



Newsletter of the Schools Registration Board

Warm greetings to principals from the Schools Registration Board. I hope you have had a great start to the 2017 school year, and that your school community has settled in refreshed and ready for the school year.

Each year, I attempt to provide information about the activities of the Schools Registration Board (SRB) for the year just past and for the year ahead.

Schools Reviews

2016 was an extremely busy year for the SRB with 19 schools undertaking renewal of registration reviews. In addition, the Board registered a new school to provide kindergarten only.

As you are aware, the Schools Registration Board has a responsibility under the *Education Act 1994* to ensure that non-government schools comply with the Minister's standards regarding the matters outlined in the Act. The outcome of a registration review process is to provide assurance to parents and the community that schools are providing quality education and maintaining high standards of competence and conduct.

In early December 2016, the Board took the unprecedented step of refusing the registration application of a non-government school. It did not make this decision lightly and I want to assure you that fair and conscientious processes were followed throughout. The decision was made with full awareness of the immediate impact it would have on all the children enrolled at the school and their families.

On 23 December 2016, the school's governing body submitted an application to be registered as a new school, and in its submission was able to demonstrate that the school had undertaken a significant amount of work in all areas of the Minister's Standards since the Board's decision. As such, the Board determined to register the school as a new school for a period of 12 months (as for all new schools).

Looking forward, 2017 will be an extremely busy year with 25 reviews to be conducted between April and September. All schools whose registration ends at 31 December 2017 have been contacted and provided with information about the process to be used for these reviews.

Changes under the Education Act 2016

As you are aware, the new *Education Act 2016* will commence on 10 July 2017.

The Schools Registration Board will continue as the Non-government Schools Registration Board. Membership will remain representative of the non-government sector with some refinement including members having expertise in areas such as education, law, governance and finance in order to strengthen the overall skills of the Board.

Separate and more tailored processes will exist for the registration of new schools and the re-registration of existing schools. Systems of schools that operate under a single governance arrangement will also now be able to register as a system.

The Board will continue to determine registrations of existing schools and will now make recommendations to the Minister regarding applications for new schools. The Board will have sufficient powers to ensure that systems and the schools operating as part of them are meeting the required Standards.

A new position of Registrar will support the Board. The Registrar will manage the day-to-day operations and the operational aspects of the regulatory process. Reviews will be undertaken by Registration Officers with educational qualifications, with a Board member participating as an observer. The Registrar will provide advice to the Board in relation to the compliance of schools with the Standards.

Current standards, which articulate the conditions a school must meet to be registered, will be refined. Standards for systems of schools will be developed. The standards will be set out in Regulation. These standards are currently being developed with a consultation process to be undertaken soon by the Department of Education.

Information and advice relating to the new standards and requirements under the *Education Act 2016* will be provided to all non-government schools in the latter half of 2017.

Membership of the Board

2016 saw two new members joining the Board - Mrs Jacqueline Conboy who represents teachers of registered schools, and Mrs Terese Phillips for organisations representing registered schools. They replaced Mrs Ann Roberts and Mr Tony Crehan respectively and I thank both Ann and Tony for their contributions, in Tony's case over six years.

2017 will also see further changes to the Board membership with appointments expiring for Mrs Jill Morgan who represents the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office, and Mr John Green who represents organisations representing registered schools. Both Jill and John have made an enormous contribution to the SRB through their extensive skills and experience in the education sector. The Board sincerely thanks them for their valuable contributions and wishes them all the best in their future endeavours. Nominations have been sought from both the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office and Independent Schools Tasmania to fill these vacant positions and the process will be completed shortly.

I have recently advised the Minister of Education and Training of my intention to resign as the Chair of the Schools Registration Board. I have served a total of nearly seven years as the Chair, and with the imminent changes to the Board as a result of the new *Education Act 2016*, it is timely that a new Chair be appointed. An expression of interest process to fill this position has recently commenced.

As this is my last communiqué to you, I would like to say that I believe that the work of the Board, over the last seven years, has been instrumental in raising the overall quality of education in non-government schools in Tasmania. Every Board member has made an enormous contribution to this effort with their outstanding expertise in teaching and learning, and willingness to donate hours of personal time to conduct school reviews.

I wish the new Chair and Board members and the new Registrar every success in the future.

If you have any queries at all relating to the registration of non-government schools, please contact the SRB Registrar, Mrs Jo Spencer via email on registrar@srb.tas.gov.au or on 6165 5713.

Warm regards

Jenny Cranston
Chair