fund Australia (CEFA) NSW 2008 Awards Ceremony. Brad received the award from Governor of New South Wales, Her Excellency, Professor Marie Bashir AO, CVO for introducing and implementing a CEFA School Parliament (CSP) at Gilroy College and at his previous school, St Joseph’s Catholic High School, Albion Park.

New Catholic Early Learning Centre opens
On Tuesday 24 March, a new Catholic Early Learning Centre at Blessed John XXIII Parish Stanhope Gardens-Glenwood, catering for children aged 3 to 5 years, opened its doors for the first time. Day one saw the first 15 children attend the learning centre, enjoying a day of exploring the new facility and meeting their teachers. Founded on Catholic values and traditions, the centre aims to engage children in experiences that promote their desire for learning and the development of positive relationships.

Photos: Former Olympian Matt Shirvington visits St John’s Primary, Riverstone during Catholic Schools Week. The Catholic Early Learning Centre’s first preschoolers. Professor John Hattie delivers the ADC lecture.
Outstanding HSC results for Parramatta diocese

Students from schools in the Diocese of Parramatta performed exceptionally well in the 2009 HSC. There were 21 students from systemic schools in the Parramatta diocese were named HSC All-Rounders by the Board of Studies, scoring in the top band for 10 or more of their HSC units. Loyola Senior High, Mount Druitt Year 11 student, Kenneth Fernandez, received first in the state in Filipino Continuers course.

Parramatta Marist High, Westmead had 150 students who achieved Band 6 results and four students received a mark of 98 in all 10 subjects studied. Overall, the school was placed 10th in the state for Mathematics.

St Patrick’s Marist College, Dundas had four students placed in the All-round Achievers list. Alyssa Onorato was ranked 5th in the state for Hospitality and Kyudong Kim was ranked 7th in the state for Mathematics. Catherine McAuley Westmead was placed 5th overall in the state for Dance.

Cerdon College, Merrylands had 111 students who achieved Band 6 results and over half of all students achieved Band 5 or 6 results. Jade Fox was named an All-Rounder, achieving Band 6 results across all subjects.

Marian Catholic College, Kenthurst performed particularly well in Visual Arts with 50 per cent of the cohort achieving Band 6 results, and in Ancient History with one third of the cohort achieving Band 6 results. School leader, Nicole Clothier, was placed 14th in the state for Biology and both Nicole and Kristina Cavanna achieved Band 6 results across all their subjects. Danielle Muscat from Bede Polding College, Windsor South received Band 6 in all her subjects.
Opening and Blessings

The following schools celebrated the opening and blessing of new facilities in 2009:

1 May St Mark’s Catholic College, Stanhope Gardens
29 May St Aidan’s Primary, Rooty Hill
5 June Holy Family Primary, Emerton
19 June Sacred Heart Primary, Mount Druitt
3 July St Patrick’s Primary, Blacktown
3 July McCarthy Catholic College, Emu Plains
28 August Xavier College, Llandilo
18 September St Patrick’s Marist College, Dundas
6 November Corpus Christi Primary, Cranebrook
13 November St Margaret Mary’s Primary, Merrylands

Trade Training Centres in Parramatta diocesan secondary schools

McCarthy Catholic College, Emu Plains and Loyola Senior High, Mount Druitt were both approved for funding under the Trade Training Centres (TTCs) in Schools program, an element of the Australian Government’s ‘Education Revolution’.

The TTCs will allow students to complete blocks of school, trade training and paid work placement over two years and graduate with their HSC, as well as achieve outcomes towards a Certificate III in their chosen trade. Courses will include Hospitality, Hairdressing, Automotive, Brick and Block Laying, Metals and Engineering, Electrotechnology and Carpentry.

The first students commenced at the McCarthy Catholic College TTC in Term 1, 2010 and the Loyola TTC will open in 2011.

19 little angels start school

Thursday 29 January was the first day in the life of the diocese’s newest school, Our Lady of the Angels Primary, Rouse Hill. Under the leadership of founding principal, Eva La Rocca, the 19 Kindergarten students were accommodated at Our Lady of the Rosary Primary, Kellyville until their new school was completed and ready to move in at the start of 2010.

Ann D Clark Lecture

On 19 October, New Zealand academic, researcher and author, Professor John Hattie gave the 9th annual Ann D Clark Lecture to over 380 educators and staff from the Parramatta diocese, other dioceses and educational systems. Professor Hattie’s lecture highlighted the need for teachers to set the bar higher and focus only on the strategies that have the greatest effect on improving student achievement.

Contemporary learning experts visit Parramatta diocese

Professor Stephen Heppell, one of the world’s foremost experts on contemporary learning, spent time in the Parramatta diocese meeting with system leadership, presenting to school staff and visiting a small selection of schools. Stephen is CEO of Heppell.net and chair in New Media Environments at Bournemouth University, and advises teachers, education systems and governments around the world on educational policy and future schooling. Stephen’s visit was an opportunity to enable greater sharing of practice through the utilisation of technology.

In May, world renowned educator, Marco Torres, presented his latest ideas on innovative education to teachers and staff from around the Parramatta diocese. Marco is a high school teacher, media coach, and education technology director for San Fernando High School, Los Angeles one of America’s largest urban schools with over 3,000 students.

Schools celebrate significant anniversaries

St Monica’s Primary, Richmond, one of the oldest Catholic parishes and schools in New South Wales celebrated its 150th anniversary. Parishioners and members of the school community joined to mark the significant milestone with a special mass.

Other significant school anniversaries in 2009:

- Our Lady of the Nativity Primary, Katoomba 80 years
- Caroline Chisholm College, Glenmore Park 35 years
- Our Lady Queen of Peace Primary, Greystanes 35 years
- Our Lady of the Way Primary, Emu Plains 30 years
- St Columba’s High, Springwood 30 years
- Mary MacKillop Primary, Penrith South 25 years
- Mary Immaculate Primary, Quakers Hill 20 years
- Clare Catholic High, Hassall Grove 15 years
- Xavier College, Llandilo 10 years
- Holy Cross Primary, Glenwood 10 years

Year for Priests celebrated at St Columbas

To celebrate the Year for Priests, 75 clergy from Dioceses of Parramatta, Broken Bay, Wollongong, Lismore, Wagga Wagga and the Archdiocese of Sydney gathered at St Columba’s High School, Springwood, in November to celebrate mass, share memories and renew friendships.
NOTES:

1. Total expenditure and payments in respect of Commonwealth & State Government Grants & Subsidies is well in excess of the level of grant funding received.

2. These figures do not include local revenue raised from parish, P&F and school based charges and corresponding expenditure.

3. Capital revenue for the financial period totalled $53,985,249 and is excluded from Total Operating Revenue. It comprises Commonwealth Government Capital Grants of $42,087,830 and Diocesan School Building Fund Revenue of $11,897,419.

OPERATING REVENUE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commonwealth - General Recurrent Grants</td>
<td>220,370,363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State - General Recurrent Grants</td>
<td>82,011,797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Commonwealth &amp; State Grants</td>
<td>42,325,658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents Contributions - Diocesan Schools Tuition Fee</td>
<td>47,176,566</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment Revenue</td>
<td>8,293,585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools - Reimbursable Salaries</td>
<td>4,444,236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Revenue</td>
<td>1,780,394</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE</strong></td>
<td><strong>406,402,599</strong></td>
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OPERATING EXPENDITURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>$</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salaries &amp; Wages Costs</td>
<td>271,093,628</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salaries &amp; Wages Oncosts (Super, LSL &amp; W/Comp)</td>
<td>37,309,943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools - Direct Support &amp; Equity Grant</td>
<td>18,776,964</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depreciation</td>
<td>19,424,308</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administration, Insurance &amp; Staff Welfare Expenses</td>
<td>10,487,904</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest &amp; Doubtful Debts</td>
<td>13,544,954</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resources &amp; ICT Expenses</td>
<td>7,945,322</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facility Occupancy &amp; Maintenance Expenses</td>
<td>20,360,194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants &amp; Levies to External Organisation</td>
<td>1,711,476</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURE</strong></td>
<td><strong>400,654,693</strong></td>
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SURPLUS FROM OPERATIONS BEFORE CAPITAL

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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SURPLUS FROM OPERATIONS BEFORE CAPITAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,747,906</strong></td>
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</table>

AUDITOR’S STATEMENT

“We have performed an independent audit on the financial report of the Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Parramatta for the year ended 31 December 2009, to which an unqualified opinion was issued by us. The attached detailed Statement of Income and Expenditure is based on the audited financial report and has been prepared by the Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Parramatta. To the extent permitted by law, we do not accept liability for any loss or damage which any person may suffer arising from any negligence on our part. No person should rely on this Statement without having an audit or review conducted.”

Moore Stephens Sydney
Chartered Accountants
S. Tzannes
Partner
Dated in Sydney, this 3rd Day of June 2010
**SCHOOL BUILDING PROGRAM**

**CAPITAL REVENUE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commonwealth Capital Grants</td>
<td>42,087,830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diocesan School Building Fund Net Revenue</td>
<td>11,897,419</td>
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**CAPITAL REVENUE \(^1\)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Receipts from Borrowings</td>
<td>53,985,249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL CAPITAL REVENUE AND RECEIPTS</strong></td>
<td>61,375,950</td>
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**CAPITAL EXPENDITURE AND REPAYMENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capital Expenditure</td>
<td>60,837,221</td>
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<tr>
<td>Repayments of Borrowings</td>
<td>7,761,174</td>
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**TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE AND REPAYMENTS \(^1\)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>68,598,395</td>
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**CAPITAL DEFICIT - School Building Program**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(7,222,445)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**REVENUE $406.4 MILLION**

- Commonwealth Government Recurrent Grants $220.4m, 54.2%
- State Government Recurrent Grants $82.0m, 20.2%
- Other Commonwealth and State Grants $42.3m, 10.4%
- Salaries and Wages $308.4m, 77.0%
- Other Operating Expenses $92.3m, 23.0%
- Parents Contributions $47.2m, 11.6%
- Other sources of income $14.5m, 3.6%

**EXPENDITURE $400.7 MILLION**

- Commonwealth Government Recurrent Grants $220.4m, 54.2%
- State Government Recurrent Grants $82.0m, 20.2%
- Other Commonwealth and State Grants $42.3m, 10.4%
- Salaries and Wages $308.4m, 77.0%
- Other Operating Expenses $92.3m, 23.0%
- Parents Contributions $47.2m, 11.6%
- Other sources of income $14.5m, 3.6%