Dear Friends

I hope you and your families had a lovely break over Christmas and the New Year and that 2009 sees you realising many new opportunities.

I would like to thank everyone for their support in 2008, especially for your responses to the community survey and in attending community events and information sessions. Feedback we have received is currently being utilised in our planning.

At Perth College we are gearing up for an exciting year with many new opportunities on the horizon. Our Junior Secondary model of education is now fully operational – building a bridge between our Junior and Senior Schools – and concentrates on a whole school focus to education. One of the many advantages we have as a K-12 school is that our Junior School students are able to use the specialist Senior School facilities.

We started the year with the news that WA’s elite netballers, the West Coast Fever, have chosen Perth College as an official training site in 2009. This offers great opportunities for not only our netballers, but also young local netballers to attend some of their open training sessions and meet the women at the top end of this sport. Also on the sporting front, it appears we have a very active local community, with residents indicating that they are interested in opportunities to use the School’s 50 metre pool. To address this interest, membership of our swimming squads (Perth Swim Academy) and our swimming club, (Lawley Aquatic), is now offered to local residents. Learn to Swim classes will continue through Term one. For those interested in a leisurely swim, we have also made public lanes available. Contact details for our club, squad and public swimming can be found on the back page.

An event on our school calendar that may interest our local residents is our Open Day which is to be held from 10am to 2pm on Monday 2 March. You are invited to take the opportunity of viewing Perth College facilities and seeing our learning in action. You will be provided with a guided tour by our Year 10 students who will be eager to assist you on the day.

If you are unable to make it to our Open Day, then our community tours might offer an opportunity for you to visit our School. These tours will take place twice a term, commencing in Term Two. We have tours scheduled for a 10am start on Wednesday 18 May and Thursday 20 June and bookings are essential as places are limited. Please phone our Development Office on 9471 2124 to reserve your place.

Finally I would again like to thank everyone for their ongoing support of the School and we look forward to maintaining and strengthening existing links within our community as well as forging ahead with new relationships in 2009.

Jenny Ethell, Principal
School Infrastructure Planning Update

We would like to sincerely thank everyone who has engaged in the community consultation process as part of our ongoing facilities planning, which aims to develop contemporary facilities that support positive learning experiences for all students. We appreciate feedback you have provided through the community surveys and by attending community meetings and the community traffic study and survey findings display held in September. Your feedback is essential to the School’s ongoing master-planning process.

Our initial planning indicated that the best land usage would be to seek rezoning and then to redevelop the apartments at 28 and 30 Queens Crescent to cater for a new Junior School. Consultation results and the completed traffic study have provided the information that has enabled our School Council to consider a number of options for the School’s development.

The options being considered include the previously investigated redevelopment of land at 28 and 30 Queens Crescent, with additional on-site parking as well as an option to potentially establish an Early Years Centre (K-2) on the corner of Queens Crescent and Beaufort St (West), with a new (Year 3-6) Junior School to be built on the existing location. This option also features the provision of a large number of additional on-site parking bays by raising the School oval and providing parking underneath. In addition, the potential development of a link road on school land between Queens Crescent and Lawley Crescent (East) is proposed. This will cater for pick up and drop off of students on the eastern boundary of the existing campus.

Discussions are progressing with the City of Stirling in regards to these options, and we will continue to keep you informed as our planning progresses.

Community Survey - What You Told Us

In July 2008 we commissioned a survey to find out your thoughts on links between the School and the community and to determine views about traffic in the local area. Your feedback is being utilised in supporting our ongoing planning. A summary of the feedback is provided below. If you would like more details log on to www.pc.wa.edu.au and click on ‘community’.

Community Perception
The vast majority of respondents (84.7%) strongly agreed or agreed that Perth College adds value to the local community. While just over three quarters (75.5%) strongly agreed or agreed that Perth College positively contributes to the local community.

Reasons listed for both include its value as a community hub, the services and events the school provides the community, and community recognition that the School is a good local education facility.

The Community Link Newsletter
The newsletter has a high readership, with 78.5% of people reading it, and 73% indicating they’d read it again. Suggestions for improvement included more information on how the School interacts with the community and a calendar of events.

Community Use of School Facilities
Swimming Club
Less than half of respondents were aware that the School runs a swimming club that is open to community members. If you would like more information about the club please contact Pool Manager Melissa Levett on 0408 923 975.

Judith Cottier Theatre
Around three quarters (75.9%) of respondents support community use of Judith Cottier Theatre, while 17.5% did not and 6.6% were undecided. The main reason given for supporting community use was that Perth College could share its assets with the community to enable its use for a range of community musical and drama performances. The main reason against community use was the increased traffic flow it would potentially bring. Based on this response Perth College is investigating how the centre might be made more accessible theatre to the community, if traffic management in the local area is improved.

School Planning and Traffic Management
A detailed traffic study of the local area was completed by consultants Cardno BSD. This study was commissioned by the City of Stirling and funded by Perth College. A section in the survey was devoted to community feedback relating to traffic management.

The survey found that there is a high level of vehicle use, with the majority of respondents (83.6%) using a private vehicle to get to their main weekday activity. Respondents rated traffic on the road network around the Perth College precinct as - very good (6.6%), good (21.5%), average (29.2%), poor (20.4%), and very poor (19.3%). The main reason given for these ratings was traffic congestion, particularly at peak times (40%).

In providing comment on the reasoning for their ratings, 23% of respondents noted they did not perceive traffic as a problem, while 13% indicated that some parents of children at Perth College do not follow the road rules (13.1%), and 5.1% perceived there to be a lack of suitable parking in the area.

A number of community members suggested measures to improve traffic management, including changes to the road structures, signalling and signage around Perth College and Mount Lawley, more dedicated drop off/pick up zones and more parking in the local area.
Perth College is proud to introduce Lynley McDonald as our Community Development Officer who is actively supporting initiatives in our local community.

It could be said, Lynley was destined to serve in the education system from the day she was born. Her parents, June and Stan Mell, were both teachers; June at PLC (where Lynley studied) and Stan at Swanbourne Senior High School.

Lynley has vast experience in a number of roles that certainly have prepared her well for her role as Community Development Officer at our School. Her organisational skills have been honed as a director of her family conference and events company, Vertical Events. She was instrumental in the growth of the business - from hosting one convention in 2000 to more recently hosting and planning twelve events in the one year, ranging in size from 150 attendees to more than 8,000. Lynley’s work in other capacities include establishing a digital technology company, property management and as a developer and presenter of TAFE courses.

“Lynley regards the people, and the environment, as the major factors in her decision to join Perth College where she enjoys planning for the variety of events on the school calendar. So far she regards her greatest challenge as facilitating the Creative Arts Festival. The event involved lunch for some 1,400 students and parents, Junior and Senior School workshops, theatre, poetry, singing, house choirs and a fashion parade.

“It was magnificent the way the whole school community came together on the day,” Lynley said.

The annual Perth College Open Day is the next major event to be held at the school on the Labour Day long weekend, Monday 2 March, and encompasses not just the school community, but also local residents who are interested in what is happening.

“I am told that this is an event that is very much anticipated by all connected, and close to, Perth College. I look forward to the opportunity to meet with our community and would welcome any enquiries on the day.”

“I’m also working on a five-year strategic community engagement plan that includes Perth College’s famous fete, which is held every three years and I would welcome feedback from the community,” she explained.

Lynley is also rising to the challenge of leading the development of the annual Perth College Business Directory, which should be of great interest to our local community.

“We still have some copies of the 2008/09 directory available for any interested members of the community and would be pleased to include any information relating to local businesses in the new directory. Please call me on 9471 2124 to obtain a copy of the current directory or to register your interest for inclusion in the new 2009/2010 directory.”

“Also please don’t hesitate to contact me with any queries regarding the school, its future events or programmes available to the wider local community, I would love to hear from you.” Lynley said.
Perth College girls are active in the local community from Kindergarten through to Year 12. Throughout each year our School community is involved in raising funds for a variety of worthy causes.

Our Senior School students regularly visit our great neighbours at St David’s Retirement Home to call Bingo games for residents. Often playing with a full room, one girl takes on the role of calling the letters while other girls work their way among the residents helping them where necessary. Students also perform music recitals for the residents and more recently our boarders have developed the ‘Adopt a Granny’ programme, where girls team one on one with a resident and paint fingernails and play board and dice games.

Visits to Manna Soup Kitchen have been part of the Perth College education experience for the past seven years, with many of our Senior School students and staff volunteering to work at Manna throughout the school term. Through this experience, students become aware of the great opportunities they have in their home life and schooling.

Environmental concerns are a big issue for our youngest students and with the involvement of kindergarten teacher Suzanne Bushby the “Perth College Greenies” environmental group is continuing a project started by the late Mr Jim Nicholson.

The project involves growing approximately 4,500 tree seedlings in order to significantly reduce the carbon footprint at Perth College. Using funds from a grant, liaising with Men of the Trees, and securing the support of parents has meant that we have been able to construct a greenhouse in the area behind St Rita’s.

Special benches have been constructed to house the seedlings when they are grown and a watering system has been installed over the benches, with a shade cloth attached to all sides and roof. Junior School girls took an active role in planting the seeds before the end of the year so the project would be well underway in 2009, with a view to planting the seedlings in Perth and country areas.

Perth College Open Day
Monday 2 March 10.00 am – 2.00 pm
The Annual Perth College Open Day offers the opportunity for all members of our community to visit the School and see all our new developments, as well as catch up with old friends and to make new connections with the community each year. Any enquiries can be made to the Development Office on 9471 2124.

Art @ PC
Friday 3 April – Sunday 5 April
The official opening cocktail party for the art exhibition will be held on Friday 3 April at 6.30 pm in the Pavilion. Exhibition viewing hours for all to view will be on Saturday 4 April and Sunday 5 April 10.00 am – 4.00 pm. All enquiries can be directed to reception on 9471 2100.

Community Tours
Wednesday 20 May and Thursday 18 June 10.00am – 11.30am
A tour of the School will be conducted on each of these dates for interested members of the community and is a perfect way to view Perth College in action. Morning tea will be provided after the tour. Please call the Development Office on 9471 2124 and reserve your place, as numbers are limited.

Spin Dance Performance
Thursday 25 June – Saturday 27 June 6.30 pm – 8.30 pm
The biennial performance by our very talented dance students is a much anticipated event. Please call the School box office on 9471 2171 with your ticketing enquiries for any of the three evening performances.